

Miscellaneous.

THE DREAM OF HEAVEN:

OR, THE SISTER'S TALE.—A FACT, AND NOT A FICTION.

In A. D. 1814, the late Mr. and Mrs. F—, who were lost in August, 1831, on board the *Rothsay Castle* steampacket, were acquainted with three sisters, residing in London, and who belonged to the highest class of society. Two of the sisters were decidedly pious, but the third was volatile and just the contrary. They were all elderly, which rendered that gaiety of the third the less becoming, and also inclined her the more easily to take offence at any remarks made upon it. She hated the piety of her sisters, and opposed it in a very petty and despicable manner, thought they endeavoured sedulously to accommodate themselves to her, and to render the difference between them as little disagreeable as possible.

One night towards the close of 1814, she had been at an assembly very late, and the next morning at breakfast, was so remarkably different from her usual manner, that the sisters feared she was very unwell, or had met with some misfortune which deeply affected her. Instead of her incessant chat about everything she had seen, and all that had been said and done, she sat sad and silent, and absorbed. The gloom of her brow was a mixture of temper and of distress, and seemed to indicate a fixed and dogged resolution, founded on circumstances disagreeable to her, yet as if she was resolved to pursue her own will, though it should lead her into the utmost distress and trouble, rather than follow the course which she knew to be right, but which would reduce her to submit her own will to the power and control of another. As she ate nothing, her sister asked her if she was unwell? She answered, "No."—"What is the matter?"—"Nothing." They were afraid something had distressed her. She said, "She had no idea of people prying into matters that did not concern them." The whole of the morning was passed alone by her, in her own room, and at dinner time the same conduct recurred as in the morning. She scarcely ate anything, never spoke, except when she answered in an uncivil way, whatever was asked her; and all with an appearance of depression, obstinacy, and melancholy, that spread its influence very painfully over the cheerfulness of her companions. Thus have I heard the wolfish winds howl and mourn, as if they mourned their own work of desolation; and yet they ceased not to blow and to rage, and to howl the more, as the destruction became the more frightful and universal.

She retired to rest late, and when she arose the next morning she scarcely touched her breakfast, and seemed in the same oppressed and uncomfortable state as on the preceding day. One of her affectionate sisters again addressed her. "Anna, you are not well, is it your head that pains you?" She answered, "I am well and nothing pains me."—"Then you have something on your mind, and will you not tell us? Do we not love you? Have we not the same earthly interests with you, and can we seek any good but yours, in an anxious wish to share your sorrows?"—"O, you have superstition enough of your own, without more being added, I shall not tell you what ails me, so you have no occasion to press any farther your curiosity. I dare say you would be delighted to know it, for you would think it some spiritual triumph, but I laugh at these things; I am not quite old enough yet to become the victim of dreams and visions."—"Anna, we do not believe in dreams and visions."—She answered sharply, "No; and I do not mean that you should." The sisters looked at each other, and relapsed into silence. This second day passed as the first. Anna was gloomy and moody, and her sisters, both from pity and anxiety, were unhappy for her sake.

The third morning she again began the day as one that loathed the light, who had no rest in being, and to whom the lapse of time and the prospect of eternity, brought neither peace nor hope. As her sisters looked at her, one of them suddenly said, "Anna what was your dream?" She started and laughed wildly. "Ah, ah, what was it indeed, you would give the world to know, but I will not tell you. I thought you did not believe in dreams and visions." The sister replied—"No more do we in all; you know some are occasioned by the occurrences of the day; and the memory of them usually passes away the

moment we are fairly engaged in our usual occupations.

But there are, no doubt, dreams which are as much sent from God as are our afflictions, or any other warning. There is a verse in the Bible where it mentions God as 'speaking to a man in a dream in the vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men.' She laughed again and said, "You have verses in the Bible for every thing that suits your purposes, but I do not choose to be warned by you in such a way; and I have no doubt that I shall get it out of my head in a day or two."—"Anna, we do beseech you to tell us; if you have really had a dream from heaven, you surely would not wish to forget it, and if not we will help you to laugh it off." She answered in a sulky mood, "Well, if you must know it you must."—"No doubt it was very extraordinary."—"I should have thought it the effect of the ball, but that I never anywhere saw any thing resembling it, and you must not suppose that you understand what I am going to say; for you never saw, nor can imagine, any thing like it."

THE DREAM.

I thought that I was walking in the wide street of a great city; many people were walking there beside myself, but there was something in their air that immediately struck me; they seemed thoughtful, yet cheerful, neither were they occupied with mirth or gaiety, but their countenances manifested such peace and purity as were never stamped upon the mortal brow. The light of the city was also strange; it was not the sun, for there was nothing to dazzle; it was not the moon, for all was clear as noon day; it seemed an atmosphere of heat; calm, lovely, and changeless. As I looked at the buildings, they all seemed like palaces, but not like those of earth. The pavement that I walked on, and the houses that I saw, were alike of gold, bright and shining, and as clear as glass; the large and glittering windows seemed like divided rainbows, and were made to receive and to emit nothing but the light of gladness, it was indeed, a place where hope might live, where love might dwell. I could not help crying as I went along. Surely these are the habitations of righteousness, and truth, and peace, all was beauty, bright and perfect, and I could not tell what was wanting to make me wish for eternity in such a place, and yet its very purity oppressed me. I saw nothing congenial, though love and kindness met me in every face of that happy throng. I felt nothing responsive, and walked on, all alone, in the midst of the crowd oppressed and sad. I saw that all went one way, and I followed, wandering at the reason, and at length I saw them all cross over to one building much larger and finer than the rest. I saw them ascend its massive steps and enter beneath its ample porches, I felt no desire to go in with them, but as far as the steps I approached from curiosity; I saw persons enter who were dressed in every varied colour, and in all the costumes of all nations, but as they disappeared within the porch, and passed on, I saw them cross the hall all in white. O! that I could describe to you that hall. It was not crystal—it was not marble—it was not gold, but it was as the sun without his dazzling rays, and within was a staircase mounting upward, all of light, and I saw it touched by the moving feet and by the white spotless garments of those who ascended it; it was indeed passing fair, but it made me shudder and turn away; and as I turned I saw one on the lower step looking at me with an interest so intense, and a manner so anxious, that I stopped to hear what he had to say; he spoke like liquid music and asked me, "Why do you turn away? Is there a place elsewhere? Is there pleasure in the walls of darkness?" I stood in silence; he pressed me to enter, but I neither answered nor moved. Suddenly he disappeared and another took his place with the same look and the same manner; I wished to avoid him, but I stood riveted to the spot. "Art thou come so far," he said, "and wilt thou lose thy labour? put off thy own garments, and take the white livery." Here he continued to press me, until I got weary and angry, and said, "I will not enter I do not like your livery, and I am oppressed with your whiteness;" he sighed and was gone. Many passers-by looked at me with mingled pity and kindness, and pressed me to follow with them and offered me a hand up the steps, but I rejected them all, and stood melancholy and disturbed. At length, one young bright messenger, stationed on the steps, came up to me and entreated me to enter, with all that kindness that I could not resist. "Do not

linger," said he, "for why shouldst thou weary thyself for nought. Enter here and taste happiness. Do not all go in, and are any rejected? Do not all tribes and all colours pass into that hall, and are they not washed, and clothed, and comforted?"

He gave me his hand, and I entered the hall along with him; here I was sprinkled with pure water, and a garment of pure white was put upon my shoulders, and I knew not how, but I mounted the bright stairs by the side of my happy guide. O what a light burst upon my sight when I had reached the summit! But mortal words cannot describe it, nor can mortal fancy in any way conceive it:—Where are the living sapphires? Where are the glittering stars that are like the bright radii in which I stood? Where are the forms of love or the looks of love that breathed in the numerous company that moved around me? I sunk down overpowered and wretched: I crept into a corner and tried to hide myself, for I saw and felt I had nothing in unison with the blessed existence of such a place. They moved in a dance to the music, to the songs that never fell upon a mortal ear: my guide joined in rapture, and I was left alone. I saw the tall forms, all fair, all bright, in their own ineffable felicity, their songs and looks of gratitude forming the countenances and the differences of each. At length I saw one taller than the rest, and in every way far more fair, far more dignified, more awfully surpassingly fair, what yet surpasses thought and to him each eye was turned, and in his face, each face was brightened; the songs and the dance were in his honor, and all seemed to derive from him their life and joy. I gazed in trembling and speechless amazement, one left the company and came to where I stood and said,—"Why standest thou so still, wilt thou not join the dance?" I felt anger in my heart, and answered with sharpness,—"I will not join in your song, for I know not the tune, and I cannot join in the dance, for I know not the measure;" he sighed and with a look of most humiliating pity he resumed his place. About a minute after, another came, addressed me as he had done, and with the same temper, I answered him in the same way; he looked as if he could have resigned his own dazzling glory to have changed me; if heaven can know anguish, he seemed to feel it; but he left me, and returned to his place. What could it be that could put such a temper in my heart? At length, the Lord of that glorious company, of those living, breathing glittering forms of life, and light, and beauty; of these sounds of harmony, and these songs of triumph; he saw me, and came up to speak to me, I thrilled in every part with awe; I felt my blood chill and my flesh tremble, and yet my heart grew harder, and my voice grew bolder.—He spoke and deep-toned music issued from his lips: "Why sittest thou so still, and all around thee are so glad? Come join in the dance, for I have triumphed; come join in the song for my people reign." Love unspeakable he seemed to beam upon me, as though it would have melted a heart of stone; I felt it, but melted not; gazed an instant, and I said, "I will not join the song, for I know not the tune, and I will not join the dance, for I know not the measure." Creation would have fled at the change of his countenance, his glance was lightning, and in a voice louder than ten thousand thunders, he said to me. "Then what dost thou here?" The floor beneath me opened, and I sunk into flames and torment; and with the dreadful fright I awoke.

There was a momentary silence, for the sisters were shocked and surprised at the dream, and they neither of them thought the substance of it, nor the deep impression it had made, to be the effects of any natural cause on Anna's volatile mind. "Anna," they said, "we cannot help you to forget such a dream as this; we surely believe it is from God, and it may be greatly blessed to your soul if you seek it to be so. Your description of the holy city may be an impression from the word of God, for much the same account is described in the Revelation: 'The city has no need of the sun, nor the moon, for the temple of God is there, and the Lamb is the light thereof.' All who enter must put off their own garments and their own righteousness, and must be clothed in linen clean and white, even the righteousness of the saints, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Those who walk in the heavenly temple are they who have come through great tribulation and have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and

they cease not day and night praising God,' and they sing a new song such as no man knoweth but they who are redeemed—it is the song of Moses and the Lamb, and wisdom waits daily upon the steps to call the sons of men into the temple; and the people of God aim to persuade them to tread in their steps; and the ministers of Christ are appointed to watch for souls, and in every way and by every means if possible to save some. O! Anna, you know something of the way, do give up your own will and listen to the fearful warning; join us, and learn the steps which lead to heaven, and how to sing the songs of Zion." Anna's brow again darkened, and she answered, "I do not want you to preach to me—I SHALL DO AS I PLEASE."

She continued in this melancholy state to the end of the week, and was found in her room—A CORPSE.

No one knew the cause of her death. She died without disease of body—she died without a change of soul.

The Honest Boy, or the Shilling and the Sovereign.

Some time ago, the Duke of Buccleugh, in one of his walks, purchased a cow from a person in the neighborhood of Dalkeith, and left orders to send it to his palace the following morning; according to agreement, the cow was sent, and the Duke happened to be in dishabille, and walking in the avenue espied a little fellow ineffectually attempting to drive the animal forward to its destination. The boy not knowing the Duke, bawled out to him:

"Flim, come here an' gie's a han' wi' this beast."

The Duke saw the mistake, and determined on having a joke with the little fellow; pretending, therefore, not to understand him, the Duke walked on slowly, the boy still craving his assistance; at last he cried out, in a tone of apparent distress,

"Come here, mun, an' help us, an' as sure as anything I'll gie you half I get!"

This last solicitation had the desired effect. The Duke went and lent a helping hand.

"And now," said the Duke, as they trudged along, "how much do you think ye'll get for this job?"

"Oh, I dinna ken," said the boy, "but I'm sure o' something, for the folk up at the house are good to a' bodies."

As they approached the house, the Duke darted from the boy, and entered by a different way. He called a servant and put a sovereign into his hand, saying, "Give that to the boy who has brought the cow." The Duke returned to the avenue, and was soon rejoined by the boy.

"Well, how much did you get?" said the Duke.

A shilling," said the boy, "an' there's the half o' it 'ye."

"But you surely got more than a shilling," said the Duke.

"No," said the boy, with the utmost earnestness, "as sure's death that's a' I got—an' d'ye not think it's a plenty?"

"I do not," said the Duke; "there must be some mistake, and as I am acquainted with the Duke, if you return, I think I'll get you more."

The boy consented—back they went; the Duke rang the bell, and ordered all the servants to be assembled.

"Now," said the Duke to the boy, "point me out the person that gave you the shilling."

"It was that chap with the apron," pointing to the butler.

The delinquent confessed, fell on his knees, and attempted an apology; but the Duke interrupted him, indignantly ordered him to give the boy the sovereign, and quit his service instantly.

"You have lost," said the Duke, "your money, your situation, and your character, by your covetousness; learn henceforth, that honesty is the best policy."

The boy by this time, recognized his assistant, in the person of the Duke, and the Duke was so delighted with the sterling worth and honesty of the boy, that he ordered him to be sent to school, kept there and provided for at his own expense.

RELIGION IN RUSSIA.—There are in Russia nearly 9 million dissenters from the Greek Church, including 2,847,004 Roman Catholics, 1,776,389 Protestants, and 3,320,810 Mahomedans.