



Das zweijährige Mäd-
chen und die Sterne.

„Was auch nur immer das
Kindchen umgibt,
Menschlich Verhältnis in
allem es liebt;
Wovon sein Herzchen es
fühlend erfüllt,
Davon ist ihm auch das
Leben ein Bild.“

XXVI.

THE LITTLE MAIDEN AND THE STARS.

The young child loves in phantasy to see
Human relationships in star or tree,
Or anything that may about him be.

Nature and life around him seem a glass,
To mirror that which fills his heart. Alas,
That with the years the childish dream should pass!

But break it not, until its hidden thought
Into more lasting meaning has been caught.
Once gone, with pain and tears it must be bought.

All that is noble in your child is stirred,
And every energy to action spurred
By Nature's silent, oft-repeated word.

He sees the moon glide on her silver way;
He sees the stars return with closing day;
He sees each plant some hidden law obey.

No wonder that he thinks an inner spring
Of love creative lives in everything,
And bids it to his life an offering bring.

And as the bright unbroken chain returns
In beauty on itself, his spirit yearns
Towards that great love which dimly he discerns.

A child's conceit? Nay, larger truth indeed,
Which shall sustain him in his later need—
A faith too deep for any written creed.

Like its predecessor, this song was suggested
by an actual occurrence. Two bright planets
were in near conjunction. A little two-year-

old girl, looking at them, exclaimed with joy, "Father-and-mother stars!"

We all know the tendency of childhood to impute to inanimate objects human life and human relationships. The incident just recorded is, however, a striking illustration of this tendency, for no one knew how the little girl had fallen upon the comparison and connection of ideas which her cry implied.

Thus much is sure: the inner life of childhood may be deepened and strengthened by cherishing the impulse to impute personal life to inanimate objects. Loyally obeying the hint thrown out by the soul, we may aid its struggle towards the insight that it is one spirit which lives in all and works through all.