

with, the daisy is not a single flower, but many; it belongs to the composite flowers—that is, its head, or blossom, is composed of numerous florets inclosed in one green envelope, or, as it is called, *involucre*, which resembles the calyx or green cup of single flowers, but yet is not a true calyx. The double flowers of cultivation, such as the rose, are not compound flowers like the daisy; they are not masses of florets, but of leaves, or, as we call them, petals, and their green cup is a true calyx. Look at the daisy blossom attentively, and you will see in the centre an assemblage of perhaps as many as a hundred very small and elegantly-shaped yellow cups, surrounded by a border of white spreading flower leaves, or petals. Now, everyone of these florets, both yellow and white, is a distinct flower of itself, not certainly very large, or growing on a long stem, like most other flowers, but still a distinct flower. And there is a most wise reason for this arrangement of cups in the centre, guarded by a ring of flat flowers. The more you study the hidden things of flowers, the more you will learn of the great and loving design that orders all. The yellow cups are shaped like bells, and are quite open, so that without some means to prevent such an occurrence, every shower of rain would fill them with water. Now, most bell-shaped flowers, as the bluebell, and different kinds of campanula, hang down their heads, and therefore, however much it may rain, they are kept as dry as if they were sheltered by a thatched roof; but the cups of the daisy are turned upwards, and, as they cannot shelter themselves, require to be protected by some other means, and here the fringe of white florets lends its aid. They are so constituted that when either rain or dew is about to fall, they slowly rise from their horizontal position and close over the yellow flowers, forming for them a covering like a tent. Should the weather be still they remain in their erect position, and the rain that falls runs down the outside of the white guardians; but if it blows hard they yield to the wind and present the base of the flower to the driving rain. In either case the yellow flowers are equally protected from the wet. If you search a meadow on a rainy day, or in the evening after sunset, you will not find a daisy open. Here and there you may perhaps discover one which seems to depart from this rule, but you will be sure to find, on examination, that all the central flowers are either dead or withering, and consequently stand in no need of protection.

But do we tell you this only because it is one of Nature's endless little bits of interest, which so many never open their eyes to? Partly that, but still more because it is one of Nature's beautiful lessons that we must open the eyes of our soul also.

It is Schiller who says, "If thou wouldst attain to thy highest, go look upon a flower; what that does wilfully, that do thou willingly." "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification." Let us listen to this little silent flower teacher; perhaps the Master of us all may have sent her with a message.

First of all, we think of the composite flowers, with their individual florets, each complete in itself, each leading its own life, and yet each members one of another, suffering with each other, helping each other, making one perfect whole. The composite human flower is the family, the "involucre" that holds all together is the home. In the centre of the daisy are the little golden cups, upturned to heaven, open-mouthed to receive either good or ill. In the central spot of home are our little ones, with innocent faces, that are not ashamed or afraid to be ever looking up, and these little ones are too young and helpless to shelter themselves. Around the

golden cup in the daisy blossom is the white living palisade, that slowly rises from its horizontal position and forms a tent over the little ones to protect them when danger threatens. In the home is the band of elder brothers and elder sisters, who stand around their little ones to guard them from harm, and take care that nothing but the rays of the sun of God's love shall fall upon them.

Think of this, brothers and sisters! Think of the little golden cups, that come empty from the hand of God, and that He gives you to watch and guard. Will they be still golden and pure when the Beloved goes down into His garden to gather lilies; or will they be choked and stained, because the watchers He appointed have forgotten or neglected the work He gave them to do; or, worse than all, have helped to defile those little ones themselves? The daisy guards are white—pure white. Be ye pure white, too; pure in example, pure in word, pure in kindly, tender deeds, and *always* be one! A single white petal could do nothing, but "union is strength." Brothers and sisters, learn to bear and forbear, to take the rubs and worries of daily life and of each other gently, so that ye be never hindered from forming the band that shall guard your little ones from all that may do them hurt.

## DOROTHEA'S DREAM.

"They also serve who only stand and wait."—

*Milton.*

"The prayers of the saints, ascending up before God."—*Rev. viii. 4.*

"The patience of the saints."—*Rev. xiv. 12.*

DOROTHEA and Alethea were twin sisters who lived together in the populous little town of Hamborough.

Alethea's health was very delicate, the result of a fall in infancy; but few women were stronger or more vigorous than Dorothea.

Alethea lay on her sofa from day to day—whether the glory of autumn lay upon forest and field, or the grey of winter shrouded the landscape in mysterious sadness, or the gladness of spring woke all things to new life, or the summer sunshine glowed on the perfect loveliness of Nature.

Yes! from day to day, without change from the monotony, almost without respite from the pain. She bore it all, for the most part, bravely; but there were times when the sense of what she called her uselessness swept like an avalanche over her soul, crushing her to the very earth, and stilling every voice within but that of a bitter murmuring at the hardness of her lot.

To this "uselessness" the life of her sister Dorothea offered a striking contrast.

She (Dorothea) led indeed a life of literally restless activity. No work of love or mercy in the parish but had her for one of its most energetic labourers; no scheme of philanthropy or social improvement but had her for one of its most enthusiastic promoters. Early and late she toiled, teaching in the schools, visiting the poor, ministering to the sick. If the clergy wanted a woman's help in their work it was to Dorothea they turned; if trouble fell unexpectedly in some cottage home, it was to Dorothea that the inmates hastened for assistance and sympathy.

No wonder that the contrast between the lives of the two sisters often painfully affected the invalid; the one all zeal and loving labour, the other too weak and pain-stricken to take the smallest share in the never-ending toil.

The enemy of souls is, we know, never idle; the "roaring lion" never relaxes in his search for "whom he may devour;" and just as he whispered into the ear of Alethea

that she was but a useless toy, a barren fig-tree cumbering the ground, that it would be better that she should curse God and die; so he whispered to Dorothea that she might well rejoice in her work, might will be proud of it and trust in it.

It is ever so. The old dragon is ever on the watch, the enemy penetrates into every wheat-field to sow tares.

And, indeed, Dorothea began to listen to his whispers, began to be very pleasantly conscious of the estimation in which she was held, and to reflect at times that certainly no one she knew was as indefatigable as she was.

But if Satan is always on the alert, we know of One who in His watch and ward of His redeemed, slumbers not nor sleeps. "And I myself caring for your souls," He has Himself assured us; and whilst Dorothea was lending a too willing ear to the suggestions of the evil one, the "Lover of souls" was offering to draw the wanderer back to Himself.

One night Dorothea was unusually tired. There was an epidemic sickness in the town which was taxing all the energies of the charitable. A thick drizzling rain had been falling all day, but Dorothea, undaunted by it, had been on her feet since early morning, going from cottage to cottage on her errands of mercy.

"I shall sleep soundly to-night," she said to herself, as she laid her weary head upon her pillow. Nevertheless, she did not sleep too soundly to dream a dream.

She was in a place that she knew not, and as she wondered where it might be a shining figure stood before her. His raiment gleamed with the whiteness of Tabor, and "the light that is not on sea nor shore" played like a glory round Him. In His hands He carried a crown.

Dorothea was dazzled at "the brightness of His presence," and sank abashed before His searching gaze.

Then a voice like the music of the spheres spoke to her.

"My child, for whom do I bring this crown?"

Dorothea bethinking her of the work she valued so much, made answer in hesitating tones:—

"For me, perchance, dear Lord?"

A sad smile flitted for a moment over the sweet, grave countenance of the shining One.

"It is for her," He replied, "who of all women in Hamborough has the greatest faith in my past sacrifice, and who does most work for Me."

Then Dorothea felt sure, and she stretched out her hands to receive the glittering crown.

But the bright Being made no response to this gesture.

"Do you *now* know whom it is for?" He asked.

And the peculiar stress He laid on the "*now*" prevented Dorothea from giving utterance to the words that were trembling on her tongue.

"For me, perchance, dear Master?"

He saw her hesitation, and, understanding all things, understood it.

"It is for Alethea," He said, speaking again. "Her patience and her unceasing prayers prevail exceedingly at the throne of grace for my dear people in Hamborough."

Then He vanished, and Dorothea knew that activity was not everything—that, indeed, prayer was more availing. And when, in the morning, she related the story of her vision to Alethea, the languid sufferer understood that she had been wrong ever to repine at the uselessness of her lot, for that "they also serve who only stand and wait."

Thus two souls, faltering and stumbling on their heavenward way, were helped onward; one learnt resignation to apparent uselessness, the other something more of the might of prayer. X.