

MORNING.

XXII.

The Vicar going to call the Angel, found him dressed and leaning out of his window. It was a glorious morning, still dewy, and the rising sunlight slanting round the corner of the house, struck warm and yellow upon the hillside. The birds were astir in the hedges and shrubbery. Up the hillside--for it was late in August--a plough drove slowly. The Angel's chin rested upon his hands and he did not turn as the Vicar came up to him.

"How's the wing?" said the Vicar.

"I'd forgotten it," said the Angel. "Is that yonder a man?"

The Vicar looked. "That's a ploughman."

"Why does he go to and fro like that? Does it amuse him?"

"He's ploughing. That's his work."

"Work! Why does he do it? It seems a monotonous thing to do."

"It is," admitted the Vicar. "But he has to do it to get a living, you

know. To get food to eat and all that kind of thing."

"How curious!" said the Angel. "Do all men have to do that? Do you?"

"Oh, no. He does it for me; does my share."

"Why?" asked the Angel.

"Oh! in return for things I do for him, you know. We go in for division of labour in this world. Exchange is no robbery."

"I see," said the Angel, with his eyes still on the ploughman's heavy movements.

"What do you do for him?"

"That seems an easy question to you," said the Vicar, "but really!--it's difficult. Our social arrangements are rather complicated. It's impossible to explain these things all at once, before breakfast. Don't you feel hungry?"

"I think I do," said the Angel slowly, still at the window; and then abruptly, "Somehow I can't help thinking that ploughing must be far from enjoyable."

"Possibly," said the Vicar, "very possibly. But breakfast is ready."

Won't you come down?"

The Angel left the window reluctantly.

"Our society," explained the Vicar on the staircase, "is a complicated organisation."

"Yes?"

"And it is so arranged that some do one thing and some another."

"And that lean, bent old man trudges after that heavy blade of iron pulled by a couple of horses while we go down to eat?"

"Yes. You will find it is perfectly just. Ah! mushrooms and poached eggs! It's the Social System. Pray be seated. Possibly it strikes you as unfair?"

"I'm puzzled," said the Angel.

"The drink I'm sending you is called coffee," said the Vicar. "I daresay you are. When I was a young man I was puzzled in the same way. But afterwards comes a Broader View of Things. (These black things are called mushrooms; they look beautiful.) Other Considerations. All men are brothers, of course, but some are younger brothers, so to speak. There is work that requires culture and refinement, and work in which

culture and refinement would be an impediment. And the rights of property must not be forgotten. One must render unto Cæsar.... Do you know, instead of explaining this matter now (this is yours), I think I will lend you a little book to read (chum, chum, chum--these mushrooms are well up to their appearance), which sets the whole thing out very clearly."