

cannot err; evil and wrong may pass in the eyes of man undetected, but they go not unobserved. Self-sacrifice and true kindness may not bring gratitude, but oblivion shall not hide them.

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## MEDITATION.

BY "AVON."

SHE trips to us when we, dismayed by "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," overawed by a consciousness of our own insignificance, crushed by failure of darling schemes, seek sanctuary from self.

She, a pure sweet maid, withdraws from our eyes the veil which everyday life places over us, and in a moment the soul, relieved of its weight of care, revels in the pure atmosphere of Nature.

We throw ourselves on the green sward, and pass before us the troubles that rankle in our breasts, the troubles that, like the canker worm, gnaw at our peace of mind and bring with them grim apprehension and carking care. And by the kindly influence of Nature, all trouble is swept away; in her pure air the diseased mind is restored to its former balance, and a sense of comfort and rest slowly steals o'er us.

In the cleansed mind does Meditation now hold sway, and we appreciate, in all too small a measure, the mystery of Nature's silent workings. Springtime it is, and the glorious Sun, now that the *regime* of "the envious clouds" is drawing to a close, beams down his genial warmth, and at his call myriads of things, great and small, leap to life. The gaily-painted flies, revelling in their new-found liberty, dash off to enjoy the pleasures of the earth, as if aware that to them is appropriate the heathen proverb, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The ant and the bee ply their busy trades—putting by stores for a thankless generation.

Dancing in the breeze, the raw leaves enliven the landscape, and a constant falling in silence under each great giant, tells us

that, like man, the old leaves have done their work, and are being slowly succeeded by a new generation. On the horizon, like a gloomy foeman, lurks the storm-cloud, provided by Nature to soften the influence of his too indulgent relation. Beneath us, the sea breaks its gentle swell upon the shore, almost mournfully, as though in remorse for its innumerable dark deeds. The wind murmurs slowly through the trees, diffusing o'er all a grateful coolness to temper the effects of the all-powerful sun, a wind which, to the listening ear, tells the tale of its birth in some far-off clime.

But look when the Supreme Being withdraws his control over the elements, or bids them carry out His stern command! How do the scorching beams strike down on an erring world! Or the storm cloud lighten! Or the furious storm whip the woods, and roar o'er the whole earth! Beneath forces such as these, weak man bows his head in submission, a submission that is not lasting.

Here a shaggy hill, there a grassy plain, awaiting the craft of man to make it yield up its fruits. The tall trees bend haughtily under the sighing wind.

Down in a quiet glade, a bell tinkles dreamily; closer at hand the song of birds and the hum of insects strike on the ear, yet we enjoy blissful rest amid these indications of presence.

What is there in one that thrills with apprehension at the approach of fellowman? A single footstep rouses us from our reverie. We feel prepared rather for a foe than for a friend. The feelings we bear towards the other creatures of the Supreme Being are absent in our thoughts towards man, man whom we should treat with confidence rather than suspicion. And so, on the appearance of a human being, we spring to our feet more in an attitude of alarm than confidence, and simultaneously the presence of Sun, of Cloud, of Wind fades away from our mind. It may be the fear that like bears towards like; it may be that we, too, feel in our inmost soul that in all the world and among all creation, "Only man is vile."