

THE CREATION OF EVE.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”—Gen. i. 27.

GOD had created man in his own image,
And in his likeness he had molded him.
So he had made him One Eternal being,
Complete, in strange perfection, male and female,
Endowed with knowledge both of good and evil;
And when God saw his last and best creation
He praised his work and said: “’Tis very good.”

God gave to man dominion o’er the whole
Broad earth and all its animals; but man,
The owner of the world, was discontented.
The fishes in the sea, the birds in heaven,
The brutes in all the fields and woods were his,
And he like God himself had all the knowledge
Of God’s creation. Neither had he needs
Or longings unfulfilled. Happy was he;
God’s greatest handiwork was very good.

He was not man, he was mankind; not one,
A single human being. No, he was
The human race summed up in its completeness;
Not male nor female, both he was at once.
No hunger did he have, no need of work
Except for recreation, to disport himself.
Such was the climax of God’s cosmic plan.
’T was perfect truly; yet God’s work itself,
The man God had so wonderfully wrought,
Was discontented with his own perfection.
He knew all things by an instinctive vision
And in himself he was complete; no wants

Tormented him, he was like God himself.
 Desires he knew not, and no longings rose
 To break the calmness of his godlike soul.

Quoth he, the man, in tone of fretful plaint:
 "Shall I thus evermore encounter naught
 But ceaseless rest? Shall passions never stir
 My heart,—passions for higher, greater gifts,
 Passions for deeds that should be done by me?
 I am not grateful for divinity
 Which thou, my father, God, alone hast made,
 Of which I nothing further can accomplish."

Said God to man, "Thou art my own true son.
 For I myself feel sorely malcontent
 With mine own Godhood, with eternal rest,
 With absolute perfection which remains
 The same, immutable and infinite.
 I long for action and to verify
 The grand eternal truth that in me lives;
 I long for life, I long for quest and struggle.
 Eternal bliss is wearisome to me!
 And so the universe originates.
 So life springs up, and life consists of struggle—
 Fierce struggle which demands great sacrifice.
 But struggle offers opportunity;
 It proves the worth of life and tests life's courage.
 Divinity is not enough for thee!
 So I will lead thee by the path of progress
 On thine own search through error to the truth,
 From brute beginnings to divinity,
 To a divinity thyself hast gained.
 Know this, my son, and venture into life.
 I'll take away from thee that grand completeness
 Of thy perfection which thou deemest naught
 And will implant into thy heart a yearning
 That will remain thy stimulant through life.
 T'is life thou wantest; life I'll give to thee,
 True life; but life means struggle, pain and sorrow,
 Sometimes defeat and sometimes victory,
 Yet always want and labor. Thou hast chosen
 The harder lot, but for thyself 'tis best."

Then God let sleep profound fall upon man
And God took out of man some bone and flesh,
A living piece of man next to his heart,
A piece of his own soul and of his life,
And such a piece as man was needing most.
Out of this piece God formed the counterpart
Of man and called it Hevah, which means "life."

When man awoke he was complete no longer,
Nor did he still partake of the great boon
Of deathlessness, he lost his strange perfection,
Nor was he any more without desire.
Poor mortal, thou must leave thy paradise—
But only to exchange it for a world
Which is far better than immortal bliss,
A world of struggle, search and aspiration.

And God brought Hevah to the man who gazed
In wonder at her beauteous lovely form
And said, "Yea, thou art bone of mine own bone
And flesh of mine own flesh. Soul of my soul!
Part of myself, we two belong together;
Thou bringest back the portion that I lost.
For thee I'll gladly fight life's bitter struggles;
Through thee, my dear loved wife, I shall regain
The immortality I forfeited."

God blessed the two and left them in the garden
Among the fruit trees pleasant to behold.
There was the tree of life, the tree of knowledge—
Of knowledge as to what is good and evil—
And there God left the lovers to themselves
In natural and naked innocence;
And when he parted spoke this word of caution:

"Eat of the fruit," said God, "of all the trees,
But"—warningly, and not without a smile,
He added—"taste not of the sweetest fruit
That grows here on the spreading tree of knowledge,
For it will drive you out of Paradise."
God knew the man, he knew too what would happen,

He knew that man and woman had to make
A living of their own; they needs must work,
And struggle with the thistles and the thorns.
They would want children to console old age,
Children to carry on the work with vigor,
And then, wearied of life, would pass away
Into eternal, well-earned rest. God knew
Life would be hard. But was it not man's will?
Had he not chosen this, his destiny?

And what man gained thereby was worth the change.
He lost his blissful immortality
And now will have to face the dreaded specter
By men called death, which is the end of life.
But then he has acquired that greater boon
Unending, never sated longing, the boon
Of progress spreading in infinitude—
That higher nobler life in wife and child,
That better, greater immortality
Which must be gained in manly fight, and daily
Regained in efforts constantly renewed,
And that diviner and much truer Godhood
Which is not God-bestowed by gracious gift
But must be earned by us with own endeavor.
This is our fate, this is our task, and God
Himself it was created Hevah fair
And brought her as man's counterpart to man.