

## Poetry.

## "ONE THING IS NEEDFUL."

"One thing is needful, and only one,"  
Said a mother, caressing her little son,  
As he prattled beside her knee:  
But it stopped his full career of play,  
And quick he turned from his toys away,  
And a troubled face had he.

"One thing, mamma! You surely forget  
How many I need this evening yet  
Before I need to sleep:  
I want my papa, for a ride on his knee;  
And I want you, too, to read to me  
A story from 'Dear Little Peep'."

And Sister Bessie! I never could do  
Without her, you know; nor yet could you:  
For when little Willie died,  
Though I don't remember it very well,  
Yet, mamma, I have often heard you tell  
How papa and you both tried

Not to be sorry that God should take  
One little lamb, for dear Jesus' sake,  
So soon to his heavenly home;  
And yet, when you gazed on his empty cot,  
And ever round you, but saw him not,  
How often the tears would come!

So I need you all, and my nurse as well,  
And many more things than I can tell,  
Even this one short night;  
And to-morrow, I need you many things  
The beautiful sunshine always brings  
Along with its own dear light.

A walk to the field where the raspers are,  
To see the bright corn-flowers clustering there,  
Along with the pale blue-bell—  
Tell me, mamma, what could you mean  
By saying I only needed one thing,  
For I don't understand it well?"

Then his mother raised her heart to Heaven,  
For, his promise has been given,  
That my child should be taught of God;  
Confirm this word to thy handmaid now,  
And by thy own Spirit teach her how  
To point out the heavenly road."

"The flowers are withering every day,  
And papa and mamma might be taken away,  
If God wanted them very much;  
The one thing needful, dear boy, must be  
What would fill up every blank to thee,  
And what death itself cannot touch.

It must be a balm for every care,  
And for all thy needs have enough, and to spare,  
Wherever thy lot may be cast;  
It must create a clean heart within,  
And seal thy pardon for every sin,  
And lead thee to heaven at last.

Seek Jesus, dear child, every day that you live,  
For on these blessings are His to give—  
Oh! early make Him your friend;  
And then no good he'll withhold from thee,  
But himself will thy one thing needful be,  
Till life's journey in heaven shall end."

## Miscellaneous.

## THE POWER OF MERCY.

Quiet enough, in general, is the quiet old town of Lamborough. Why all this bustle to-day? Along the hedgebound roads which lead to it, carts, carriages, vehicles of every description are jogging along filled with countrymen; and here and there, the scarlet coat or straw bonnet of some female occupying a chair, placed somewhat unsteadily behind them, contrasted gaily with the dark coats, or grey snuff-boxes on the front row; from every cottage of the suburbs, some individuals join the stream, which rolls on increasing through the streets till it reaches the castle. The ancient moat teems with idlers, and the hill opposite, usually the quiet domain of a score or two of peaceful sheep, partakes of the surrounding agitation.

The voices of the multitude which surrounded the court-house sound like the murmur of the sea, till suddenly it rises into a sort of shout. John West, the terror of the surrounding country, the sheep-stealer and burglar, has been found guilty.

"What is the sentence?" is asked by a hundred voices.

The answer is "transportation for life."

But there was one standing aloof on the hill whose inquiring eye wandered over the crowd with indescribable anguish, whose pallid cheek grew more and more ghastly at every denunciation of the culprit, and who, when the last sentence was pronounced, fell insensibly upon the green sward. It was the burglar's son.

When the boy recovered from his swoon, it was late in the afternoon; he was alone; the faint tinkling of the sheep bell had again replaced the sound of the human chorus of expectation, and dread and jesting; all was peaceful, he could not understand why he lay there so weak and sick. He raised himself tremulously and looked around; the turf was cut and spoiled by the tramping of many feet. All his life of the last few months floated before his memory, his residence in his father's hall with ruffianly comrades, the desperate schemes he heard as he pretended to sleep on his lowly bed, their expeditions at night, masked and armed, their hasty return, the news of some female in town, the court, the trial, the condemnation.

The father had been a harsh and brutal parent, but he had not positively ill-used his boy. Of the great and merciful Father of the fatherless he knew nothing. He deemed himself alone in the world. Yet grief was not his prevailing feeling, nor the shame of being known as the son of a convict. It was revenge that burned within him. He thought of the crowd that had come to feast upon his father's agony, he longed to tear them to pieces, and he plucked savagely a handful of grass on which he leaned. O, that he were a man! that he could punish them all—all—the spectators first, the constables, the judges, the jury, a clergyman, named Leyton, who had given his evidence more positively, more clearly, than all the others. O that he could do that man some injury—but for him his father would not have been identified and convicted.

Suddenly a thought occurred to him, his eye sparkled with fierce delight. "I know where he lives," he said to himself; "he has the farm and parsonage of Millwood. I will go there at once—it is almost dark already. I will do as I have heard father say he once did to the wife. I will set his barns and his house on fire. Yes, yes, he shall burn for it—he shall get no more fathers transported.

To procure a box of matches was an easy task, and that was all the preparation the boy made.

The autumn was far advanced. A cold wind was beginning to moan among the almost leafless trees, George West's teeth chattered, and his ill-clad limbs grew numb as he walked along the fields leading to Millwood. "Lucky it is a dark night; this fine wind will fan the flames nicely," he repeated to himself.

The clock was striking nine, but all was quiet as midnight; not a soul stirring, not a light in the window that he could see. He dared not open the gate

lest the click of the latch should betray him, so he softly climbed over; but scarcely had he dropped on the other side of the wall before the loud barking of a dog startled him. He covered down behind the hay-rick, scarcely daring to breathe, expecting each instant the dog would spring upon him. It was some time before the boy dared to stir, and as his courage cooled, his thirst for revenge was somewhat subsided also, till he almost determined to run to Lamborough, but he was too tired, too cold, too hungry—besides the woman would beat him for staying out so late. What could he do?—where should he go? and as the sense of his forlorn position returned, so did also the affectionate remembrance of his father, his hatred of his accusers, his desire to satisfy his vengeance; and once more courageous through anger, he rose, took the box from his pocket, and boldly drew one of them across the sand paper. It flamed, he stuck it hastily in the stack against which he rested—it flickered a little and then went out. In great indignation, young West once more grasped the whole of the remaining matches and ignited them, but at the same instant the dog barked. He heard the gate open, the step is close to him, the matches are extinguished, the led makes a desperate effort to escape, but a strong hand is laid on his shoulder, and a deep, calm voice inquired, "What can have urged you to such a crime?" Then calling loudly, the gentleman, without relinquishing his hold, soon obtained the help of some farming men, who commenced a search with their lanterns all about the farm. Of course they found no accomplices, nothing at all but the handful of half consumed matches the lad had dropped, and he all that time stood trembling, and occasionally struggling, beneath the firm but unyielding grasp of the gentleman.

At last the men were told to return to the house, and thither, by a different path, was George led, till they entered a small, poorly furnished room. The walls were covered with books, as the bright flame of the fire revealed to the anxious gaze of the little culprit. The clergyman lit a lamp, and surveyed his prisoner carefully. The lad's eyes were fixed on the ground, while Mr. Leyton's wandered from his pale, pinched features to his scanty, ragged attire, through the tatters of which he could discern the thin limbs quivering from cold or fear; and when at last impelled by curiosity at the long silence, George looked up, there was something so sadly compassionate in the stranger's look, that the boy could scarcely believe that he was really the man whose evidence had mainly contributed to transport his father. At the trial he had been unable to see his face, and nothing so kind had ever gazed upon him. His proud, bad features were already melting. "You look half-starved," said Mr. Leyton; "draw near to the fire; you can sit down on that stool while I question you; and mind you answer me the truth. I am not a magistrate, but of course can easily hand you over to justice if you will not allow me to benefit you in my own way."

George stood still, twisting his ragged cap in his trembling fingers, and with so much emotion depicted on his face, that the clergyman resumed in still more soothing accents: "I have no wish to do anything but good, my poor boy; look up and see if you cannot trust me; you need not be so frightened. I only desire to hear the tale of misery your appearance indicates, to relieve it if I can."

Here the young culprit's heart smote him. Was this the man whose house he had tried to burn? On whom he wished to bring ruin, and perhaps death? Was it a snare spread for him to lead to a confession? But when he looked upon the grave, compassionate countenance, he felt that it was not.

"Come, my lad, tell me all."

George had for years heard little but oaths, and curses, and ribald jests, or the thief's jargon of his father's associates, and had been constantly cuffed and punished; but the better part of his nature was not extinguished; and at these words from the mouth of his enemy, dropped on his knees, clasping his hands, tried to speak, but could only sob. He had not wept before during that day of anguish; and now his tears gushed forth so freely, his grief was so passionate as he half knelt, half rested on the floor, that the good questioner saw that sorrow must have its course ere calm could be restored.

The young penitent still wept, when a knock was heard at the door, and a lady entered. It was the clergyman's wife; he kissed her as she asked how he had succeeded with the wicked man in goal?

"He told me," replied Mr. Leyton, "that he had a son whose fate tormented him more than his punishment. Indeed his mind was so distracted respecting the youth, that he was scarcely able to understand my exhortations. He entrusted me with agonizing energy to save his son from such a life as he had led, and gave the address of a woman in whose house he lodged. I was, however, unable to find the boy in spite of my earnest enquiries."

"Did you hear his name?" asked the wife.

"George West," was the reply.

At the mention of his name the boy ceased to sob. Breathlessly he heard the account of his father's last request, of the benevolent clergyman's wish to fulfil it. He started up, ran toward the door, and endeavored to open it. Mr. Leyton calmly restrained him. "You must not escape," he said.

"I cannot stop here. I cannot bear to look at you. Let me go,"—the lad said wildly, and shook himself away.

"Why, I intend you nothing but kindness." A new flood of tears burst forth; and George West said, between his sobs,

"While you were searching for me to help me, I was trying to burn you in your house. I cannot bear it." He sank on his knees and covered his face with both hands.

There was a long silence, for Mr. and Mrs. Leyton were as much moved as the boy, who was bowed down with shame and penitence, to which hitherto he had been a stranger.

At last the clergyman asked, "What could have urged you to commit such a crime?"

Rising suddenly in the excitement of remorse, gratitude, and many feelings new to him, he hesitated for a moment, and then told his story; he related his trials, his sobs, his sorrows, his supposed wrongs, his burning anger at the terrible fate of his only parent, and his rage at the exaltation of the crowd; his desolation on recovering from his swoon, his thirst for vengeance, the attempt to satisfy it. He spoke with untutored, childlike simplicity, without attempting to suppress the emotion which successively overcame him.

When he ceased, the lady hastened to the crouching boy, and soothed him with gentle words. The very tones of her voice were new to him. They pierced his heart more acutely than the fiercest of the upbraidings and denunciations of his old companions. He looked on his merciful benefactors with bewildering tenderness. He kissed Mrs. Leyton's hand, tenderly laid on his shoulder. He gazed about like one in a dream who dreamed to wake. He became faint and staggered. He was laid gently on a sofa, and Mr. and Mrs. Leyton left him.

Food was shortly administered to him, and after a time, when his senses had become sufficiently collected, Mr. Leyton returned to the study, and explained holy and beautiful things which were new to the neglected boy; of the great, yet loving Father; of Him who loved the poor, forlorn wretch, equally with the richest, and no less, and happiest; of the force and efficacy of the sweet beatitude.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

I heard this story from Mr. Leyton, during a visit to him in May. George West was then head ploughman to a neighboring farmer, one of the clearest, best-behaved, and most respectable laborers in the parish. —*Diogenes's Household Words.*

**THE ROYAL INSURANCE COMPANY, 92**  
Lombard-street, London, and Royal Insurance Buildings, Liverpool.  
*Chairman of the London Board—SAMUEL BAKER, Esq.*  
*Chairman in Liverpool—CHARLES TURNER, Esq.*  
The Royal Insurance Company is one of the largest Offices in the Kingdom.  
At the Annual Meeting held in August 1869, the following highly satisfactory results were shown:—  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT.**  
The most gratifying proof of the expansion of the business is exhibited in the one following fact—that the increase of the last three years exceeds the entire business of the year 1868. The number of policies issued in the year 1868 was 2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1868 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1869 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1870 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1871 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1872 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1873 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1874 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1875 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1876 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1877 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1878 was £2,130,000. The amount of business done in the year 1879 was £2,130,000. 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