

THE
IMMORTAL FOUNTAIN,

&c., &c.

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"Without a parable spake he not unto them."  
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USING one day upon the state of things as it was in the Golden Age—that delightful time of which the poets so frequently speak—and especially respecting the mode of instruction then, when there were no writings, and when man was taught what is true and holy by the opening of his spiritual sight, and thus frequently admitted into spiritual association with angels, who taught him the truths of heaven, just as God taught Adam, and the angels the patriarchs, I fell into a sound and most delightful sleep, and dreamed that I was living in those peaceful and happy times. It seemed as if I was in one of the most beautiful districts of the earth that I ever beheld. The sun was rising with great glory above the eastern hills, the dew drops were still upon the green pastures, and as the light fell upon them, it seemed as if the earth was covered with gems. In the distance there was a lofty range of hills, and on them, here and there, were fine tall trees. At their feet the flowing of a gentle pellucid stream, murmured agreeable



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music, which harmonized with the voices of thousands of sweet feathered songsters. On a gentle eminence there was a singularly beautiful house, embosomed within magnificent fruit trees, that were in full blossom. An extensive garden surrounded the house, in which were long shady walks that terminated in cool grottos, to which the owner and his family retired in the heat of the day, to discourse upon things of everlasting moment.

This gentleman (for we must speak after the manner of our times) had two daughters called Chacune and Aucune. Chacune was extremely lovely both in mind and body. She was full of grace and innocence, yet majestic and noble; her kindness and benevolence were unbounded, and she possessed to an eminent degree, that indescribable charm which inspires confidence and pleasure in others. But Aucune was just the opposite. She was always frowning and out of humour; wanting and getting, but never satisfied; and ill tempered with herself and every one else. From long continued indulgence in evil tempers, her body had lost its natural beauty, and had become the impress and form of the ugliness of her disposition. It is mind that gives character to the body. A sweet mind always makes for itself, in some way or other, a beautiful body; and though we sometimes find good and virtuous minds in deformed bodies, yet how completely is the deformity overshadowed and put comparatively out of view by the sweetness and beauty of the disposition!

Aucune's greatest desire was to be as beautiful and as much beloved as Chacune; and she could conceive of no way of being so, but by making her sister as ugly and as despised as herself. For some years she had tried this plan, sometimes by beating and abusing Chacune, at others by tearing her beautiful dress, or

cutting off her lovely auburn hair, as she was sleeping in the grotto; and on one occasion she even struck her in the face, with the intention of leaving an ugly mark there, which she hoped would destroy the charm that was about it; beside all this, she had been known to steal the playthings of her companions, and more than once she was known to break into neighbors' gardens, and tread down the flowers, and bring some away with her, and lay them and the playthings in her sister's bed-room, with the intention of throwing the blame upon Chacune.

These were some of the means she adopted; but some way or other, Chacune remained as beautiful, and even more beautiful, than before—every blow that she received, seemed to make her more amiable and lovely; for, I must observe, that in no case did she resent the unkind treatment of Aucune, and therefore to all her other beauties, she added those of patience, forbearance, forgiveness and mercy, which are those that appear most lovely in Heaven. And notwithstanding all the wicked and deceitful plans of Aucune, no one would believe that Chacune would injure any one. Thus poor Aucune had the mortification of seeing Chacune growing more beautiful and beloved every day, while she was becoming more and more disagreeable and deformed.

It was reported in the neighborhood, that, during the time Chacune slept in the grotto of her father's garden, her spirit was admitted into the company of angels, with whom she talked and strayed into the fields of eternal green. It was also said, that the angels bathed her in the Fountain of Beauty, which is situate on the summit of Mount Innocence, in the spiritual

world, and it was further said, that this was the cause of her surpassing loveliness. Aucune, to whom nothing of the kind had ever occurred, had often heard such things reported of others, and when this was said of Chacune, she became much interested, and desired to know whether it was so or not; "for perhaps," thought she, "I may be able to bathe in these waters too, and then I shall be as beautiful, and as much admired, and beloved as sister!"

The next morning she hastened to Chacune's bed-room, and stole softly and silently along the passage, and listened at the door, expecting to hear angels conversing and playing with her. All was quiet, however, save the noise of some sweet singing birds, that came every morning, and warbled their music from the boughs of a vine tree, to awake Chacune from her peaceful slumbers. As soon as she went in, Chacune, who had just awoke, asked why she had come so early? Aucune was disappointed, and a little confused at her sister's question, but in a moment she recovered, and at once said—

"To see the angels."

"To see the angels!" exclaimed Chacune; "what angels, dear sister?"

"The angels who love you, and make you so beautiful," replied Aucune.

"But how is it that you look for angels here?" asked Chacune. "Do you not know that angels live in the spiritual world?"

"But I have heard," observed Aucune, "that angels bathe you in the Fountain of Beauty, and do sister, tell me where I can find them, for I long to bathe in those waters, and be beautiful also!"

Chacune blushed at the allusion to her beauty and association with angels ; but she smiled at the simplicity and earnestness of her sister, and said—

“My dear Aucune, you know that I love you, and would do anything for you that I am able, but I cannot show you angels in this lower world of ours, for they have no bodies that can be seen here. Their bodies are spiritual and made of spiritual substances, and suited exactly to the spiritual world in which they live, and therefore can never be seen by material eyes.”

“Then how must I see them ?” said Aucune with impatience.

“I will explain it, sister,” said Chacune. “While here you are an inhabitant of two worlds—this world of matter, and a world of spirit, and you have a body adapted to each. One, a material body for the material world, and the other, a spiritual body, for the spiritual world.* “Now listen, sister,” continued Chacune with earnestness, “each of these bodies has senses peculiar to itself; and what is remarkable, when the senses of the material body are active, you see men and material things ; but when the senses of your spiritual body are active, and those of the material body quiescent, you can behold angels and spiritual things as plainly and palpably as you now do the things of time ; but you cannot see spiritual beings with material eyes. At what we call death, we put off the material body, and leave the material world for ever, to live eternally in spiritual bodies in the spiritual world, which will be as really and truly substantial, as ever the material was. You perceive, therefore, dear Aucune, that unless the Lord sees fit, in his good providence, to open the eyes of your spirit, you will not be able to see angels.”

* 1 Cor. xv. 44. by Google

Aucune pondered over what her sister had said, and almost despaired of ever being able to bathe in the Fountain of Beauty. One day, however, after being more than usually anxious, she wandered up and down in her father's garden, and was quite overcome with her feelings, when suddenly, she beheld a glorious being, dressed in white garments. His face beamed so much with love and kindness, that Aucune could scarcely look upon it, for the glory that was about it.

"Young immortal," said he, as he approached Aucune, "we have perceived that you are anxious to have communion with angels, and to enter the spirit-land, and bathe in the Fountain of Beauty; our kind Father has granted your desire, and you are now in the world of spirits.

Aucune was astonished, and could not conceive how it could be; "for" said she "I have a body, and garments, and here is a solid earth!" and for some time she could scarcely believe it, but in time she became convinced that it was so; for all her faculties were a thousand times more free and sensitive, and all the objects that surrounded her were so much in unison with herself, that they seemed as if they were the things of her own mind portrayed before her.

"Follow me," said the angel after the surprise of Aucune had somewhat subsided, "follow me, and I will show you the way to the Immortal Fountain."

Aucune instantly followed, inwardly exulting at the thought of soon being as beautiful as her sister. So entirely did this occupy her mind, that she never once spoke to the angel. They walked on in silence, until they arrived at a splendid massive gate of brass. Over the top of which was written, the

"Gate of Obedience." It was a strange name, but Aucune thought it was one of the peculiarities of the spirit-world, and made no enquiries.

"We must enter through this gate," said the angel, as he lifted a ponderous knocker, and struck three times. The gate was instantly opened by several glorious beings, who were clad in a similar manner to the conducting angel, and all equally benevolent in their appearance.

"Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome,
Welcome to the angel-land;"

said they rejoicing, and in tones of kindest affection. "Immortal, enter our happy land," they continued.

Aucune attempted, but as soon as she got within the Gate, she felt an oppressive pain upon her forehead, her eyes became dim, fear and trembling came upon her, and she thought she was dying.

When the angels saw this, they sighed; and tears of pity rolled down their cheeks, as she was compelled to withdraw to the outside of the Gate.

"We know by this," said the first angel, "that you cannot reach the Fountain of Beauty; for none can breathe the air of our land, but those, who, in spirit and life, are like us. This gate is closed against no comer; for it is the will of our great Master that all should enter; but when any one retires with pain, we perceive that he is unfit to pass through our land."

Poor Aucune burst into tears and earnestly entreated them to tell her what she must do.

"Return to your world," said they "and hearken to the

good counsel of your father, and do not tease, or speak angrily to your sister; do this and in three months you shall return to us, and we will take you on your way to the Fountain."

She turned away from the gate very sorrowful; for the task appeared an extremely hard one; and once or twice she thought of turning back to ask, whether some easier thing would not do; and, probably, she would have done so, if her spiritual sight, at that moment, had not been closed.

The first object she saw on her return to the world of nature, was Chacune watering a beautiful bed of flowers, that had grown exceedingly since she had noticed it.

"Ah, there it is again," said she, as she viewed, with vexation, the success with which her sister had cultivated her garden; "she strives to do every thing better than any one else, and then she is praised for it; she knows I don't like it, and I am sure she does it to tease me; I will go this moment and trample upon the bed, that I will."

And away she ran, quite in a rage, simply because her sister had, with great pains and care, succeeded in cultivating a few flowers!

As she was running with this wicked intention, she suddenly stopped, and looked round in amazement and alarm.

"Did you speak Chacune?" said she with terror.

"No sister dear, I am just making you a bouquet of my beautiful flowers; come and see how nicely they have grown.

"But some one spoke sister, and said "*remember.*"

"You must have thought it sister, for I heard no one!" said Chacune.

But it was indeed a voice that spoke, probably that of her guar-

dian angel, who was speaking to her spirit, as God spoke to Samuel when he was laid down in the holy place, and beseeching her to remember the consequences of such wicked conduct. This is the way that angels do, they call to remembrance the instruction we have previously received, and strive thereby to withdraw us from the sin we are tempted to commit.

This warning from the mysterious voice, had its beneficial effect, for she concluded it was some kind admonition from heaven. When she went to Chacune, and saw her flowers, and with what readiness they were all bestowed upon herself, she felt inwardly ashamed for having suffered such unkind feelings to obtain an influence over her, and resolved thenceforth to destroy no more of Chacune's flowers. This was, perhaps, the first time that Aucune felt ashamed of having done wrong, and, perhaps, also, it was the first good resolution she ever made, that was not broken immediately afterwards.

Many were the conflicts that raged in the mind of Aucune, between envy and jealousy, and the necessity of obedience to the injunctions of the angels, in order to be fitted to pass through their land to the Fountain of Beauty. It was not in all cases that she conquered; for she was occasionally overwhelmed by passion, and more than once, under its influence, she positively refused to obey her father. It was not, therefore, without serious misgivings, that, she looked forward to the end of the three months. At last they were over, and as she was musing in the shady grotto, her spiritual sight was opened, and her guardian angel stood before her.

"Hasten sister," said he "for angels are waiting for thee. There is a company going to the Immortal Fountain, and they desire thee to go with them."

Aucune made all possible haste, and very soon arrived at the *Gate of Obedience*. After the usual knock it was opened by an angelic band, who again greeted her with a smile of welcome. On entering, to her surprise, she felt the atmosphere most delightful and invigorating, and every breath she breathed, communicated an unspeakable pleasure. This was the case too, with each of her senses, for whenever she exercised any of them, it was accompanied by most exquisitely delightful sensations. In fact it seemed all delight and pleasure; for everything was so completely harmonious and one with herself, that there was not a single thing that she could have wished otherwise than it was.

After her surprise, the angels led her into a spacious hall, in which another company of angels were walking, and seemingly waiting for her. They came and gave her the kiss of affection, and bade her be of good courage; for they perceived Aucune's spirits were drooping as she reflected on her disobedience. To her great astonishment, she found on joining them, that her garments were similiar to theirs, but somewhat disfigured with black spots, which appeared here and there upon them; and turning round she said, "stay, and let me retire to wash away these spots, for they look so filthy."

The angels smiled at her anxiety, and said, "you cannot yet, but let us hasten to the Fountain, and you shall wash them there;" and so saying, they led her out on the path called *Beauty*.

The atmosphere was still delightful, and the road full of interest. It was wonderfully formed. There was here a gentle ascent and there a slight descent, and yet on the whole they

were continually ascending. It was not straight forward ; for occasionally they met with barriers, which sometimes caused them to go a little way round ; but this was really no misfortune, for they were invariably rewarded with some glorious view that they would otherwise have lost ; or, they were thereby protected from some great danger, which they saw on turning the corner was concealed behind it. As far as the eye could reach, there were magnificent trees, variously gathered into clusters, according to their kinds ; and in rich green pastures, all kinds of cattle were peacefully feeding. But the most singular and interesting of all these things to Aucune, was a star that went on before them, and pointed out their way, just as that did which led the Magi to Bethlehem ! The angels were well acquainted with this beautiful object, and called it "The star of knowledge." It was always visible, and shone with peculiar splendor during the shades of evening ; and so long as they saw it, there was no danger of missing their way.

Aucune travelled on with her angelic associates, who made their journey extremely interesting and instructive, by telling stories of wisdom, or describing to Aucune the character of their great Master, and the nature of his kingdom. For a long time she went on, and once or twice she thought she could hear the flowing of the Fountain, but it did not appear. At last, however, she became weary and tired, and moreover she began to feel the same oppression and difficulty of breathing, that she experienced at first.

In a little while she was obliged to stop, and with tears in her eyes, said, "I see I cannot reach the Fountain ! what must I do !"

“Sister fear not ;” said they in tones of kindest sympathy ; “We knew that you would be unable to reach the Fountain, but if we had told you so, you would not have believed us, so we have come thus far to show you. We know that you have not been obedient to your father ; and it is well that you should know, that until you habitually obey your earthly parent, you will never be able to obey God, and live in this land of angels ; for obedience to your father on earth is the foundation of true obedience to your Father in heaven. You must therefore return to your earth,” continued the angels with earnestness, “And mark ! you must not only implicitly obey your father’s just desires, and be kind to your sister and friends, but you must also change your motives ! Hitherto you have desired beauty and loveliness, to enable you to take away your sister’s. Go now, and learn to desire blessings without wishing to take away the blessings of others. You will not be less blessed because others are blessed too ; for in the hand of our Great Master there are blessings for every one. Do this for six months, and then you shall visit us again.”

If the former disappointment disturbed her, this did in a ten-fold degree. It was not only the disappointment itself, but the additional task, as she felt it, which was imposed upon her, that overwhelmed her with trouble ; for she supposed that there was little value in beauty, if it did not make her an object of praise and admiration above all others. The words of the angels had puzzled her, and she felt, that if those were the only conditions on which she was to go to the Fountain, she could never get there. She returned sorrowfully, and much disturbed. But on her approach to the gate, the angels met her, and gave her many

assurances of ultimate success. They bid her an affectionate adieu and entreated her to have courage and to trust in God. As she passed through the gate, the sound of sweet music struck upon her ear. There was something so soothing and consolatory in the tones, that she felt grateful to the choristers, and wondered who they were. In another moment she could distinguish the words, which were as follows :—

“ Never fear,
Sister dear,
For thou shalt beauteous be ;
Thy soul prepare,
By holy prayer ;
Then the fountain thou shalt see.”

From being called by the endearing name of “sister,” she knew that the singers were her guardian angels ; for they love to regard those who are striving to improve, as brothers and sisters.

On her return to the world Aucune was very sad and dejected for some time. But Chacune, was even more than usually kind ; she danced and sung, and brought her ripe fruit, which she had cultivated with great care, and endeavored by every means in her power to raise Aucune’s drooping spirits. By the assistance of her father and sister, and a few kind friends, who had already observed the change that had taken place in her mind, she began at last, to be more cheerful and playful.

It soon began to be remarked by all, how amiable Aucune was becoming, and how kind to Chacune she was ! And as they walked abroad with their father, it was said by the

neighbors, "Here comes the good man and his two beautiful daughters."

The first time Aucune heard this, she was much pleased. "Two beautiful daughters!" she kept saying to herself. "Two beautiful daughters!" "Well I never expected this," she continued, "but I see it is just as the angels said. I am not less blessed, because sister is blessed too. Who would have thought, that the praise of our neighbors would have been so sweet, when shared with sister!" She gradually began to feel this truth more and more; and in a few months, she saw how blessed it is to be willing to share our blessings with others.

Aucune gradually began to feel a certain delight and pleasure about life, that she had never felt before. All those who had avoided her, from fear that she would quarrel with them, now seemed to strive who could be the kindest: for it is a truth worth remembering, that by love and kindness we easily beget the same towards ourselves.

There was one very benevolent gentleman, who was called "The Wise Man of the Hill," a friend of her father's, who was extremely pleased with the change which had taken place in Aucune's mind. This person had great possessions, and having no children, he had determined to leave the whole of his property to Chacune; but in consequence of the improvement in her sister's disposition, he now decided to divide the whole equally between them. This was a proof of the superiority of kindness over unkindness, that Aucune could not mistake.

The sisters frequently visited this gentleman, and sometimes they stayed two or three days together, and enjoyed the beautiful walks on the hill sides, or played with lambs in the fields. On

On the occasion as they were walking out with the "Wise Man," Aucune saw a few wild flowers growing on the top of a large rock, and without saying anything to her companions, she stepped aside, and walked up a steep and troublesome pathway, that, seemed to lead directly to the flowers. She did not perceive however, that the path, after a little while, diverged in an opposite direction, and led her completely astray. She toiled, expecting every moment to reach the top, but still she did not; and after growing weary, and being afraid lest the "Wise Man" and her sister should leave her, she turned round, with the intention of retracing her steps; but as she turned, a female clad in showy robes, came forward with a bow and fascinating smile, and said, "Beautiful maiden, I perceive you have lost your way, come with me, and I will show you one nearer and easier, than the troublesome one by which you came." She beckoned Aucune to follow her, and then turned down a good broad path. Poor Aucune's vanity was flattered when the woman praised her beauty, and without a thought, she instantly followed.

As they walked along the woman appeared to be extremely kind and agreeable, and said, amongst many other things, "At the end of this path, there is a fountain, that makes the heart glad, the life happy, and the countenance beautiful, of those who drink of its waters."

"Indeed!" said Aucune with astonishment, "and what distance is it from here?"

"Not more than a few miles," replied the woman.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Aucune, "how astonishing that neither the "Wise Man" nor Chacune ever named this fountain!"

and then turning to the woman she said, "this is the very fountain I have been endeavoring to reach for many months! how long have I been teasing myself, and here it is just at hand!"

She began to think now, that the angels and Chacune had been deceiving her; and to surprise them all, and to show that she had found out the secret as well as they, she determined to solicit the woman to show her at once, the way to the waters.

"Gladly," said the woman, "for my name is Venus, and I am appointed to wander about in these lonely paths, to lead the weary to rest, and to guide all that will follow me, to that happy fountain of ease, and mirth, and beauty." She then took hold of Aucune's arm, and hastily led her away.

Poor Aucune! she was like most of mankind. She was so anxious to obtain her object, that she was ready to listen to any improbable story, if it only promised the easy and speedy fulfilment of her desires. She doubted her tried friends, and gave herself up to one, that she knew nothing of. The result was, as might have been expected; the same is occurring from day to day in our time.

The "Wise Man" and Chacune had walked on, expecting that Aucune would follow every minute; but as she did not arrive, they thought she was staying to gather a bouquet of wild flowers, of which she was exceedingly fond, and would soon follow them. So they went on and left her, thinking she would arrive at home, at least, in time for dinner. But dinner time came, however, and no Aucune appeared. It was not unusual for Aucune to stay from dinner; for very frequently, the neighbors would invite her to stay with them, and therefore, her absence caused but little uneasiness: and in the afternoon, the

"Wise Man" and Chacune went to visit a friend, and did not return until evening.

In the meantime, Venus led Aucune onward, and in the most winning manner, told her all kinds of tales, some of which shocked her at first, but in a little while she entered into the spirit of them with delight. The road was shaded, indeed so much so, that the light was nearly excluded. It was easy and cool; and being a gradual descent, the walk was delightful and interesting. The fountain, however, did not appear so soon as she expected. She had heard, what Venus described, as the murmuring of its waters, for an hour or two, but still they seemed to get no nearer; and at last she began to be anxious, lest she should not be able to return home that night.

"Never fear," said Venus, "for I have fairy legions at my command, who can transport you back in a moment!"

"If that be so," thought Aucune, "they can as easily transport me to the fountain at once, and thus save any further trouble." But when she named this, her conductor, who was always ready with some plausible reply, said, "the day is fine, and the way is beautiful, and as the distance is so short, it will be more delightful to walk."

Thus Aucune travelled on, but in spite of all the stories and artful smiles of Venus, she gradually became anxious and uneasy, particularly as the sun was setting, and thick thunder clouds gathering in all directions. To add still more to her anxiety, they began to enter a dense forest, in the midst of which, as they entered, Venus declared the fountain was. The shades of evening rapidly closed upon them, and before they had proceeded far, the night became black and dreadful, and every

star disappeared. The wind moaned among the trees, and at every succeeding blast it blew louder and louder. Great drops of rain began to fall upon the leaves, and by and by, they fell upon the travellers, and drenched them to the skin. Flashes of lightning followed in quick succession, accompanied with loud and terrible thunder. Trees were struck down, and hurled about by the fury of the wind, which now blew a complete hurricane.

It was most awful; Aucune became terrified, and covering her face with her hands, she ran hither and thither, striving to find a place of safety, but every place was under the influence of the storm. She besought her companion to protect her, and lead her back; but the true character of Venus now began to exhibit itself. Aucune was within her power, and it was seen that she was the demon of the storm; and had allured the poor girl into the forest to torment, and, if possible, to destroy her. As the flashes of lightning rapidly followed each other, and shivered the trees to atoms, and struck Aucune almost dead with fear, Venus laughed and rent the air with the noise of her wild unearthly joy; and as she sung in boisterous song, in derision of the piteous supplications of Aucune, the infernal notes joined in unison with the dreadful howling of the tempest.

Poor Aucune now saw the error she had committed, and vowed that, if God would deliver her from the dangers that surrounded her, and save her life, and give her truth to understand the wicked one, she would never again suffer evil in disguise, to lead her astray from the path of duty. Then turning from the wild vagaries of the demon, she covered her face with her mantle, and fell upon her knees, and prayed, and said, "Oh Father of heaven and earth, the God of all children, and the

comforter and protector of the distressed, look down, with pitying eye, upon the lost and awful condition of thy child, and deliver me out of all my distresses. I have erred in forsaking thy paths, and now I am beset with all the miseries of sin ; but with thee Almighty Father, there is mercy and forgiveness ; be pleased to extend thy omnipotent aid, and lead me to the abodes of safety."

She rose from prayer, internally comforted ; and on looking round, she beheld Venus fleeing away, as if hastening from some dreaded object. Aucune was astonished at this sudden flight, and could not, at first, comprehend, that

" Infernals tremble, when they see,
The contrite heart and bended knee."

but on reflection, she saw, that evil is only powerful, so long as we are pleased to be its slaves. The moment we turn to the Lord, and submit to be guided by His influence, evil begins to flee away, and we enter into the liberty of the children of light.

As soon as the woman had fled, the difficulties of Aucune began to cease, at least she was no longer afraid. The storm gradually abated ; and when the rays of light began to break through the trees, she knew that morning was approaching. Which plainly proves, that it is the presence of evil, in the form of some Venus, that is the cause of all trouble and woe.

But still Aucune was in a disagreeable position. She was in a dreary forest, with no path or friend to direct her to any human habitation ; indeed so lonely was her state that she began to fear she should die of hunger.

"Fear not," said a voice, "thy prayer is heard, and thy guardian angels shall conduct thee to a place of safety."

Aucune started at the voice of the mysterious messenger of consolation, and looked but saw no one, and wondered from whence it came ; but man knows not the hand that blesses him, nor from whence comes his consolation. When in trouble, he does not often think of Providence, and the hosts of God, who are its ministers. Aucune did not think of the angels who were attending her, and guiding her through all her dangers, as they did Hager when she was in the desert, or she would have recognized the friendly voice.

While she was yet bewildered with astonishment, at the strange flight of Venus, the abatement of the storm, and the mysterious voice, the silvery notes of a trumpet struck upon her ear ; she followed swiftly in the direction whence they came, and at each step they gradually became louder and louder. At last she heard the sound of voices, one of which she instantly recognized as Chacune's. She raised her voice, and called "Chacune, Chacune, help, my dear Chacune!" Chacune heard the cry, and turned the head of the beautiful pony on which she was riding, towards her lost sister, and in a few moments she was embracing Aucune. Both sobbed for joy that they had met each other again.

As soon as they could speak, Chacune said, in gentle rebuke, "Oh, sister, why did you stray from us ? We have been seeking you all night ; and our hearts have been sorely troubled on your account."

"Forgive me, sister," Aucune exclaimed, "and you shall know all.

At this instant the "Wise Man" came up, followed by several servants ; one of whom dismounted, and after all had

congratulated Aucune upon her deliverance she was assisted upon the horse, and they hastened away to a house at a little distance from the forest, where refreshment and other necessaries were obtained, to restore the exhausted condition of Aucune.

As they were going, Aucune related the adventure, and told how she had been deceived, and what a night she had passed, and how she was delivered, and how the notes of the silver trumpet had directed her to them.

"I knew," said the "Wise Man," with exultation, "that my trumpet of Truth, if fairly sounded, would be heard by her! She is not the first poor soul that it has saved; and by the blessing of God, I will spend my life in behalf of such lost and erring creatures."

In a short time they arrived at the "Wise Man's," and after partaking of a feast, that had been provided to commemorate the happy deliverance of Aucune, the sisters departed to their own home; the father was astonished at the adventure, and thankful for the deliverance of his daughter.

When the circumstances were known, all the neighborhood were filled with gratitude to the Lord, that he had so mercifully preserved Aucune; for they now began to look upon her as a pleasant and good sister; she had the same face, but there was a charm about it that did not exist when her temper was bad. But Aucune knew nothing of the charm itself, for that would have destroyed it, but she felt she was loved, and that is one of the highest joys of human life.

Her time passed happily on, and the six months were soon over. As she was reflecting on what had passed since she was in the spiritual world, the Lord again opened the eyes of

her spirit ; the same angel, stood before her, and with a smile of welcome, he led the way to the "*Gate of Obedience.*" The angels there congratulated her with a kiss ; and to the astonishment of Aucune they seemed more lovely, and their robes more beautiful, than ever. As she went into the lofty hall, she was still more powerfully impressed with the beauty and elegance of every thing she saw. The walls were of pure alabaster, with numerous figures of gentle beasts and birds, curiously wrought upon them. The roof was of cedar wood, richly carved, and supported by pillars of porphyry. The light descended through a dome with a rich mellowness, and what was very remarkable, it seemed to be living, and looked like living golden light ; and as its beautiful rays played upon the walls, it created wonderful images, that portrayed the state and character of the affections and thoughts of the angels.

"Astonishing," exclaimed Aucune, in her first surprise. And turning to the angels, she enquired "why all things were so beautiful to day ?"

"O," said they, "we enjoy all these wonderful and beautiful sights every day."

"But," said Aucune, "they were very different when I last saw them !"

"Very likely," said the angels, "but you know, you did not, then, love your sister ; neither were you kind to your friends ; that was wicked ; and wickedness causes a mist to rise over the mind, which distorts and perverts the loveliest objects, and thus true beauty appears as complete ugliness to the wicked !"

"If this be so, how many glorious sights I must have lost by my wickedness and folly !" thought Aucune. And with this

conviction she determined thenceforth to avoid all evil, and particularly all desire to injure her sister.

In a short time, she was clothed with heavenly garments, and to her surprise, they were as beautiful as any of those that the angels had on! The black spots and filthy appearance were entirely gone; and in addition to her former clothing, she received a garland of sweet flowers; which was placed upon her head, by a being of superlative beauty, who informed her that that was a symbol of the crown of life, and the badge of sisterhood of that heaven.

Thus robed, she proceeded on the path of Beauty. It seemed as if there were no necessity for a guide; for the way was perfectly familiar; but, notwithstanding, an angelic band went with her. The beautiful star of knowledge, again appeared, and shone with increased splendor. It distinctly pointed the way; and when there was any danger, it stood still, and shed its light upon the spot, so that, in every case, the travellers had timely warning, and could easily avoid the danger.

They travelled on, delighted with each other, and every thing they saw, until they came to another gate, composed of solid shining silver, so brilliant that they could scarcely look upon it, and over the top there was written, the "*Gate of Duty.*" "Here we must part with you," said the angels, "we cannot live in that land, which you behold through that Gate, for it is much more glorious and holy than ours. In our land we are happy, and our cup runneth over with blessings, but our spirits are not fit to breathe that purer air; and so for the present we must bid you adieu!"

Aucune was surprised at this, but said nothing; for she was

anxious to get to the Fountain. The angels gave her an affectionate kiss, and then turned away; Aucune ran boldly up the steps and knocked loudly at the Gate. It was opened almost instantly, by a glorious being in shining white. When Aucune entered she told her errand, and the angel said, "You shall proceed immediately."

In a little time a company of heavenly beings came to her, and signified that they were ready; Aucune accompanied them, but they had not proceeded far, before she felt a similar oppression upon the head, to that which she had perceived when she was obliged to return before. She knew its meaning; and bursting into tears, she said, "Am I not pure enough yet, to go to the Immortal Fountain?"

"We would gladly take you, dear sister," said an angel, "but it would destroy you. You cannot go until you can breathe, with pleasure, the air of our heaven."

Aucune was very sad and sorrowful at this announcement. For the moment, it appeared to be impossible to grow better than she was, and yet she knew, that some new duty would be imposed upon her. So true it is, that no one, can appreciate a higher state than that in which he is. But Aucune, in tones of despair, asked, "What must I now do?"

"You must again change your motives;" said the angels, "hitherto you have avoided evil, and done good, not from a sense that it is a duty you owe to God, and to your fellow-creatures, but that you might acquire some selfish good. At first you wished to be beautiful, that you might deprive Chacune of love and praise, and then you wished to be beautiful, that you might share them with her. Now cannot you see, that in

both these motives, there is something selfish, particularly in the first? You must, therefore, return to your world, and cease to do evil, because it is a sin against God, and an injury to your brethren. You will thus gradually lose sight of self in your inward motives, and do good because it is of God, and for your neighbours' benefit; such are the motives that should actuate men." The angels bid her be of good cheer, and trust in the Lord, and the difficulties of the task would, in time, be overcome. "Return to the world for twelve months," said they, "and at the end of that time, you shall come to us again;" they then gave her a most affectionate kiss, and she found herself in the world of nature.

At first Aucune felt great difficulty in banishing all idea of reward from her mind. But, in time, by constant attention to her motives, she found that it was possible even to "do good *hoping for nothing again.*" She ceased to make any more bargains with God, by saying, that, if he would make her beautiful by permitting her to bathe in the Immortal Fountain, she would be kind to Chacune, and to every one else. She was gradually led to see, that it was a right, a duty that we owe to each other, to do no evil either in thought, affection, or deed; and thus that we are placed in this world, to learn to contribute our mite to the treasury of human usefulness and human good, that we may all have a common right to human happiness.

After repeated trials during the twelve months, divine Providence once again opened her spiritual sight, and she was conducted through the "*Gate of Obedience,*" to the "*Gate of Duty;*" and on this occasion its grandeur and magnificence had increased to a wonderful degree. It shone as if ten thousand

rays of the noon-day sun had concentrated themselves, and become formed into a beautiful gate. Aucune knocked, and at the solicitation of the angel in shining white, she entered. As she looked round and beheld the astonishing grandeur of the place, she trembled, lest anything should be injured by contact with her. She was first struck with the intensity of the light; for it seemed as if she were placed in the midst of a diamond, on which all the glittering rays of a thousand suns were shining. And yet, strange as it may seem, it was not painful, but exhilarating and delightful! The heat that was in it, elevated and sanctified her whole soul; for it was spiritual heat, that could warm the heart, and kindle up the best affections, and produce a reverence and veneration for things good and true.

Aucune was robed in shining white, and began her journey. She had noticed a strange peculiarity in the circumstance of the persons of the angels, and the scenery of heaven, becoming more beautiful and interesting at each succeeding visit. On a little reflection, however, she perceived that the change was in herself; for in that spirit-world all things have an immediate correspondence with its inhabitants. Every thought and affection of angels, takes up an external objective form; and thus, all that is seen in heaven, is the outbirth and reflex of angelic minds. Each angel, therefore, sees himself portrayed upon all that surrounds him. Every beast and every bird, yea every object that is beheld, is thus made a mirror to reflect the inward souls of the angels, upon their external senses; so that they cannot possibly mistake their quality! This is one reason why angels are so singularly happy; for there is a continual harmony

and correspondence between their state and external objects. No annoyances or difficulties can exist with them; for the desires of the mind flow forth into external objects, and provide, as it were, for their own wants. Here is the reason, too, why heaven is so glorious, and hell so monstrous; for goodness and virtue are the soul of real beauty; so that the beauty of heaven is the form of the goodness of angels. And wickedness and vice are the essence of all deformity and misery; so that the dreadfulness of hell, is the outbirth of the wickedness of the sinner. Just, therefore, as Aucune's state improved, did all that she beheld become more beautiful and delightful. She was gradually brought into a pure, angelic state, and then she could breathe the air of heaven, and associate with its inhabitants. And, as they journied they beheld each other's states, and even every wish, and object of life, reflected before their eyes; and thus, each enjoyed his own pleasure, and that of others too, and in blessing others they became blest altogether.

They saw beautiful palaces on their way, some were of polished marble, with steps of alabaster in front, and pillars of jasper at the sides supporting rainbow roofs. Within these colonades were angels walking and enjoying sweet conversation. They wore long flowing robes of shining white, like those that the women saw the angels clothed with at the sepulchre of the Lord. The companions of Aucune told her "That those, and every other angel, had once been inhabitants of the natural world, and had been transplanted from earth to heaven, to live in everlasting bliss.

Aucune was walking on in silence, contemplating within herself the remarkable things which she had heard and seen, when the faint notes of distant music struck upon her ear. They came

nearer and nearer, and seemed to emanate from every palace and every angel in heaven! It was a hymn of praise to the Creator; and the song was this:—

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
Which was, and is, and is to come!
Thou art worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honour, and power;
For thou hast created all things,
And for thy pleasure, they are, and were created!”

Aucune, almost unconsciously, echoed the loud swelling song; for it was in unison with the chord that was almost awakened in her heart. As soon as the music had ceased, and she had recovered from her surprise, she asked the meaning of such general praise.

“These are glorifications,” said the angels, “they are frequently heard in heaven, and are indications of the strong perceptions of the goodness of the Lord, which the angels sometimes feel. We are made sensible of the benevolence and mercy of God, and in humble thankfulness for all His mercies, we simultaneously burst forth into songs of adoration and gratitude. Heaven then rings with the praises of God.”

They still went on and talked about these wonderful things; and at every step new wonders appeared; at last they arrived at another gate, still more beautiful than either of the others, and made of solid gold. Over the top was written in letters of shining gold, “*The Gate of Love.*”

As soon as Aucune saw it she felt a presentiment that she could not pass, and involuntarily cried, “Not yet!” “Not yet;” was echoed from within the portal. “All is well, but not

yet;" said the voices again. She started, and was turning away, quite dejected at her repeated failures, when the gate was opened, and a company of the loveliest beings ever mortal saw, clad in rich white robes, appeared, and invited her to them. As she was approaching, another company in the gate sang a song of condolence; and all the music she had ever heard was as nothing to it; the words were as follows:

Young immortal, never fear,
 God will give thee aid,
 Fill thy soul with love sincere,
 Until an angel made.

Then through this gate of glory,
 Thou shalt enter in
 To realms of joy so holy,
 Pure and free from sin!

Ancune was delighted with this assurance of yet seeing the Fountain of Beauty; and felt that it would, indeed, be a fountain of joy to her. The angels kissed her, and emboldened by their kindness, she entreated them to say what yet lacked, to fit her to proceed through their land to the Fountain.

"Thou must know, sweet immortal," said one, who seemed to be the personation of love itself, "that ours is the land of love. Here we do every thing from love, and not from a mere sense of duty; for in motives of duty we perceive something of constraint and merit. They, therefore, who are in this state look upon God as a good Master, and themselves as His servants; but we love to regard Him as our Father, and ourselves as His children. Thou must go, then," continued the angel, "to thy world again, and make what has hitherto been a duty, into a delight and a

pleasure. Thou must learn to hate evil, and shun it because it is contrary to God, and thou must do good because it is good, and of God, and the unconstrained choice of thy soul. Thou must neither let fear drive thee from evil, nor the hope of reward, either in the life of the body or in that of the spirit, cause thee to do good; but thou must do it, from the sincere and pure love of virtue itself; so shalt thou, in time, return to us, and pass on to the Fountain of Beauty."

The angels walked down the steps with her, and kissed her, and bid her be of good courage. They stood affectionately gazing after her, and as she went from them, they waved their handkerchiefs in the breeze, by way of encouragement, until they were closed from her view.

Aucune returned to the world almost afraid, that, after all, she would not be able to bathe in the Fountain. "Hope not for the Fountain!" said the same mysterious voice, that had, more than once, taught her what to do in cases of trouble. She felt that it was a warning from heaven, but she was at a loss to understand it; "hope not for the Fountain!" said she to herself, with surprise, and thus she kept pondering upon it, and turning it over for many days.

In great distress of mind she wandered to the shady grotto, and prayed to be enlightened; and while she prayed the heavens opened, and an angel stood before her. "Let not thy soul be disturbed;" said he. Thou must henceforth cease to hope for the Fountain as an end of life: but go to Chacune, and she will instruct thee further." And as he said thus, he suddenly departed out of her sight.

Aucune still felt disturbed, and immediately sought Chacune,

and told her all that had occurred, and implored her to tell her what to do. "Dear sister," said Chacune, "you have followed goodness hitherto, merely to enable you to go to the Fountain of Beauty; you must now reverse matters, and hereafter desire the Fountain, for the purpose of leading you to goodness. What you have, up to this time, made the end, you must now regard as the means, and the means must hereafter be the end. Goodness and virtue should be the end of every endeavour. Truth and many other objects are allowable, as ends of life, up to a certain period of regeneration, but afterwards they must become merely the means to higher and holier ones, which consist of goodness. Learn, then, dear sister, to understand the true ends of human life, and without hoping for blessings, you shall have them. Endeavour to make this change in your mind, and the barrier will become an assistance to the higher object you have in view!"

The sisters walked, in a meditative mood, into their father's garden; one was wrapped in thought concerning the interior wisdom that the angel and her sister had taught her, the other was hoping for the ultimate success of her sister, and meditating on the means she should adopt to aid her. While thus engaged, they were aroused by the approach of their father, who informed them that the "Wise Man" had come, and wished to see them.

"Run and welcome him," said Aucune, "and I will go and gather a little fruit, for he will be fatigued with the journey." And away she bounded, to the orchard, and plucked the best she could find, while Chacune and her father went to entertain the good man.

As soon as Aucune entered, the old gentleman related to them,

a dreadful occurrence. He said, "as I was riding with my servants, not far from the district where we found Aucune in the forest, we met a boy, shivering with cold, and with his face covered with blood. On enquiry we found, that his father and mother, with two sisters, and himself, had mistaken their way; and while in the act of retracing their steps, they were met by a woman, probably the same that led Aucune astray, who told them to follow her, and she would lead them to a place of safety. Little thinking whom they were following, they cheerfully obeyed, and were led on from one place to another until night set in; when a dreadful storm arose; and while in the midst of it, a faint light appeared, which they followed, and found it led to a cave, from which proceeded the noise of revelry and boisterous joy. The man at first refused to enter, but the storm was raging with awful fury; the lightning flashed among the trees, the thunder rolled, the wind roared, and the rain fell in torrents; and looking round upon his shivering and fatigued family, he at last consented. It so happened, that the boy, from weariness, had tarried a little behind; and before he could arrive, a massive gate was drawn across the mouth of the cave, and shut him out, and his parents and sisters in. As soon as the gate was drawn, an infernal shout of delight proceeded from thousands of voices, and the noise and revelry increased! The youth was terrified, and fled from the place, not knowing whither. He wandered about in the forest, and more than once, was struck with the falling trees, that caused the blood to flow down his innocent face, and filled him with terror.

As soon as we found him, and heard his story, we judged that it would be the cave of the furies into which they had been

allured; and we hastened thither to rescue them. On our arrival, we heard moans proceeding from within, which indicated that some one was still living. We sounded our trumpet of truth, that they might know that help was at hand, and then set ourselves vigorously to work; we very soon found a crevice in the rock, through which we all entered as quickly as possible. But the furies heard us, and took alarm; before we had got into the cave, we were obliged to draw our swords and fight the infernal hosts! The conflict was at first severe, but not long; for when manfully assailed the furies are great cowards! We drove them before us, and they at last descended through the earth, and fled by a subterraneous passage, and left us in entire possession of the cave. We were directed to the man and his family by their moans, and, to our joy, we found them still living, but much more than half dead. We broke down the gate, destroyed the cave, and bringing the unfortunate creatures to the light, we examined their wounds, poured in oil and wine, set them on our horses; and now they are at my house doing well!" The two sisters were much pleased with the success of the "Wise Man," and desired to return with him, that they might see the family.

On their arrival, Aucune manifested great anxiety to render some assistance, for she remembered the night of horror which she passed under similar circumstances. She cleansed their wounds, brought them nice gruel, and repaired their tattered garments. And when they were able to walk out, to enjoy the fresh air, she attended them, and often, with much forethought, anticipated the wants that occurred, and provided for them. As often as opportunities offered, she got the distressed family, and

the servants of the "Wise Man," to assemble together, and then charmed them with the relation of some lovely story. These were sweet moments to all. The eyes of Chacune sparkled with delight as the sentences dropped from the lips of her sister; and the poor family were so pleased, that they forgot their troubles.

The little boy and his sister were objects of especial interest to Aucune. She taught the first to cultivate the garden, to train beautiful flowers, and to plant trees. The little fellow proved a willing scholar, for in after life his flowers continued to bloom, his trees to grow, and his fruit to be excellent. The sister was timid, but Aucune's warmth of manner soon produced confidence, and by and by her mind opened, and it was found that her disposition was exceedingly agreeable. Aucune taught her to sew, to prepare food, and to do many other useful things. Every morning she gathered a few flowers, from the "Wise Man's" garden, and took them for a perfume to the sick room of her parents. She carried them in her bosom, and they left an impression there, the odour of which was always sweet, and it lasted for ever; for a child's offering to a distressed parent can never be forgotten.

The poor family remained with the "Wise Man" for some time, during which they improved, in mind and body, and at last they were able to proceed on their journey. It was agreed, however, before they departed, that the whole family should enter the service of the "Wise Man," and live on a beautiful estate, which he possessed, near the city of Contentment. Aucune accompanied them thither, where they lived for many years in great happiness. She left them with their blessing, and returned home with her sister. These are the actions which prepare the soul to

associate with angels; and in due time, Aucune was once more admitted into their presence.

As she approached the magnificent Gate of Gold, a company of glorious beings came out and met her, fell upon her neck, embraced, and kissed her. Their countenances bespoke intense love, and they were evidently filled with joy; which strongly reminded me of the joy, which there is in heaven, over every repentant sinner. The robes of the angels were so beautiful, as almost to surpass, even a faint description. They were white as the purest light, and shone as if some brilliant flame burned within them. They were all bound together by a girdle of rich purple velvet. So perfectly did the robes fit their bodies, that there was not a single fold out of its place. Around their heads were wreaths of delicate fragrant flowers, which never lost their odours. Here and there a ruby sent forth its beautiful light; and behind each ear, every one had an olive leaf.

As Aucune entered, every angel manifested the utmost delight, and welcomed her as a sister; and a choir of voices from within, raised their harmonious notes, and sung,

Enter, enter, young immortal,
Through celestial's golden portal;
Welcome to our land of love,
Welcome to the realms above!
Sweetly shall the Fountain flow,
On thee rich blessings to bestow;
Beauty, goodness, joy and peace,
Shall within thy soul increase!

Sister angel, pass on, pass on!

She was immediately clad with similar robes; and one majestic

being, who seemed to be the prince of the company, came to her, and placed behind her ear an olive leaf, and said, "this is the badge of our heaven, and by it we acknowledge you as our sister; come now to the Immortal Fountain; for the barriers are all passed: peace and tranquillity shall henceforth be your companions, joy and gladness shall for ever attend you, and we will be your protecting friends."

They then departed; and it is impossible to describe the beauty of the flowers, the sweetness of their odours, the glory of the light, the purity of the atmosphere, and the happiness of that heaven; for to mortals they are ineffable! There was one object, however, the most wonderful and glorious of any she had yet seen, it was God clothed, as it were, with the sun! and from whom proceeded light, which illuminated all heaven with its glory;* and on the appearance of his Divine Majesty, the angels prostrated themselves in humble adoration.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the objects they saw. In one district there was a most magnificent garden, through which they had to pass. In the midst of it was the Tree of Life, beneath whose lofty spreading shade, little children found protection and pleasure. Trees were planted in a spiral circular form; and between each circle there was a pathway; so that every walk, even those at the circumference, tended towards the centre, where the Tree of Life was. The trees bore fine flavored fruit, and were entwined about with young vines. There was every variety amongst the trees. The most excellent of all were luxuriant in the choicest fruits, and were called "Paradisical trees," because none such ever grew in the world of nature.

* Psalm civ. 2. Rev. xix. 17; xxii. 5.

These were succeeded in order by olive-trees, and these by vines, and these again by sweet-scented shrubs, and last of all came the trees which afford timber. Here and there were seats formed of young shoots which were entwined in each other, and just above them hung delicious fruit, which at once enriched and adorned them. At proper distances, passages led from these perpetual circular walks, into beautiful flower gardens and delightful shrubberies, laid out in areas and beds.

Aucune was delighted with these things, which when the angels saw, they said, "Behold heaven in form! Every thing here, is a type or symbol of heavenly principles and celestial blessings!"

In a little time, the murmuring of the waters were heard, and a thrill of delight passed through the soul of Aucune. She ascended the beautiful Mount of Innocence, on which it stood, and there the waters lay before her in the form of a lake, from the centre of which they rose high into the air, and fell gently upon the surface. Angels were bathing their beautiful forms. Aucune ran and looking, saw the face of one beaming with joy and beauty, which seemed to be gazing at her from within the water!

As she continued to admire this lovely countenance, her sister Chacune came joyfully up, and kissed her, and in tones of exultation and pleasure, said, "O, my beloved Aucune! long, long have I wished to behold you standing on the brink of these blessed waters, that I might show you how sweet and beautiful you are! "Look there," said she, pointing to the face in the water, "look there, and behold the beauty of your own countenance!"

Aucune looked, and was astonished to find that it was her own face, the countenance of her own purified soul, so much more beautiful than that of her body, that she did not recognize it! "But I have not yet bathed!" said she with surprise.

"True, you have not yet bathed in this type of the Holy Water," said Chacune, "but the true water of purifying truth, from the River of Life, has been flowing in your soul, since the time you first set out to reach the Fountain! Remember how your heart was once filled with the spiritual filth of sin, and then think of the holy commands and wise instruction, that were given you by angels to make you pure, and fit you for heaven: these were the waters of the true Fountain of Beauty!"

"O Chacune, Chacune," said Aucune, "I understand it all!" and falling upon her neck, the two sisters embraced each other with the ardency of angelic love; and then fell upon their knees, and with eyes and hands uplifted, they uttered in unison a holy and solemn prayer, which I heard as if ascending to the throne of the Majesty on High, blessing and praising God for all His mercies, and His wonderful works to the children of men! After this I awoke.

