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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

MORNING ALL DAY.

BY DR. W. A. ALCOTT.

I have been the companion, the victim of sorrow;
I have lain down at night without hope of the
morrow—

No gleam in the future—not a single bright ray;
No quiet at night, and no morning all day.

Heart sick of the world, I have sometimes retreated
To forests and glens, and my sorrows repeated;
I have shrunk from the sound of my feet by the way;
No slumber by night, and no morning all day.

I have wished—oh, how vain! I had wings, and
could fly

From earth and its turmoil, to rest in the sky,
Where glorified spirits, in brightest array,
Rejoice without ceasing, in morning all day.

But a change has come o'er me. I lift up my head;
The world is all joyous—my sorrows are fled:
No fears or forebodings beset my bright way;
I rise ere the lark, and 'tis morning all day.

You ask for the cause. The reply is soon given;
I have learned how to please the rich favors of heaven;
I breathe the pure air; I think, labor, and play;
I repose when 'tis night, and have morning all day.

The world is now hopeful, I heed not its dangers;
My friends and companions no more seem like
strangers;

The darkness and clouds have now all passed away;
I have peace all the night, and bliss the morning all day.

My youth seems renewed—my thoughts on swift
pinions
Explore the condition of monarchs and minions—
All scenes and all trials instruction convey;
I dream not by night—I have morning all day.

O ye who but sleep, while all nature rejoices,
Forsake now your slumbers, and join you glad
voices

With that of the robin, that sings from the spray—
With that of the lark—and have morning all day.

And then when the lessons of life are all o'er,
And they who now know us shall know us no more,
When the last gleams of twilight have faded away;
We'll soar to a world where 'tis morning all day.

Religious.

THE SOUL-GATHERER.

A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM.

Does the name "Soul-gatherer" seem strange to you? It came from a mother, standing by the pillow of her child, waiting to see the spirit pass away. Long weeks of sickness had brought her very low. A friend arrived at the house to wait for the night train. "Go and see him," said the child, and when her mother came back, she asked, "Did you find out if he had come to Jesus yet?" "No." "Oh, then, I'll try to be able to see him before he goes." A fit came on, and, unasked, the stranger, with others, sprang into the room, where the child lay in agony, to give his help. When breath came back, they were left alone. "Will you speak of Jesus to-night to the people in the train?" asked the child gently. "Well, I fear not." "Oh! you can't have come to Jesus; then; everybody that has Jesus tries to bring more to him." Once more a paroxysm of the illness brought all into the room. That time the stranger feared he should never see these lips move again; but as the child lay back on his arm, and while he bent in fond love over her, saying, "What troubles my darling? Is it pain?" The smile returned, and the child said, "Nothing troubles me but your soul, because you haven't Jesus. Do trust him now, and you'll be so happy. I don't sleep; somebody needs to stay with me. Stay you; do stay, and perhaps you'll find Jesus before morning."

Far on in the morning, while the train carried the traveller hundreds of miles away, and the lamps burned low beside the watchers, those pale lips whispered, "No, I can't sleep; but I'm praying for him. I wonder if he has found Jesus in the train, and if he's telling the rest how to find Him. He has so sweet a face; but if he had Jesus you would see it far sweeter." Another day and night, and there was almost no pulse and no pain,

yet the little one could whisper, word by word, "Write for me, and say I wonder if he has found Jesus." Fronting her bed hung an engraving. It had remained over the auction at a bazaar, as too pretty to go for less than its value. The minister had given it to the child. There was a deep-flowing river, with some large stepping stones for a ford. A child was seen crossing, balancing herself with difficulty, and one who went before and showed her each step to take, carried a sheaf of grain as though they had been gleaned. It was too emblematic not to become a part of the scene in that still chamber. The Lord said, "Mother wilt thou give the child to me?" The mother's heart was dumb. The enemy said, "Give her; but thy lips shall never pronounce her name again for anguish." The picture on the wall seemed to supply the answer, "Tempter, begone, I need not call her by her name again. I may call her Soul-Gatherer. . . . Yes, Lord; Though I cannot give up my child, take thou thy little Soul-Gatherer." For she thought she saw an angel divide the waters, and her own child climb, with the ripe ears gathered in early morning, up to the footstool of the great white throne.

A child was seen to rise and cross the room in her sleep. She was sharply spoken to; and stopped short, turning her eyes full on the person in charge of her, though still asleep, and saying, "I was going to put down Annie's name by Mary's in my prayer-list; but I'll lie down." Immediately she lay fast asleep again. Under her pillow was found a green morocco pocket-book, with the names of companions and friends written in rude characters. Soon after one of these died. She was bidden score out the name; "No," she said, "I won't score it out; when he came to Jesus I put a mark at his name for praise; and now I will put to his name double praise."

While a fisherman was out in his boat, a storm came on. He toiled homewards, but made little way. It got dark, and the shore was rocky and unsafe. He was at his wit's end. At last he saw the twinkle of a lamp which showed him the lie of the land. He made for it, and when he pulled his boat up on the beach, he found he had been saved by a light set for him in the window of his own cottage. How glad and thankful he was! But he did more than give thanks for his own safety. Every dark night after, he trimmed the lamp and set it in the window, in case there should be any other fishing-boat struggling with the waves. We shall enjoy the sweet light that brought our souls safe to anchor in God's heaven, if we hold forth the word of life that saved us to others also.

Forward little children and forward big people are a trouble everywhere. Modest little children find a place in every heart. The more struggle you have had to get out the word you long to say, if it makes you think well, and pray to say it in the right way, the more likely it will be that Jesus will bless it. "Oh, that the friend I love were with the great Physician, that is now making and hearts rejoice, and wicked men good, and sins of a long life to be blotted out for ever; for He would recover him?" Does your heart never say so?

How useful the little spider was when he tried so often to fix his web to the rafters of the barn just over the Bruce's lowly bed. How useful its failures were. "He has failed as often as I have," thought the unthroned king; "if he succeeds this time I shall try once more." Next time the spider's thread bore him along. The Bruce fought—and won the crown of Scotland. Before you brush the spider's web away, watch him at his work, and see what lesson you can learn from him. He spares no pains to snare one little fly. Those of us who are kept in one quiet corner, and cannot do the good, nor say the words that other people do and say, we can put all the heart's work of a day into a web of love and prayer to snare a soul—not for death, but for life.

You have often heard of that little Church which shone for ages like a single spot of light in the midst of Papal Europe. For her symbol, she had a torch shining in the darkness; for her motto, *Lux lucet in tenebris*. She was most true to both. Again and again did Satan, by the arm of the Church of Rome, strike at her life. He sent the sword, he

sent fire, he sent cruel armies to destroy. He could not suffer to hear one voice still speak for Jesus, all others being dumb. Many a Vaudois child could remember its flight by night from its happy home, with those cruel soldiers in pursuit who had slain its parents.

But all this only made Vaudois of the Alps to become a whole church of soul-gatherers. God's children learn new songs of triumph in the dark night of suffering. Instead of hating those who had driven them from the cottages among the vineyards and chestnut-trees,—being like Jesus,—they loved them but the more. A priest made this complaint of them, "They all preach here, there, and everywhere, without any distinction of age or sex, and they insist that whoever knows God's word must spread it, and preach it too." Another bitterly accused them thus, "They employ all their zeal in leading away others after them. They teach even to the very little girls the gospels and epistles, using them to error from first infancy; and no sooner have these little creatures learnt some little thing out of these books, than they do their utmost to tell others of it, and this they do wherever they are found." The magistrates made laws that no catholic should receive one Vaudois, man or woman, under his roof, knowing that where a Vaudois went, Jesus followed!

The hymn you sing may be used by the Spirit of grace to light the spark of love in another's heart. The prayer a child offers may be the wings on which a cold and heavy heart first tries to fly to the throne of grace. But above all, is the way you behave taken notice of. Angry voices, cross looks, unkind selfish ways, spoil everything. Old people learn at least to hide these, and try to get the better of them by God's grace. But you are very apt to let them escape from you all on a sudden. And then you are sorry, for them, when it is too late, when the harm you have done cannot be undone. Try to stop short when you are yielding to a fault, and check yourself for the love you bear to the Lord Jesus. And ought we not all to pray every night, that the kind Lord would rub out of the minds and souls of others, the effects of our blunders, since we make them in all we do.

A WORKING CHURCH.

No other can prosper; and yet it is strange that so few Christians can comprehend it—that so few church members can understand their own obligations. They think they can see any want of interest or activity on the part of the pastor; but they cannot seem to comprehend the necessity of their own faithfulness, enough to induce decided action. They know the minister cannot make a good prayer meeting without their co-operation; yet, notwithstanding they have as much interest in the success of the meeting as he has, he cannot always rely on them in an emergency to come to his assistance. They seem paralyzed! "Why!" says a brother pastor in astonishment, "we went into the body of the house last night; several strangers were present, and the very brethren on whom I depended, utterly failed me, and the meeting all flatted out." This is not a solitary instance. When it depends on the minister, those same persons expect him to be prepared and prompt to do this duty, and why should he not expect them in turn to do the same, especially in an emergency? How easy comparatively it would be, when a meeting of this kind drags, for all hands to come to the rescue.

Again, some churches not only expect the minister to do the preaching, but also most of the praying, and visiting, and talking of a religious kind. They are too much like the deacons who looked up the house against a prayer meeting, saying, "We have hired our minister to do our praying for us, and he has got to do it." Instead of this, every Christian must attend to his own praying, religious visiting and conversation—in short, he must attend to all his own personal duties himself. He cannot do them proxy—no other one can do them for him. When a church comes to see this, and every member is found at his post, ready to do all he can for the cause of God, we shall have an efficient church.—*Morning Star.*

THE BUDGET—The Scene in the British House of Commons.

It is not an easy matter to narrate the accounts of an empire, or to make arithmetic picturesque. Sensational financiers, indeed, might produce a certain effect by budgets that would be but the brilliant preludes to ultimate bankruptcy; Mr. Disraeli might mix figures of speech with figures of the multiplication table, until he produced a showy though bewildering result; and Sir Stafford Northcote, humbly imitating the great Caucasian in financial inaccuracy, if in little else, might earn a brief distinction as the acrobat of the Exchequer. Far different was the course of William Ewart Gladstone when he rose on Thursday afternoon to explain the policy of the British Government to the British House of Commons. The occasion was a great one; it was, in fact, of historical magnitude and import. If Napoleon's taunt be true—if we are "a nation of shop-keepers"—it must at least be admitted that the shop we keep is a large one, and does a most amazing amount of business. Every item of our trade had to be reviewed by the Chancellor. Rival claims had to be weighed, adjusted, balanced; conflicting interests to be conciliated; and above all was it essential that the onward march of England in the path of free trade should receive a fresh encouragement. Mr. Gladstone had to deal with men who listened eagerly to every word he spoke, and were on the alert to detect him in a blunder. He had to state a case which was plain enough in its broad outlines, but infinitely perplexing and complicated in its details. On him more than on any other man in the empire devolved the grand task of managing the commerce of the English people; and of this great glory, this tremendous responsibility, the earnest gravity of his manner showed that he was not unmindful. No startling disclosures were expected; no sudden alteration of policy was looked for; the tariff, thanks in a great measure to Mr. Gladstone himself, contains but few objectionable items upon which experiments can still be made. It was almost as much in his capacity as orator as in that of financier that the people were eager to hear him. The House was crowded. At seven o'clock in the morning, there were many waiting for admission. It may be said of the Lords that they adjourned bodily into the House of Commons. For the first time, at least in the recent annals of Parliament, peers were allowed to sit in the galleries ordinarily reserved for members. The Earl of Derby was there—the lord of many proxies and of many politics—the fiery and fervid Stanley, who talked something that sounded very much like revolution in 1842, and who is now ready, with a Partingtonian courage, to "stem the tide of democracy" in 1864. The Report of debate,—and it should be remembered that Prince Rupert, for all his splendid courage, was soundly beaten by a Huntingdonshire brewer—sat gravely listening to the man with whom he once held office. Old ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer were there gazing with a somewhat bewildered expression at this strange statesman, who had learned the art of making money matters attractive—who had learnt what is rarer still, the secret of increasing the revenue by absolutely reducing taxation.

When the hero of the night rose from his seat, strangers craned eagerly forward to look at him. The sight, indeed, was a grand one for those who know the difference between real greatness and the splendours of parade. In that hall sat five hundred gentlemen chosen by the English people to make its laws; and to these five hundred the orator was to speak. Such an audience would inspire even a mediocrity; upon a man of genius its influence must be immense. The quiet thoughtful scholar who has commented upon Homer as learnedly as any German professor who ever lectured at Göttingen or Leipzig—whose voice rang through Europe like a clarion when, with all the magnificent eloquence of earnestness, he denounced the iniquities of the Neapolitan prisons—he who sat at the feet of Robert Peel, and has almost completed his great colleague's work—was hailed with a hearty cheer when he rose. It was broad daylight still, but the clock struck thrice before he ended. Put the merits of the Budget on one side, and think for a moment on