

The Gardener and His Pupils

by Ralph Lanesdale

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THE Master Gardener was wise with the Wisdom of many ages, and he was sad, when he saw how the gardens of earth were neglected. So sad was he for the barrenness of the earth, for he knew that it was caused by the ignorance of the people, who neglected all the old rules that their former wise master gardeners had given them. They no longer planted any seed, for they had not known how to collect it in days when the flowers and fruit trees bore seed in abundance. In those days the people had got tired of fruit and flowers, and had killed the animals and eaten them, the animals that were their servants and friends, and whom they ought to have protected and trained, so that the spirit which lived in the animals might learn to become fit to live in human bodies on another land in time to come. Then too they had dug in the earth, not to plant new fruit trees, but to get gold, and silver, and other metals, which they used to put on their clothes for ornaments, and also they made swords and spears and fought and killed each other, to get more gold for themselves. And the sun shone but the flowers bloomed no more, and the fruit trees withered, and those who tended them built houses and temples to preserve the dead trunks of the trees, and told the people that these trees had always been like that, and that they were beautiful, and the people believed them and worshipped the dead trunks, which the priests of the temples had covered with gold and silver and other metals. And sometimes one or other of these trees which was not quite dead would try to put forth a bud or leaf, but when the priests saw that, they were frightened and cut it off and put more gold over the place to keep in the life as [Page 14] they thought. And there were some who did not go to the temples to worship the dead trunks with the gold upon them, but they ever kept repeating songs and stories, and painting pictures and making sculptured figures, and everywhere they made the trees with leaves and fruit upon them, and the ground with leaves and flowers upon it. And the people liked these pictures and poems, and some thought that perhaps there was once a time when things like that happened. And the priests said that, that was only when gods came down on earth and not at all when men lived and ate the fruit and loved the flowers, and they called the poets and the artists wicked, because they said they told stories and laughed at their temples and dead trees.

But the artists and the poets took no notice, for they knew that it had been so once, and they knew that the world should blossom again and bear fruit and flowers, and so they went on singing and working their souls into their songs and their pictures and statues, and the people liked them and some loved their work, and a few understood. And those who did understand tried hard to find out how to make trees and flowers grow again, but they had no seed to sow, and though some of the old trees in the temples, were not quite dead yet, they could not put out leaves, because the priests had covered them up with gold and other baser metals entirely. And then some of those, who sought and sought for the seed, fell into a despair, and said, "Behold there is no truth in these things; the priests have deceived us with their golden images and there are no trees within the metal cases, and the poets and the artists have told us false stories and the flowers are all inventions of their own, and we can prove it, for behold we have searched and we have not found and therefore we are sure that there is nought". But some said, "We have sought and found nothing, but others shall tread in our footsteps, and starting where we leave off shall go farther,

and perhaps in the far future they shall find what we have sought. Behold we are content."

And the sun shone bright upon them and the germ of life in the earth sighed deep in its mother earth when it heard their sad voices, and the people were sick for want of the fruit, and their hearts were cold for the want of the love of the flowers, and when the priests called them to the temples they cried "Can your golden trees bear fruit? can you give us the flowers again?" And the priests were angry and said that they were wicked and had no faith and that the golden trees would fall upon and crush them — and all the people were in sickness and great distress. And one came from the East, and she was a woman, and she said, "Long ago I heard the cry of the people, and my heart was sore and sad, and I knew that what the poets and the artists said was true. And I went to the East and sought the Light in its own home deep in the bosom of the Wisdom of the Ancient Ones. There I found a Master Gardener who knew the secrets of all Nature and, who had kept the seed [Page 15] safe and had cultivated other gardens, and ever the good Gardeners had tried to find pupils who could learn the lost Art of Gardening and give it once more to those seekers on earth who might plant the trees once more and make the flowers grow. But often and often they had sent out their pupils, but again and again the people laughed at them, being heavy with the flesh food, and fierce with the greed of gold and passion of war, and the priests had taken them and put them to death and burned the seed and the gardening tools, but some of the priests were wise and said 'Come let us take this seed for ourselves and plant it in the gardens of the Temple and show the people what we can do, and so shall we get great honour'.

But they did not know how to plant or tend the seed and it brought forth no plants, and so they were angry and said also, 'The seed is false and the flowers cannot grow on earth', but they told not this to the people, for they loved honour. And now, see, I have brought seed and will show you where are still the living roots of those trees and dead branches, which are covered with gold in the Temples, for the roots lie deep in unknown places and when you have cleared away the ruins of the broken Temples which cover the spot, and prepared the ground and done those things that I shall tell you to do, behold the trees shall grow again, and in time they shall bear fruit as in the old days and people shall all eat and be well; and I will give you this seed that you may plant it, and the flowers will spring up again and men shall learn Love instead of Hate. But hear my words and take heed, these fruit trees when they grow up are to bear fruit for *all* to eat, and the flowers shall bear their fragrance to every heart; build no Temples to guard them, they are for all, yes, even though they trample them underfoot, for *the* fragrance of the crushed flower shall rise in the air and soften the breeze with its sad sweetness". And the people were astonished, and some said "She is the Gardener, let us follow her and learn", but others said, "She is another mad deceiver and only fools will hear her words", and they jeered at her and scorned her pupils and made a great mockery at them.

For the pupils were as yet foolish and ignorant, and many there were would be gardeners without learning the art, and some were so full of sorrow for humanity that they cried to her, "Give us the seed at once that we may sow it, see the fields are ready and bare, and the people are sick". And they took the seed and planted it in great haste and heard not the words of caution, and most of that seed was lost; but of the labour came wisdom and those who still loved the people more than their own glory, went sadly to her and said, "Your words were the words of wisdom, let us first learn, in order that the seed may not all be lost" ; but most of the people scoffed, and said cruel things in their misery and despair. And some of those who had toiled to clear away the ruins of the Temples were in great haste to dig up the ground and their tools cut the roots of the old [Page 16] tree and the sap ran out, and others said; "Here shall grow the tree, let us mark the spot with a post and set our names upon it", and this they did in vanity, and the post

they drove deep down and hurt the root that was trying to spring up.

And the people saw the post and written upon it they saw "This is the tree that shall bear the fruit", and laughed bitterly at the post and the vanity of those that set their names upon it, and took no heed that they had laboured long and painfully to find the spot and clear the ground, and some had died there at their work. And the people knew not that love was in the hearts of the workers and the folly that they did was done in ignorance and weakness. And the post may stand or fall, it matters naught: the roots of the great tree are freed once more and men shall learn to plant fruit trees and eat the fruit, and the flowers shall grow and the earth be beautiful and men's hearts be full of love, and joy, and peace, and even the gardens of earth shall become more beautiful, while men shall hear the teaching of the Master Gardeners and learn to become themselves Masters of Wisdom.

THE strong well-balanced man accepts things as they come with a spirit attuned to the sweet melodies of creative power: and weeps not over blighted joys or withered hopes. He looks above and beyond these things, and his soul is filled with rest thereby. He does not essay to control others, for he has as much as he can do to control himself. By this means he converts his enemies into friends, who come to him, as an oracle, for counsel. His control is far greater than that of one whose whole life is spent in trying to control others. The gigantic evils of this life come from the desire to rule others — or to make others do as you wish them to do. Counsel is far better than rule. Let everyone do as they like, but scatter light and knowledge of the true way to happiness and power.

Reader, if you have lost youth and happiness — let go! If friends have proved false and ungrateful — *let go!* If your heart is torn by unrequited love — *let go!* If you are poor — let go! If you are wealthy — *let go!* If Providence forsakes you — *let go!* If you love life — *let go!* If you are tired of life — *let go!* If you look back upon your life's journey with regrets — *let go!* For "He that would save his life shall lose it, and he that would lose his life shall save it."

From *The Temple of the Rosy Cross* by F.B.Dowd