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“Something More or Different”: George MacDonald and Victorian Art Photography

Flora Armetta

George MacDonald’s enigmatic short story “The Day Boy and the Night Girl,” of 1879, is beautiful. I begin with this unscholarly assessment because, I would argue, the story is intended to evoke an aesthetic response. In its focus on different ways of seeing, with characters who experience only light or dark conditions, “The Day Boy and the Night Girl” both narrates and creates a visual experience—a personal, lived set of moments corresponding to ocular movements and the physiological responses they produce—to which MacDonald ascribes meaning and value, and in fact the story cannot be understood without a clear grasp of its visual vocabulary and its specific visual referents. While critics have focused on the autobiographical, allegorical, and psychotherapeutic elements of the story,¹ in this paper I read MacDonald’s tale, for both its form and content, in the context of Victorian photography, particularly the “art photography” that rose to prominence in the period.

This reading will, I hope, provide a counterbalance to many scholars’ tendencies, in describing MacDonald’s narrative style, to over-emphasize his mystic or fairy-tale tone at the expense of recognizing the formal craft and learned use of letters and history that his writing reveals.² I will thus consider the historically Christian allusions present throughout “The Day Boy and the Night Girl” while, at the same time, and perhaps more important, exploring the way MacDonald’s imagery reveals his deep and specific engagement with the cultural concerns and ideals of his day. Placing MacDonald in the context of a contemporary of his, the photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, can help point to and evaluate their shared project: as I hope to make clear, both MacDonald’s work and the Victorian photography with which it intersects offer a meditation on the possibility that spiritual qualities may be apprehended visually. MacDonald and Cameron can be read together productively in order to point to and evaluate a suggestion they each make in different ways, that what is not clearly visible to the human eye-or represented in a photograph-may yet ultimately be as valuable as what is.

“The Day Boy and the Night Girl” begins with a witch who steals two babies from their mothers and raises the children from birth; one is a boy who is never allowed to see the darkness or the night and the other a girl who never sees the sun or the day. The boy, whose name is Photogen, grows up bathed in constant light (the Latin roots of his name mean “light-

producing” [“photogen”]): “Never . . . would she let a shadow fall upon him,” MacDonald writes of the witch, “watching against shadows as if they had been living things that would hurt him” (244), and he is forbidden to stay out long enough to see the start of sundown. Photogen grows strong and confident, his constant experience of brightness making him “so full of life” that he is “more like a live thunderbolt than a human being” (246). He becomes a superior hunter and does not know what fear is. Meanwhile, the girl, whose name is Nycteris, is kept by the witch in a tomb-like set of caverns underground, unaware that any place else exists and with only a dim lamp for light (her name is the name of a genus of bat, from the Greek root (nyx), meaning “night” [“nycterin”). “Hence,” the story tells us, “her optic nerves, and indeed her whole apparatus for seeing, grew both larger and more sensitive; her eyes, indeed, stopped short only of being too large” (245). The story goes on to tell us that, though she was not unhappy, Nycteris

desired, nevertheless, something more or different. She did not know what it was, and the nearest she could come to expressing it to herself was—that she wanted more room . . . [her guardian] would go from her beyond the shine of the lamp, and come again; therefore surely there must be more room somewhere . . . she would fall to poring over the colored bas-reliefs on the cavern walls . . . [and] she could not fail at least to imagine a flicker of relationship between some of them, and thus a shadow of the reality of things found its way to her . . . Also, the lamp being fixed high overhead, and in the centre of everything, she did not know much about shadows either. (247-248)

In these early pages of the story, MacDonald attends particularly to *how* each of the two protagonists sees—by what light, and with what results? Initially, though they are in most ways polar opposites, the boy and girl share the experience of a world untouched by shadows; neither, in other words, is able to see any variations or contrasts in the light they know, a limitation that reinforces their utter ignorance of all that the witch has chosen not to teach them. But the relative lightness or dimness they know results in a different set of values for each: Photogen’s bright days bring him a sort of certainty, in which he pursues simple violence, unafraid, hunting and killing with pleasure (though not merely for pleasure—he supplies the tables of the castle with his hunting). Nycteris’ life of near-darkness, meanwhile, leaves her unfulfilled, and she begins to want “something more or different.”

At this point, a reader might already have intuited that the two children will surely, as the narrative unfolds, learn to see differently. And this is the case. Photogen eventually manages to break his keepers’ rules and stay out past sundown, at which he is suddenly petrified, and loses all his certainty and boldness in his terror of the dark, falling “senseless on the grass” (261). By contrast, when Nycteris at length finds a way out into the castle gardens

at night, she is overcome by the beauty of the grass, the flowers, a stream, and particularly by the moon, which is the brightest thing she has ever seen. MacDonald makes two points clear. In the first place, Photogen's terror comes from a sudden extinguishing of his apprehension—all that he knew has disappeared, and it has been replaced with what he sees as nothing (that is, he is essentially blinded by the dark). In the second place, Nycteris' wonder, which the narrative valorizes, delineating it at length, comes from the inverse discovery that all that she knew was essentially nothing, and that now she is *beginning* to see.

MacDonald's use of literal darkness and lightness in the story functions as a natural metaphor (for good and bad, for aspects of archetypal masculinity and femininity, etc.), and critics have dealt with this sensitively and thoroughly.³ But it is worth considering that MacDonald's specific phrasing and word choice in a few key places in the story offer not only metaphor but direct references to the photography of his age. His emphasis on the "apparatus for seeing" that grows so sensitive in Nycteris is one way of entering into this. In order to consider further examples, we must turn first to the world of photography MacDonald knew. He had rich experience of it, thanks to his longtime close friendship, and frequent appearance in the work of, one of the best known and most active of Victorian art photographers, Lewis Carroll (who photographed MacDonald's daughter Irene and was a frequent visitor in the MacDonald home [see Prodger 83]).

Art photography is a term used to emphasize the Victorian era's recognition that photography, which was only discovered in the late 1820s, could be valued as a medium and practice in ways similar to painting and sculpture. The idea of photography as art was directly contradictory to earlier assessments of photography's worth and value, which was usually centered on the medium's "relentless precision," its exactness in relation to "reality," or what Kate Flint has called the "evidentiary qualities of photography" (450). The earliest photographs were prized for their ability to reproduce an image deemed a near-perfect equivalent to an immediate, direct optical impression. Daguerreotypes, introduced in 1839 to astonished viewers around the world, were presented by their inventor, Louis Daguerre, to the French Academy of *Sciences* (as opposed to the Academy of Arts) as a "complete image [that] reproduced in minutest detail, with exactness and incredible delicacy" (Ford 15). William Henry Fox Talbot, an English innovator who built on Daguerre's discoveries in the late 1830s and 40s, produced a book of photographs he called "The Pencil of Nature," in which he suggested that the medium would eventually be valuable for "reproducing rare prints and manuscripts, recording portraits, inventorying possessions, representing architecture, tracing the form of botanical specimens, and making art" (Fox Talbot). But most of the uses found for photography in the years following

still stressed clarity and a sense of a representation of detail—professional photographers, like the one who took a well-known carte de visite of Queen Victoria, looked for them to be similar to daguerreotypes: as crisp and exact as possible (Teukolsky 471, Fig. 1). It was not until the 1860s that Talbot’s suggestion of “art” in photography began to be taken seriously, and the photographer Oscar Rejlander, a pioneer in this field, argued, “I think that in denying or affirming that photography is a fine art, many persons make a very common mistake: they seem to think that if photography were a fine art, all photographs would be works of art. I regard art as a means of making thought visible” (1867; Proddger 209).

Taking Rejlander’s definition of art as an operating assumption (note, of course, that he says that it is “a” means, not “the” means) leads to the question of how the concept of “thought made visible” can help elucidate the subtle visual ideals in “The Day Boy and the Night Girl,” and it’s here that we turn to the work of Julia Margaret Cameron, now hailed as perhaps the most important and influential of the art photographers (Ford 1ff). Though Cameron and MacDonald may be considered together for many reasons, not least that they are eminent Victorians who shared not only metaphysical interests but overlapping social circles, the clearest point of connection is, I would argue, that in Cameron’s work we see an eloquent contemporary visual expression of the experiences MacDonald describes in his text.⁴ But it’s important to stress here that, rather than seeing Cameron’s photographs as “illustrations” of MacDonald’s story, we should instead consider the story and the photographs as, within their disciplines, illustrations of a shared set of ideals. MacDonald’s tale, we might say, is an attempt to describe a way of seeing that Cameron was actively and independently working to record, in contradistinction and sometimes direct opposition to the ways even of her fellow-art photographers. The ideals MacDonald and Cameron shared are rooted in historical Christian thought, and work in tandem to reveal the human figures they each present as creatures made in the image of God, the contemplation of whom must naturally turn the viewer toward God as well. What is unusual about these ideals is that they are represented by the author and photographer not through symbols, quotations, or allusions but through an expression of value for two key qualities: motion and shadow.

First: *motion*. MacDonald and Cameron’s value for motion can be best understood as having derived, ultimately, from Dante Alighieri, the great medieval epic poet with whom both were familiar and whom both had studied.⁵ Scholars such as Giorgio Spina have judiciously traced specific allusions to Dante throughout much of MacDonald’s work, but none has, it seems, noted the opposition between motion and what we might call frozenness in “The Day Boy and the Night Girl.” In Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, the entire progress of the poet from the Inferno to Purgatory to Paradise is

structured around the idea that divine love sets everything—the planets, God’s creatures—in motion; movement therefore becomes a recognizable quality of anyone who is of God. In Canto 33 of *Paradiso*—the final book of the poem—Dante the character (as opposed to Dante the poet) encounters God in the Empyrean, the fastest-moving of all the heavenly spheres, and records that “what was One in appearance was altering for me as I was changing”—God is also described here as “That living Light on which I looked”; that is, God cannot be entirely apprehended and thus appears to be in continuous motion, even as He is transforming those whom He loves. The famous last line of the poem describes how Dante’s own “desire and will” are turned by God, “the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.”⁶ The *Divine Comedy* also makes it clear that any turn *away* from God will have the opposite effect; thus, contrary to the Biblical imagery in Revelations, Lucifer in Dante’s poem resides not in a “lake of fire” but frozen in a lake of *ice* at the bottom of hell, living but immobile.⁷ This, for Dante, is a natural consequence of Lucifer’s efforts to “be like the most High,” as he is described in the book of Isaiah (Is. 14:14). Motion in Dante is not merely a signal of transformation and progress, but a quality of being in relationship with God.

“The Day Boy and the Night Girl” uses this imagery by making Nycteris’ will to move with a specifically spiritual journey and comparing it to Photogen’s opposite impulse, to freeze and kill. On the one hand, Nycteris’ desire for “something more or different” propels her to explore, moving forward into the unknown until she finds herself, as the narrative puts it, in “air alive with motion—with that thrice blessed thing, the wind of a summer night,” which acts upon her “like a spiritual wine, filling her whole being with an intoxication of joy” (253). Photogen, on the other hand, is described, when he is glorying in the sun, as “fighting the wind, and killing the buffaloes” (258; the narrative also describes 5 other kinds of animals Photogen hunts). It is especially important that MacDonald specifically connects Nycteris’ desire for movement to her experience of darkness (she leaves the airless, darkened cave only to fall in love, outside, with the windy night), and likewise suggests that Photogen’s bright world, which essentially blinds him to anything beyond himself, is what makes him freeze.

It is the connection of darkness with movement that is so photographic about this story, a point that becomes clear when we turn to Julia Margaret Cameron. Here, it is immediately evident that one of the most recognizable qualities of Cameron’s photographs is that they tend to be somewhat blurry, or out of focus. Though she was often ridiculed for it, not only in the press (one reviewer referred to her pictures as “smudges”⁸) but also by her fellow-art photographers (even Lewis Carroll commented that he did not like her photographs [Prodger 24]), this out-of-focus quality was a deliberate choice on the part of the artist, and it arises from several

different factors and conditions. In the first place, to achieve the aesthetic in these images Cameron worked in artificially darkened conditions, using only small amounts of diffused and filtered natural light instead of seeking out the bright natural conditions that most photographers prized. “The room cannot be too humble, if it is capable of having all light excluded except that of one window or one aperture which I will myself cover with a yellow calico that is all I desire,” she wrote to the wife of Sir John Herschel (Ford 46). This exclusion of light meant that the production of the photograph required an extremely long exposure time—often up to 10 minutes, or even more, so that, as one contemporary photo historian has written, “the sitters could hardly avoid moving” (Ford 46). Thus we find that MacDonald’s association between darkness and motion as opposed to brightness and frozen-ness is a specifically photographic one. A shorter exposure, under brighter conditions, conversely produced a much sharper, clearer image (of a kind that was far more popular, and considered more professional in this period⁹). This fact recalls us to Nycteris’ description of sunlight, when she first encounters it, as “a terrific sharpness” (276), as well as to Photogen and his literal and metaphoric sharpness (in his arrows and in his attitude toward the world). Indeed, in the characterization of Photogen as a “live thunderbolt” (thunderbolt meaning “a flash of lightning conceived as an intensely hot solid body moving rapidly through the air [“thunderbolt”]), MacDonald essentially anticipates the effect of a flash photograph (flashes were first experimented with in the 1830s with various unpredictable chemical sources, but did not become common until the invention of flash powder, in the 1880s, some ten years after this story was published [Flint 457]). This allows him to gesture towards Photogen’s arrested, or frozen, growth. And it is the precise effect Cameron worked to erase.

In addition to her preference for a slow exposure, which was, for her sitters, a rather famously torturous experience, Julia Margaret Cameron’s aesthetic lack of focus also came from her insistence on being as close to a sitter’s head as possible, to make his or her face and head fill the frame (Ford 46). And finally, Cameron adjusted the lens to lose focus as well; of this practice, she wrote: “What is focus and who has the right to say what focus is the legitimate focus? . . . When focusing and coming to something which, to my eye, was very beautiful, I stopped there instead of screwing on the lens to the more definite focus which all other photographers insist upon . . .” (Prodger 210).

On the question of the aesthetic of motion, it is also worth noting that, in Victorian photography at this time, the very sharpest images tended, by their nature, to be the works we now consider macabre and tasteless, but which at the time were cherished as loving mementos: photographs of the dead. It was common practice in the period to photograph loved ones who

had died before they were buried, and sometimes, as a way of memorializing the relationships in the family, dead people were photographed with their living relatives. Again, it was the exposure time that showed the difference between those living and those dead in this case—naturally, because the living could not help but move slightly during the exposure, while the dead did not (Bell). Thus the blur becomes a mark not just of movement but of life. That Cameron at one point created at least one deathbed photo herself, a work she called a “study,” unlike most other of her more creative titles, suggests that she was well aware of this fact. As for “The Day Boy and the Night Girl,” Photogen at one point insists that, with the arrival of the dreaded dark, he failed to withstand it because he was “taken unprepared” (272). This phrase is particularly suggestive of both photography (a subject could potentially, after all, be captured on film—the photograph taken—without prior knowledge or preparation) and of death, and I would argue that MacDonald used this subtle but strong association in the Victorian mind to his advantage.

We turn now to the second key ideal shared by MacDonald and Cameron, the *shadow*. The impetus for tracing this concept is the fact that Nycteris’ journey from underground cavern upward, into the night and finally into the day, strongly recalls Plato’s Allegory of the Cave, as described in *Republic VII*, in which, Plato suggests, the world as we know it (in flickering shadows on the wall of the cave) is a lesser version of true ideal Forms, the original objects in the outside world, as yet unperceived by those in the cave, which are the forms from whence the shadows derive). In Christian history, it was Augustine who, in borrowing from this Platonic concept, so familiar to the believers of his time, considered it a useful way to invoke the relationship between God and his created universe: God was the true and perfect Ideal, the Form of the Good, and all else a lesser version, reflective of His presence (Honderich 65).¹⁰ MacDonald invokes Plato at first, and then a more directly Christian, Augustinian vision of the universe, as Nycteris develops her understanding of the world. At one point in the story, when she has not yet left her underground cavern for the first time, she is, by her continual seeking to know, enabled to experience what MacDonald calls “a shadow of the reality of things,” a clear reference to the Allegory of the Cave (248). Later, and even more important, the last line of “The Day Boy and the Night Girl,” spoken by Nycteris after she has married Photogen and learned to love the day even as she has taught him to love the night, is a gesture toward the true and perfect, the greater Form: “‘But who knows,’ Nycteris would say to Photogen, ‘that when we go out, we shall not go into a day as much greater than your day as your day is greater than my night?’ ” (288).

It is not difficult to see how the relationship between shadow and form becomes a newly urgent field of exploration, one with new visual

currency, in the age of photography. Fox Talbot, when he first invented what the National Gallery refers to as “the negative-positive process of photography” by creating the calotype in 1839, described it as “the art of fixing a shadow,” the appearance of “the most transitory of things, a shadow, the most proverbial emblem of all that is fleeting and momentary . . . fixed for ever” (“On the Art of Fixing a Shadow”; Prodger 90). As Fox Talbot’s quotation demonstrates, the questions underpinning this issue in photography have to do with time, and with the fact that a photograph captures (captures “forever”) a moment that was and no longer is; shadows that would have lengthened and disappeared in the course of a day are caught and held in the image. Equally at stake in this point regarding photography and shadows, however, is the idea of the absence and presence invoked by the photograph of the shadow; as a long line of critics have argued, “a photograph is the physical trace of the light an object or human life reflects” (Hoffman 57).¹¹ Rachel Teukolsky, putting it another way, has described a photographic portrait’s “lingering engagement” with the subject’s “surfaces” (472). The point is that the flat surface of a photograph functions, in many ways, like the shadow of a real form; it has a kind of transparency, as opposed to opacity, that both documents and points to the presence of something greater (more alive, more substantial, more valuable, more complex) than itself; it has been made “in the image” of that specific and particular, yet absent, something. Given photography’s ever-growing cultural presence and cachet in the period in which he was writing, I would argue that MacDonald’s continual references to shadows (and light) are not merely metaphoric or allegorical but instead act as explicit references to the visual experience inherent in the photographic process and the viewing of a photograph. MacDonald’s “day much greater” is a clear gesture toward the Augustinian idea of human beings, created in the image of God, whose lives by their shadowy nature always point to the form, the substance, the greater-ness, of God. What might such ideals look like if envisioned in a photograph?

I want to suggest that, conceptually and formally, the same kind of pointing to presence through the invoking of shadows is powerfully at work in Julia Margaret Cameron’s photographs, but *not* in the way she is usually read by contemporary critics. It is often argued that Cameron’s subjects, particularly her female ones, conform to Victorian ideals of femininity in their apparent ethereal transparency, which seems to be a visual code for an assumed inner spirituality that is read as a kind of shadow: sweet and, more to the point, insubstantial (as in Victorian ideals of separate spheres, with the woman as Coventry Patmore’s figure of “the angel in the house”).¹² This is a point worth considering, especially in the context of supposedly spiritual Victorian photography, such as the many “spirit photographs” that proliferated in the period and purported to be images of ghosts. In images

such as these, the view of a woman as transparent (as opposed to opaque) devalues the embodied present—it suggests that what is usually not visible becomes, when made visible, a lesser thing, displaced and weightless, more an absence than a presence. Similarly, when photographers—even including Cameron, much to our likely dismay—attempted to visually signify or *symbolize* what was not usually visible (say, by outfitting seemingly resistant child models in poorly made dress-up wings [Fig. 2]), the very solidity, opacity, or un-shadow-like qualities of the forms in the image tended to cheapen the relationship between presence and absence. The obvious materiality of something like the wings makes them repugnant—this of all things is surely not related to the reality of the as-yet-unseen, Nycteris’ “greater day.” But as Cameron advanced in her understanding of the photographic process, she gained mastery over the relationship between darks and lights in a way that stressed a full presence, even in the parts of the subject which were, thanks to the perfectly opaque depiction of the shadows, invisible. That which is opaque in Cameron’s photos, I would argue, is so evocative of a version of a truly Ideal form—a suggestion that these human beings are image bearers, and, themselves, substantial shadows now of what they will become—because it is equally present in both lights and darks. In other words, the clearly visible presence of the subject’s face and figure carry a visual weight *equalled* by the absence by which the most compelling of her subjects are surrounded. What we can *know* of the subjects in the photographs, by perceiving what there is of them to see, is balanced by all that we clearly cannot know. The absence in these pictures has, itself, a presence, as in a portrait of Cameron’s niece, Julia Jackson, where the subject’s intense, willing gaze comes through the dark even though her face is half in shadow [see Fig. 3]. Cameron’s portrait of Thomas Carlyle [Fig. 4] is especially suggestive, and, significantly, Cameron called it “Carlyle Like A Rough Block of Michael Angelo’s Sculpture,” herself gesturing toward the value, the weight, the form of the unseen (that which had been carved away).

Cameron herself once wrote of her work, “My aspirations . . . are to secure for [photography] the character and uses of High Art by combining the real & Ideal & sacrificing nothing of Truth. . . .” (Prodder 210). We tend now to take this kind of statement as a saccharine and potentially rather abstract claim, but, given the specifics of the historic Christian thought underlying such language, one might argue that in her best work, she did precisely, formally and conceptually, what she said she wanted to do. And Cameron’s work depicts ways of seeing that MacDonald validates formally, in his diction and imagery. Considered together, MacDonald and Cameron provide a visual and imaginative power to engage that speaks not only to the deep past but to their own present day, and, for those who concern themselves with the Real and the Ideal, to ours.



Fig. 1 - André Adolphe Disderi, carte de visite of Princess Louise (daughter of Queen Victoria), 1860s, Royal Photographic Society Collection, © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2 - Julia Margaret Cameron, “I Wait,” 1872, the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.



Fig. 3 - Julia Margaret Cameron, “Julia Jackson,” 1867, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

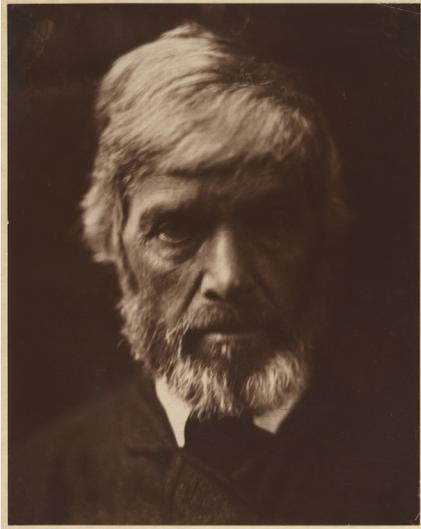


Fig. 4 - Julia Margaret Cameron, “Thomas Carlyle,” 1867, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Endnotes

1. See, e.g., Dearborn and Avery.
2. Cf. Gabelman: “MacDonald was a Celtic mystic, but unlike W. B. Yeats and other modern mystics who delight in philosophical vagueness, MacDonald loved clarity, brightness, and actuality” (2). Other scholars have undertaken this project as well, using different texts; see, e.g., Burt 89-90 on *Phantastes*. For examples of the many who refer to MacDonald as a mystic, see, for example, selections from Raeper.
3. See Cusick, and McGillis, respectively. See also Gaarden’s Jungian reading of MacDonald.
4. While there is no definite record of a meeting or correspondence between MacDonald (1824-1905) and Cameron (1815-1879), it seems likely that they crossed paths, and they must certainly have been aware of each other. One small bit of evidence toward this is an 1871 art-exhibition review in which Little Holland House, the location of regularly held salon discussions hosted by a sister of Cameron’s (see Ford 26), is mentioned in the same column as an approving comment on a sculpture bust of George MacDonald by the Scottish artist G. A. Lawson (“Sculpture” 180). Other connections include the fact that MacDonald’s daughters Irene and Mary once accompanied their father’s friend Lewis Carroll on visits to two other of the best-known art photographers, Oscar Rejlander and Clementina, Lady Hawarden (Prodger 28-29), both of whom knew and were known to have interacted with Julia Margaret Cameron (Prodger 22). It is also said that Lady Hawarden photographed the MacDonald girls, although no print of this is still in circulation as far as I can determine.
5. MacDonald was mentioned in 1889 by a fellow-literary scholar as “an appreciative lecturer upon Dante” (Walford 223) and at one point wrote of Dante, “His books will last as long as there are enough men in the world worthy of having them” (qtd. in Spina); Cameron, perhaps conceding to the general popularity among bohemian and well-educated Victorians—particularly those under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites—for all things medieval, subtitled one of her photographs “A Dantesque Vision” in 1865 (Cameron).
6. Perhaps not coincidentally, G. K. Chesterton uses this line from Dante to help describe and assess MacDonald’s character, arguing that, unlike MacDonald, contemporary poets (of the early twentieth century) cannot conceive of such a love (see Gabelman 7).
7. As the Dante scholar Joan Ferrante has put it, Dante suggests that “Once we give in to [sinful desires], our feelings are dead; the lake of the heart becomes the frozen lake of Cocytus, with pure evil—Satan—at its core” (“The Corrupt Society”).

8. The jury of the tenth annual Photographic Society of London exhibition noted of Cameron: “She should not let herself be misled by the indiscriminate praise bestowed upon her by the non-photographic press and she should do much better when she has learnt the proper use of her apparatus”; the respected photographer Henry Peach Robinson, whose work was collected by Queen Victoria, described Cameron’s work as “photographs by a lady, many of them failures from every point of view . . . it is not the mission of photography to produce smudges” (both qtd. in Ford 83).
9. This was due in large part to the influence of the daguerreotype, which made images that were “sharp . . . and largely grainless,” as the photographic standard (see Prodger 86ff).
10. A Biblical point of reference for this same idea of earthly life as a lesser visual experience is I Corinthians 13:12: “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face” (*NIV*).
11. This is in many ways similar to the Victorian photographer Alfred Wall’s claim that “Light plays much the same part in photography that pencils do in drawing” (qtd. in Prodger 99).
12. See for example Nancy Armstrong’s discussion of spirit photography and critique of Cameron in *Fiction in the Age of Photography* (94, 110ff).

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