

DAWN.

SUMMER had taken a lingering farewell, and the life of the drooping leaves in the woodlands ebbed slowly away. But the unseen presence of autumn slowly approached. Her magic breath tinged with glory the forsaken leaves, and she tenderly weaved over them a mantle of gold and red and bronze. Through the woodlands a winding pathway led to a secluded and lonely glade. The branches of the trees intertwined overhead, and through them the morning sun shone brightly, transforming the withered leaves into shining golden flakes as they fluttered to the ground.

There a woman paced to and fro. Suddenly she raised her arms as if in mute appeal to the swaying boughs above her, then stood with breath stilled and eyes intent. As from afar came a voice sternly rebuking. "Dost thou hope to gain victory in times of peace? Dost thou hope to be a conqueror of life's mighty waters while sailing on a tranquil lake? The victor's crown is won in battle. Thou must steer and guide thy bark on troubled waves, with calmness as a beacon-light and courage as a helm."

The woman stood with bowed head, then with a look of despair on her pale face, she walked towards one of the trees and leaning against it remained motionless. Now and again around her fell a withered leaf. Hush, hush! The quivering soul sways in anguish. Hush, hush, ye fluttering leaves, be still! Over her head is a bud of light struggling to open its petals. Its leaves slowly unfold. Its fragrance wafts a cooling breeze, and peace gently falls.

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A circle of golden mist obscured with its dazzling light all else that lay beyond. Near her stood a marvellous green font of crystalline transparency. Awed and entranced she gazed, for softly from its beauty there rippled in continuous radiations a wondrous joy, and in her heart was the tremulous flow of awakening spring. Bending over it she gazed into its clear waters, then stooped and drank a deep draught. And lo! she stood a glorious being in whose eyes burned the steady flame of eternal youth. The golden mist lifted its shining veil.

Far, far in the past she saw herself—a dreamlike self—joyous with the happy freedom of youthful hope and trust. Ideals, untried by experience, clouded her vision on life. Slowly shadows crept across her path. Startled and surprised she anxiously tried to thrust them aside,

but thick and fast they fell. Her despairing cry arose to the heavens. Her shattered ideals lay in burning fragments in her bleeding heart. Hope and trust faded from her eyes. But while the anguish pierced and wounded, far above a star appeared, growing brighter, shedding at times a soft ray which softened the wounds and brightened the weariness and gloom. Again the shadows fell, making more dense the darkness.

Yet onward came the dream-form, through despair, hope, joy, and grief, swaying this way and that, ever onward, following unknowingly the light from the star above.

A bright ray pierced the gloom, and the shadows disappeared as mist in a sunbeam. The dream-form stood bathed in a soft glow of light. Hope and trust once more dawned in her eyes. Courage, brave dream-form. On the horizon appeared a cloud black as night, rolling like a mighty wave. Nearer, nearer. It wraps the dream-form in its mighty folds.

Forms swarmed around her, peering from the blackness with mocking eyes. The light from the star shone dim, fainter, fainter, all grew dark.

The mocking shapes faded away. Beautiful forms appeared offering gifts of joy, love, and happiness. With her hand she waved them aside, and overcome with weariness stumbled and fell. All was still in a great silence.

Suddenly a faint light glimmered through the darkness. A spark in the heart of the dream-form.

With lightning swiftness there burst from the star above a shaft of flame. Through the gloom it flashed, and kindled the faint spark into a brighter glow. A glittering thing lay by her side. A shining sword. Grasping it the dream-form arose, and stood with head erect, majestic.

The light shone from her heart, and as it fell on the forms in the blackness they shrank away. Sometimes with greater courage they returned, and as they approached the light from her heart ran like lightning along the uplifted sword, burst into tongues of flame, and darted like arrows encircling the forms of her foes, and as they darted here and there soft music filled the air. Onward, onward came the dream-form, the dark shapes ever approaching, the flames ever flying from the sword.

Lo, the darkness is vanquished, the gloom is lost in the light from the darting flames. The bright star above her paled; it disappeared. The light from the darting flames grows brighter, brighter. It breaks into a dazzling radiance.

The star and the dream-self are one in its glorious depths. All vanished in a triumphant volume of music and song.

The golden mist dropped its shining veil.

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Some withered leaves fell, and as they rustled to the ground the woman raised her head with eyes filled with wondrous depths.

But slowly memory returned, with its quivering arrows awakening the anguish in her heart. The bell-like voice again fell on her ears. "The fleeting thou must leave behind if thou art to become and know that which thou hast now been. By aspiration thou shalt draw into thy being a breath of the changeless from the brilliant star ever shining above thee. Through its rays thou shalt see the beautiful. Sometimes a radiance will descend on thee and thou shalt feel its peace. The radiance will fade; only a memory shalt thou keep. Listen well and remember. Hold fast even to the shadow of its memory. Be strong, be true in the darkness. Only in the darkness can *thy* star begin to shine." The voice grew faint. All is silent.

Hush! music falls softly on the air. Something white is gleaming in the distance. A white bird. A white bird with plumage like sunlit snows. Swiftly it flies on motionless wing. Lo, it comes! It nestles in her heart.

A. P. D.

THE BAYREUTH MASTER.

(Continued from "*The Internationalist*," p. III.)

APPLYING this lofty conception of the true function of a king, or leader, to Parsifal—who, as we know, became king over the knights of the Grail—we are at once lifted into a region far above the normal conception held by mankind of such an office, and begin to catch glimpses of an ideal state of things which, as Wagner says, already exists, only needing to be brought into active manifestation by the "devotion, loyalty, and trust" of a body of people who can surely be found. Is it too much to hope that such a body of "knights" already exists? Wagner speaks with no uncertain note; he speaks as one who *knows*, as one who had the vision of that certain future, the elements for the building of which already exist.

It is hardly necessary, I think, to in any way touch upon the performances of other dramas at Bayreuth, seeing that they can all be seen elsewhere, and equally well—if not better, so it is said—performed. Of the *Ring* Wagner says that it rolls "like a mystic web of