

Heaven.

Some picture heaven a city
With many streets of gold,
With pearly gates, with mansions
Whose beauties ne'er were told,
Some picture it a forest
Where many flowers blow,
Where bright-winged birds are singing,
With music soft and low.

Some picture heaven a resting-place,
Where with some well-loved friend
They hold a sweet communion,
While heart with heart doth blend.
Some picture it a joyful place,
Where music e'er is heard,
Where white-robed angels sweetly sing,
Till every pulse is stirred.

I know not, dare not picture
What heaven is to be;
But this I know, it perfect is,
Prepared for you and me;
And Christ is there, a radiant light,
Our friend, companion, lover;
And we fearer content will be,
Around that light to hover.

—M. Star.

Out of Sight.

Margaret Carter, her cheeks flushed, her eyes sparkling, dragged her aunt Jane from room to room to show her new house and her wedding presents. She laughed and almost danced as she walked, in sheer delight.

"I have everything that heart could wish for, Aunt! Nobody could find a fault with John—character, or appearance, or position. We have a good income, and this house is perfect. I start fair. I am going to be a model house-keeper. I have divided off the days. So much time for the house, so much for study, for social duties, for church work. I mean to excel in every walk in life. You see!" with a keen flash of the eye which hinted that her jest was secretly earnest.

They sauntered through every apartment.

"But where," asked Miss Tracy, "are Mr. Carter's musical instruments? I heard he had a most interesting collection."

"Oh! a lot of old Chinese drums and Arabic fides. Dingy, ugly things! He could not play upon them. I put them in the garret. I could not have the house cluttered up with them. It was just a fad of John's."

"Love me, love my fad," said her aunt, laughing.

"My love does not show itself about such abject trifles," said the bride, too vexed to be grammatical. "My husband, thank God, knows how true and deep it is! If ever great trials come into our life it will fail him. I can go down with him into the depths."

Miss Tracy was touched by the ardent light in the young wife's eyes. The tears came to her own.

"Still, my dear," she said, "I should bring out his battered drums."

Mrs. Carter hastened to change the subject. "Now here is Uncle Tom's gift. A cashmere shawl. Yes, it is wonderful. It was made for a Rane. It makes me feel as if I were a queen to own it. I am the Rane, secretly, unbeknown to you all."

The old lady fingered the exquisite web with delight. "Why don't you wear it, Margaret?" she exclaimed. "Why don't you keep it out in sight! It gives one such genuine pleasure to look at these colors."

"No," said Mrs. Carter, folding it up and replacing it in the box; "one must not make precious things common. Cashmere shawls or—love," she added significantly, and a smile of calm superiority usual to woman who are young enough to be sure that they are infallible.

Miss Tracy's visit to the newly-married pair lasted but a couple of days. She was a quiet middle-aged woman, who supported herself by teaching. Margaret who had been a motherless girl, loved her better than all the wealthy aunts and cousins who had petted and indulged her since childhood.

"Aunt Jane," she told her husband, "had nothing to give me; but I drop my anchor on her! She loves me as my mother would have done!"

In spite of this tender affection, however, Miss Tracy bravely ventured to advise her very intelligent and resolute niece marriage, and now she hesitated long before she hinted a warning. But she was not blind.

"I don't think," she said, gently one night when Margaret took her to her room, "that John cares for classical 'sic'."

"He ought to care," said his wife, sharply. "I educate him up to it." "He is very fond of ballads. Why would you not sing them for him, dear?"

"Milk for babies," laughed Margaret. "I will not humiliate him in such ridiculous tastes."

Miss Tracy hesitated. "It seems to me, Margaret, that you do not humiliate him in any taste whether it be for ballads, or hot cakes, or an idle walk alone with you."

"Affection does not show itself in indulging childish fancies. I will show John and others better ways."

"That is—your ways." "If you like to have it so, yes. They are not childish."

The next morning Miss Tracy found her niece envied by a formal array of Greek Testaments, lexicons, and concordances. "This is my hour for Bible study, she exclaimed. 'I have no family worship. It is so apt to become a merely perfunctory form. I never intend religion to become a hackneyed platitude from too common use in my house.' She spoke, as she often did, as if reciting phrases which she had conned in private.

"But," hesitated the older woman, going back perhaps to some dream of her own of that marriage which never came to her, "forgive me, dear child, but I suppose you and John read a chapter every day and pray together?"

The young wife flushed. "John is not a member of any church," she said coldly. "I do not intend to thrust my faith upon him at regular intervals like his food and clothes. Some time—if a great trouble or any crisis in life should come to us—I will bring the matter before him."

"But—don't you think that men really at heart care more for the question of religion than for any other? Don't you think, too, that they look upon woman as a kind of born missionaries? No doubt John expects you to speak of this thing, and is surprised that you do not do it."

"I shall do it at a fitting season," said Mrs. Carter, in a tone which effectually closed the subject.

After Miss Tracy had gone Margaret seriously considered this matter. She fancied that John sometimes looked wistfully at the Bible, which lay on the little table near her bed. Would he like to read and kneel with her to pray?

Margaret Carter loved her husband and loved her God; but her love, like her Indian shawl, was hidden carefully away, to be produced only on great emergencies. Her religion was of a kind which takes keen delight in a great theologic argument. She thought, indeed, of the Almighty as an immortal dogma. It was not the religion which would find vent in snatches of fervent hymns, or the continual upward glancing of an eye to a dear Father who had never failed to hear her.

Her lofty, righteous theory about wifely duty and love would have struck terror into a host of Western divorcees. But as for running to meet John when he came in, or bothering the cook about the seasoning of his favorite dishes, or listening to his mild jokes, she knew her place and his place in creation quite too well for any such folly. And, undoubtedly, John's oft repeated jokes were tiresome, and he was undeniable fussy about his food, and he had a childish loving temperament that made him happy when he was carressed and humored, all of which traits palled upon Margaret.

Nothing could have been more simple or natural, when they were first married, than for her to have put her Bible in his hands, asking him to read; or for her to have drawn him down with her as she knelt to pray. He would have been glad to kneel and find again the Father that he used to know when he was a child; for, big whiskered fellow that he was, he was but a boy, and but a lonely boy, at heart.

But as weeks passed into months, and months into years, it seemed impossible for her to do this. She put the thing at last out of her thoughts. Life was long before them. If John should be ill, or lose all his money, or any supreme moment like that should arrive, she would bring her faith before him with victorious effect. She would show him then how a Christian could endure and triumph. But the years jogged on prosperous and dull; no supreme moment came.

As time passed there came between them a silence, not of words but of thoughts and feelings. He probably did not believe in a love which was not demonstrative. She had an older and more masculine nature than his. People who knew John well noticed a gradual change in him. He had been a man full of gentle enthusiasms, a man who gave and exacted much kindness and affection. He had been, perhaps, jealous and unreasonable in this action; but he now grew slowly indifferent, cold and cynical to his friends. There was a wistful look in his eyes, like that of a man who has lost something out of life which he shall never find.

Occasionally he occupied a seat in the pew which Mrs. Carter owned in the church in which she was an energetic worker, and sometime, meeting the minister afterwards, he disputed his arguments good humoredly. "A most interesting man!" the rector said to his wife one day. Full of keen perceptions and sensibilities! I wish we could draw him into the church."

"Why do you not bring the subject home to him?" "I do, in the pulpit, as directly as I can. He is a man who would re-

quire the tenderest touch. If his wife has been laboring in vain all these years, what can I do?"

So it happened, by these easy, natural chances, that when John Carter last winter fell ill and came down to the edge of that outer darkness which lies so near to us all, nobody had put into his hands the lamp which would have lighted his way.

Mrs. Carter nursed him skilfully. It was not in intelligence nor energy that she failed. But the time came when the consulting physician, with the usual grave, gentle formula, suggested that "if there were any matters of moment which Mr. Carter should attend to? His will, probably?"

"That is done—it is not that!" gasped Margaret. "But I must speak to him. And he does not hear. He lies there in that hopeless stupor."

"It is a phase of the disease, madam, an alarming phase to be candid."

"I suppose," said the family doctor, "it is his religious condition that she is thinking of. To let to open up that subject to poor Carter. His brain stopped work an hour ago."

Miss Tracy who had helped to nurse John, met Margaret in the hall.

"What is it? What have they told you?" she cried, seeing her face.

"He is dying. Don't touch me. I am not going to faint. I understand."

She had never been more keenly awake or alive. The whole future yawned before her—empty.

"I see it all now," she said, turning her ghastly face to the door of his chamber. "I see what a lonely life he has had. He never knew how I loved him. There was never any love for me to show it. It wasn't my fault that the chance did not come."

The two women went to the dying man and were left alone with him. He was sunk in a heavy stupor.

"He is going," said Margaret; and what has he to take with him yonder? I have given him nothing."

He roused at last a little and looked at her with dulled eyes.

"It is I, John, I, Margaret. You know that I loved you? I have not shown you as I ought. Oh! for God's sake say that you know!"

His eyes closed drowsily.

"Don't reproach yourself, my dear," he said, in the gentle, hopeless tones she knew so well.

"Shall I pray with you? Oh, John, think of the Saviour, think of—"

But he did not hear her. He muttered something about sleeping awhile, and turned away. He never awakened from the sleep.

Mrs. Carter, when she had laid her husband in the earth, went abroad to forget her old life or to begin a new one. Miss Tracy was left in charge of her home. One day she opened the box in which lay the priceless Indian web; it had been hidden out of sight in the damp so long that the moth and dampness had done their work. Nothing was left but a mass of rags and dust.

The old woman shook her head. "More precious things than this grow worthless if hid away too carefully," she said, with sad significance.—Independent.

Show Your Colors.

REV. C. H. MEAD.

I was riding on the train through the eastern section of North Carolina. Nothing can be flatter than that portion of the country, unless it be the religious experience of some people. The rain was pouring down fast, and for a person so inclined, not a better day and place for the blues could be found. Looking out of the car windows, brought nothing more interesting to view than pine trees, bony mules, and razorback hogs. Groups of men, white and black, gathered at each station to see the train arrive and depart. Each passenger that entered, brought in more damp, moisture, and blues. Two men at last came in and took the seat in front of me. Shortly after, one of them took a bottle from his pocket, pulled the cork, and handed the bottle to his companion. He took a drink, and the smell of liquor filled the car. Then the first one took a drink, and back and forth the bottle passed, until at last it was empty and they were full. Then one of them commenced swearing, and such blasphemy I never heard in all my life. It made the very air blue—woman shrank back, while the heads of men were uplifted to see where the stream of profanity came from. It went on for some time, until I began talking to myself. I always did like to talk to a sensible man.

"Henry, that man belongs to the devil." "There is no doubt about that," I replied. "He is not ashamed of it." "Not a bit ashamed."

"Who do you belong to?"

"I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Are you glad or sorry?" "I am glad—very glad."

"Who in the car knows that man belongs to the devil?"

"Everybody knows that, for he has not kept it a secret."

"Who in the car knows you belong to the Lord Jesus?"

"Why, no one knows it, for you see I am a stranger around here."

"Are you willing they should know who you belong to?"

"Yes; I am willing."

"Very well, will you let them know it?"

"I thought a moment and then said, 'By the help of my Master, I will.'"

Then straightening up and taking a good breath, I began singing in a voice that could be heard by all in the car:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

Before I had finished the first verse and chorus, the passengers had crowded down around me, and the blasphemer had turned round and looked at me with a face resembling a thunder cloud. As I finished the chorus, he said:

"What are you doing?" "I am singing," I replied.

"Well," said he, "any fool can understand that."

"I am glad you understand it."

"What are you singing?" "I am singing the religion of the Lord Jesus."

"Well, you quit."

"Quit what?" "Quit singing your religion on the cars."

"I guess not," I replied, "I don't belong to the Quit family; my name is Mead. For the last half hour you have been standing by your master; now for the next half hour I am going to stand up for my master."

"Who is my master?" "The devil is your master—while Christ is mine. I am as proud of my master as you are of yours. Now I am going to have my turn, if the passengers don't object."

A chorus of voices cried out: "Sing on stranger, we like that."

I sung on, and as the next verse was finished, the blasphemer turned his face away, and I saw nothing of him after that but the back of his head, and that was the handsomest part of him. He left the train soon after, and I am glad to say I've never seen him since. Song after song followed, and I soon had other voices to help me. When the song service ended, an old man came to me, put out his hand, and said, "Sir, I owe you thanks and a confession."

"Thanks for what?" "Thanks for rebuking that blasphemer."

"Don't thank me for that, but give thanks to my master. I try to stand up for him wherever I am. What about the confession?"

"I am in my eighty-third year. I have been a preacher of the Gospel for over sixty years. When I heard that man swearing so, I wanted to rebuke him. I rose from my seat two or three times, to do so, but my courage failed I have not much longer to live, but never again will I refuse to show my colors anywhere."

"An occasional absence from church or the prayer-meeting, a little shortening of private devotions, a trifle more time for social and a trifle less for religious duties, will do me no harm," reflected a youthful Christian. But in a few months she mourned,

"Where is the blessedness I knew?"

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