

INSULT NOT THE FALLEN.

("Oh! n'insultez jamais une femme qui tombe.")

[XIV., Sept. 6, 1835.]

I tell you, hush! no word of sneering scorn--  
True, fallen; but God knows how deep her sorrow.  
Poor girl! too many like her only born  
To love one day--to sin--and die the morrow.  
What know you of her struggles or her grief?  
Or what wild storms of want and woe and pain  
Tore down her soul from honor? As a leaf  
From autumn branches, or a drop of rain  
That hung in frailest splendor from a bough--  
Bright, glistening in the sunlight of God's day--  
So had she clung to virtue once. But now--  
See Heaven's clear pearl polluted with earth's clay!  
The sin is yours--with your accursed gold--  
Man's wealth is master--woman's soul the slave!  
Some purest water still the mire may hold.  
Is there no hope for her--no power to save?  
Yea, once again to draw up from the clay  
The fallen raindrop, till it shine above,  
Or save a fallen soul, needs but one ray

Of Heaven's sunshine, or of human love.

W.C.K. WILDE.