

## At Night.

EMMA S. ARHART.

Sometimes when the burdens of the day  
Have seemed more than I could bear,  
And I sink to my welcome couch at night,  
Almost too tired for prayer,  
There comes to my soul the restful thrill,  
And rapture of God's felt care.

I hear a whisper in my heart  
Bidding my striving cease,  
And the touch of his hand on my forehead  
Brings  
From all worldly cares, release;  
And my spirit is wrapped and baptized in  
God's own infinite peace.

What am I, Lord, that thou bidd'st me rest  
When others must wake and weep?  
And O! will our toiling end like this  
When death's shadows round us creep?  
Yes; Lord! for thou lov'st us, and thou  
Givest  
To thy beloved—sleep.

—Chris. Standard.

## Afraid Of The Minister.

BY MRS. M. S. POTTER.

Rev. Irvin Lynn entered his pleasant sitting-room at home, and sat down with an air of relief and weariness, and a look upon his face as of one having passed through some unusual experience. He had lately settled in G—, called to his first charge there, and to-day he had commenced his first round of parish calls.

His young wife looked up, and seeing a cloud where she had been used to seeing naught but sunshine, she smiled cheerily and addressed to him a sympathetic query which brought some of the sunshine back, lighting up her husband's face with a gleam of rather dubious merriment, in fact, as he replied to her question by asking another.

Edith, do I carry signs of being terrible in my face or anywhere about my outward being? Am I hideous or fearful to look at?

Well, no; not especially so, returned Mrs. Lynn, with a mischievous hesitancy in her manner. Why do you ask?

I have made half a dozen calls this afternoon, and I have used my best manner; that is, you know, not my stately company manner, but one that combines my best smiles and most pleasant words with (joking aside) a genuine exertion and wish to make to make myself agreeable to those I visited; and but one of the visits made yielded any degree of satisfaction.

Perhaps it might relieve your mind to relate your experience, suggested Mrs. Lynn sympathetically, but with unmistakable curiosity.

Possibly it might. To begin, then, I called first at the house of a widow lady, Robinson by name, and there I was very kindly received and passed a pleasant half-hour. Half a mile beyond I came to a family named Smith, and, full of pleasant thoughts about the call I had just made, I went confidently up to the door and knocked for admittance. Just as I did so a curtain to a window near the door fell suddenly, and with it a hush that was intended to convince me that nobody was at home. I knew better, however, for I saw a face at the window as I was entering the gate.

A low ripple of laughter came from the lips of Mrs. Lynn. Took you for a book agent, perhaps, she said.

Oh no, the family were at church last Sunday; they knew me. I left the premises as soon as I understood that that was what was wanted of me, and though my enthusiasm was somewhat chilled, I proceeded to the next house on the list I had made out in my mind. Mr. Jones's I have no fault to find with my reception there. Mrs. Jones was evidently very kindly disposed, and she has a daughter who is a conscientious pupil in the Sunday-school and plays the organ. But they seemed so very much embarrassed by my presence that I shortened my stay, feeling that I was making my hostess very uncomfortable, and that she would be much relieved by my absence.

How could you tell? inquired Mrs. Lynn, much interested in her husband's recitation, and thoroughly enjoying the humorous side, while she deprecated that which caused her husband uneasiness and pain.

Oh, there were various signs. I confined myself to simple generalities, thinking it the better way to get acquainted; as an instance, I asked Mrs. Jones if they had good water on their place, and if it was cold. She replied that it was cold in the winter time, and then a second or two later, when she had realized the absurdity of her words, she turned a brilliant scarlet, and I did not get a coherent sentence from her afterward.

Such people are much to be pitied; they suffer so much from such painful timidity, remarked Mrs. Lynn.

Well, shall I continue my harrowing tale? inquired Mr. Lynn.

"You might give me one or two more leaves from the diary of your experience if it does not disturb you too much."

Oh, no, the telling of the story

doesn't make the matter any worse, or any better, perhaps only I would like to have you suggest a remedy for the trouble I have this day, in the very beginning of my labors, encountered. The next family I called upon were the Browns. A girl came to the door and ushered me into the sitting room, and as I entered at one door some one went out of an opposite one. The room was unoccupied by any one but myself for fully fifteen minutes, during which I heard, in sharp whispers proceeding from an adjoining room:—

You go in.  
No, you.  
I'd rather be whipped than go in!  
Well, you're no better than I am.  
But I look so.  
You look as well as I do.

At last the door opened and a young lady entered with a very red face and a desperate air, as if she were about to encounter an animal that was dangerous. I did not inflict myself upon her for a long period, I assure you, though I tried to divest her mind of the idea that I wanted to eat her, while I did stay.

Did you succeed? queried Mrs. Lynn with feigned anxiety.  
I do not know; but I do know that the young lady brightened wonderfully when she found I was taking my leave.

There was a brief silence.

I will give you one more, the one I think, that gave me the most pain of all. One lady received me in a manner entirely free from embarrassment, but very coldly. She spoke sharply and to the point, and seemed glad of an opportunity to free her mind. I heard your last Sunday's sermon, she said, and some of it done very well, but I saw that you are greatly in favor of missions, and that I do not like at all. I have not attended church services for two years because I did not like the minister. He talked too much of missions and leaned too far toward Congregationalism. I'm plain spoken, Mr. Lynn, and I mean to be. It's good to have an understanding at the first, I think. There! what do you think of that?

You repeat it as if it were a task set you to learn by rote, laughed Mrs. Lynn.

I could not help learning it, as I believe I did, almost verbatim, every word was uttered so slowly and coldly, and they mean so much to me, returned Mr. Lynn, very much disturbed as he recalled the scene.

Now, Irvin, you are taking this matter too seriously said Mrs. Lynn.

But how am I to reach my people to do them any good if they are afraid to meet me on pleasant terms; if they close their doors against me and—

Deliver tirades against your most precious hobby—is not that what you meant to say?

Pretty near, assented Mr. Lynn. Why, simply go right on in the way you think is right, and pay no attention to the tirade, whatever. Only, of course, striving in every possible way to gain her respect and confidence, win her, and all like her, over, if you can, to a milder way of looking at the matter which they are so prejudiced against.

As to the others, when they get used to you, they will doubtless be less afraid of you; though I remember going with papa to visit his parishoners, among whom he had lived for years and several of the experiences you have detailed remind me of some of those visits. It is simply because you are the minister, not from any dislike they have of you personally.

I trust you are right, dear, but it worries me, nevertheless. The half-dozen calls I have made today have chilled my ardor and unfitted me for work. It seems to me that if my people only knew how anxious I am to meet them on terms of love and friendship they would be willing to come the remainder of the distance when I go more than half way. I know it is as you say, people are afraid of the minister; but why is it?

More than one has been troubled as Mr. Lynn was troubled, discouraged and cast down by the coldness of their reception by many of those in their charge. Some see the humorous side, as well as the other, and do not take the matter so seriously to heart, but it remains a chilling obstacle in the way of the sensitive many that might easily be removed.—Star.

Only a stray sunbeam? Yet it cheered a wretched abode—gladdened a stricken heart.

Only a gentle breeze? It fanned aching brows, cheered many hearts by its gentle touch.

Only a frown? But it left a sad void in the child's heart—quivering lip and tearful eyes.

Only a smile? But how it cheered the broken heart, engendered hope, and cast a halo of light around the sick-bed.

Only a word of encouragement, a single word? It gave the drooping spirit new life, and led to victory.

## Profit And Loss.

Lost time may be time gained. Profitableness may be secured from the result of wasted hours. Time thrifty workers, who find themselves to have been on a fool's errand, are very apt to grieve over the waste, as they consider it, of so many precious hours. The scholar who follows out a difficult clue to the end only to find it unproductive; the business man who throws all his thought and strength into a new venture, and finds it unremunerative; the pastor who has painfully elaborated a line of thought which he in the end discovers to be specious or unprofitable; the visitor who journeys far and, after thorough search, fails to come across the person he is anxious to see—is likely to lose heart, and is inclined to chide himself for such a profitless waste of time. Yet, if the disappointed seeker will look out for the gains to himself of his fool's errand, he will find that that experience which cannot be made to pay its cost is a rare one. If he would be wise, he will take into account all those incidental insights by the way, which in the future, germinating new ideas, and by suggestions that arise from them, may more than counterbalance the direct loss of the present. His activity, though profitless as to immediate results, may have proved a good drill in methods. Practice and skill in the method are often of more consequence to us than success itself. Moreover, he will have in mind that if his errand becomes a painfully impressed warning to him, it may save him many similar experiences in the future, and thus bring real, actual gain to him. Disappointment or failure is, in various ways, one of our most useful soul educators. Penitence, patience, resignation, humility, and many other things, come not except through much tribulation. So, in reckoning up the profit and loss of a so-called fool's errand, let us not fail to remember that the gains of wisely improved failure may be among our most profitable possessions.—Sunday-school Times.

## One Thing at a Time.

"Early in life," relates a gentleman who has now spent many decades in the service of God and his fellow-man, "I learned from a very simple incident a wholesome lesson and one which has since been of incalculable benefit to me."

"When I was between twelve and fourteen years old, my father broke up a new field on his farm, and planted it with potatoes, and when the plants were two or three inches high he sent me to hoe it. The ground of that piece was hard to till, it was matted with grass roots and sprinkled with stones. I hoed the first row, and then stopped to take a general look at the task before me. Grass as high as the potatoes was everywhere, and looking at the whole from any point, it appeared to be a solid mass. I had the work to do all alone, and as I stood staring at the broad reach of weedy soil, I felt a good mind not to try to do anything further than with it."

"Just that minute I happened to look down at the hill nearest my feet. The grass didn't seem quite as thick there, and I said to myself, 'I can hoe well enough.'"

"When it was done another thought came to help me: I shan't have to hoe but one hill at a time, at any rate."

"And so I went to the next, and the next. But there I stopped again and looked over the field. That gave me another thought, too. I could hoe every hill as I came to it; it was only looking away off to all the hills that made the whole seem impossible."

"I won't look at it! I said; and then I pulled my hat over my eyes so I could see nothing but the spot where my hoe had to dig."

"In course of time I had gone over the whole field, looking only at the hill in hand, and my work was done."

"I learned a lesson tugging away at those grass roots which I never forgot. It was to look right down at the one thing to be done now, and not hinder or discourage myself by looking off at the things I haven't come to. I've been working ever since that summer at the hill nearest my feet, and I have always found it the easiest way to get a hard task accomplished, as it is the true way to prepare a field for the harvest."

## Helps To Patience.

A Woman whose life had been long and chequered with many reverses, said lately: Nothing has given me more courage to face every day's duties and troubles than a few words spoken to me when I was a child, by my old father. He was the village doctor. I came into his office where he was compounding medicine one day, looking cross and ready to cry.

What is the matter, Mary? I'm tired. I've been making beds and washing dishes all day, and what good does it do? To-morrow

the beds will be to make and the dishes to wash over again.

Look, my child, he said: do you see these little things, of no value in themselves; but in one I put a deadly poison, in another a sweet perfume, in a third a healing medicine. Nobody cares for the vials; it is that which they carry that kills or cures. Your daily tasks, the dishes washed or the floor swept, are homely things, and count for nothing in themselves; but it is the anger, or the sweet patience, or zeal, or high thoughts that you put into them that shall last. These make your life.

No strain is harder upon the young than to be forced to do work which they feel is beneath their faculties, yet no discipline is more helpful.

The wise builder, says Bolton, watches not the bricks which his journeyman lays, but the manner in which he lays them.

The man who is half-hearted and lagging as a private soldier, will be half-hearted and lagging as a commander. Even in this world, he who uses his talents rightly as a servant is often given the control of many cities. They also serve, said John Milton, who only stand and wait.

We should remember, above all, that the greatest of all men spent thirty years of His earthly life, waiting the appointed time to fulfill his mission.—Youth's Companion.

## The Church Festival.

1. It robs the giver of the blessing that comes to the "cheerful giver." Being a commercial transaction, he receives value equal to his investment, and so gets no reward. This tends seriously to degrade the sense of obligation to give.

2. It hinders church finances, by fostering a spirit of selfishness, instead of encouraging true liberality. True liberality gives for the good of others. The spirit appealed to by the festival is that of good to yourself. There is a wide difference between giving to others and investing for a little present entertainment.

3. It takes the support of benevolent enterprises out of the region of conscience, and makes it depend upon the caprice of the mind on the impulse of the moment.

4. The church festival is a screen behind which parsimonious souls seek to shield themselves from their obligations to God. It is a blind with which the idea of sacrificing effort for the cause of Christ is sought to be maintained, with the sacrifice really left out.

5. It is a ludicrous subterfuge, by which many persons try to make themselves believe it is easier to give.

6. The Church is a family. Suppose the members of an earthly household should propose to raise means to support the family by a festival. It would provoke laughter.

7. It will get those to give who otherwise would not. But does it get them to give? It does not cultivate benevolence.—Pittsburg Ad.

## A Holy Life.

A holy life is made up of a number of small things—little words, not eloquent speeches or sermons; little deeds, not miracles or battles nor one great heroic act of mighty martyrdom, make up the true Christian life. The little constant sunbeams, not the lightning that waters of the Siloam "that go softly" in the meek mission of refreshment, not "waters of the river, great and many," rushing down in noisy torrents, are the true symbols of a holy life. The avoidance of little evils, little sins, little inconsistencies, little weaknesses, little follies, indiscretions, and imprudences, little foibles, little indulgences of the flesh—the avoidance of such little things as those go far to make up at least the negative beauty of a holy life.—Bonar.

COVETOUSNESS.—The sin of covetousness is peculiarly dangerous. Never was there a time or place when and where it needed to be guarded against more than now and here. The opportunity to make large gains suddenly and the ad men make over the successful gold hunter surround one with strong temptations. Other sins awaken disgust in the minds of respectable people, but there is a certain deliciousness about mammon worship which draws human nature as with a strong cord. A great minister said last Sunday: "Let a man tell a lie, and society sets its foot on his neck; let him heap up unto himself gold, and society is at his feet." "Take heed, and beware of covetousness."

There is scarce any lot so low but there is something in it to satisfy the man whom it has befallen; Providence having so ordered things that in every man's cup, how bitter soever, there are some cordial drops—some good circumstances which, if wisely extracted, are sufficient for the purpose he wants them—that is, to make him contented, and if not happy, at least resigned.—Sterne.

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