

Harvest Hymn.

J. G. WHITIER.

Once more the liberal year laughs out
O'er richer stores than gems or gold;
Once more with harvest song and shout
Is nature's bloodless triumph told.

Our common mother rests and sings,
Like Ruth among her garnered sheaves;
Her lap is full of goodly things,
Her brow is bright with Autumn leaves.

O favors old yet ever new!
O blessings with the sunshine sent!
The bounty overruns our due,
The fullness shames our discontent.

We shut our eyes, the flowers bloom on;
We murmur, but the corn-ears fill;
We choose the shadow, but the sun
That cast it shines behind us still.

God gives us, with our rugged soil,
The power to make it Eden fair,
And richer fruit to crown our toil
Than Summer-wedded islands bear.

Who murmurs at his lot to day?
Who scorns his native fruit and bloom,
Or sighs for dainties far away,
Beside the bounteous board of home?

Thank heaven, instead, that freedom's arm
Can change a rocky soil to gold;
That brave and generous lives can warm
A clime with Northern ices cold.

And by these altars wreathed with flowers,
And fields of fruits, awake again
Thanksgiving for the golden hours
The early and the latter rain.

Angels Unaware.

We read in Hebrews xiii. 2:
Be not forgetful to entertain
strangers, for thereby some have
entertained angels unaware. The
reference here is to Gen. xviii. 3
and xix. 2. When the three men
came to Abraham he did not know
they were angels. But if he had
known it, he could not have
welcomed them more hospitably.
He regarded them as men who were
weary and hungry, and he entreated
them to rest under the tree, and to
partake of the food that he prepared
for them, as if, in doing so, they
would confer a favor upon him. He
calls himself their servant, and
hastens to wait on them, standing
while they ate. So also, when two
of these angels went to Sodom, Lot
bowed himself before them and en-
treated them to become his guests.
In all this the patriarchs showed
their interest in strangers simply as
strangers, and they were rewarded
by learning that they had entertained
angels. I have often thought
how Abraham and Lot would have
felt if they had neglected to enter-
tain those men, and afterward found
out that they were angels.

There are stories current about
kings and princes traveling in dis-
guise. Those who failed to treat
them with common courtesy were
sadly mortified when they found out
who they were. They said: 'Oh, if
I had known it was the King, how
polite and attentive I would have
been!' And there are such stories
in regard to the treatment of

STRANGERS IN CHURCH.

Here is one that I have heard,
and that is worth repeating. A
certain rich man had been very
liberal in aiding churches. The
church in Z—, which, like many
other ambitious ones nowadays, had
built a costlier house of worship
than it could pay for, and was in
debt, applied to this man for help.
The pastor and elders, in making
their application, urged that they
had to make a large church in order
to accommodate strangers, and an
attractive church so that strangers
would come to it. Mr. W—
replied courteously that he would
consider the application. As he did
not live in Z—, and was person-
ally unknown there, he determined
to visit the place and see for him-
self. He went very plainly dressed,
stopped late Saturday evening at an
obscure hotel, and found his way to
the church Sabbath morning. It
was not full. There were plenty of
vacant places in the best pews. But
the usher, who was no doubt in-
structed to grade the strangers who
applied to him according to their
apparent social standing, after keep-
ing Mr. W— waiting some time,
pointed him to a seat away back
under the gallery. The sermon was
scholarly and rhetorical, adapted to
the taste of a fastidious congregation.
The music was fashionable. The
cost of it would have paid the mort-
gage in two or three years. Mr.
W— did some thinking as well as
looking and listening that Sabbath
morning. He went home, and wrote
to the pastor that having visited his
church as a stranger, and been
welcomed as a stranger to a back
seat, he had concluded that he could
invest the money which he held as
a steward of the Lord to better
advantage than in helping to pay
their debt.

Great was the consternation at
Z— when this letter came. Every-
body was ready to blame everybody
else. The poor ushers said, 'The
pew-holders are angry if we put
shabbily dressed strangers into their
seats. We do the best we can. If
Mr. W— had told us who he was,
we would have taken him to Judge
A's pew. But even then we should

have been compelled to introduce
him to the Judge, or he might have
been made to feel that he was not
welcome.' If Mr. W— had found
the spirit of the gospel in that
church, he would have given it at
least five thousand dollars. But
when he found that if Christ him-
self had gone there unannounced—
simply as 'a poor, wayfaring man'—
he would have been treated as an
intruder, he did not feel that such
an institution had any claim upon
him.

And now, as bearing on this
matter of the treatment of strangers
in the sanctuary, I want to tell
another story. An excellent worker
as well as a liberal giver in one of
the large Eastern churches deter-
mined to move to a Western
city. He made a preliminary visit,
including two Sabbaths. He took
no letters of introduction, and made
himself known to as few people as
possible. There were two Presby-
terian churches in the place, both
anxious, of course, to get the best of
the immigration that was coming so
fast to the rapidly growing city.

ELDER JONES.

For so I will call him, visited these
churches as a stranger. He noted
carefully how he was received,
whether as a possible tramp or as a
possible angel. He found the
atmosphere in the larger of the two
churches cold and repellant, while
in the smaller church it was warm
and Christlike. When he returned
with his family he took his and their
letters to the smaller church, of
which he speedily became one of the
pillars. When the people in the
larger church expressed surprise and
disappointment, he simply answer-
ed: 'Brethren, if you had welcomed
me as a stranger, I would have been
with you as a co-worker. But when
you want to know who a man is
before you treat him with Christian
hospitality, you must excuse me.
That is not the way I read the New
Testament.' That church, like the
church in Z—, received a rebuke
that it deserved. Alas! how much
of this unchristlike spirit there is in
many of our churches.

But I am told that if a church
stands with open arms to welcome
all who come, it is liable to be im-
posed upon. I don't believe it.
Tramps don't go to churches. If
you see a plain-looking man or
woman in the vestibule of the
sanctuary, you may be pretty sure
that the attractive power is love for
Christ. Such strangers are his
'little ones,' and we ought to treat
them as we would treat him. If not
angels, they are saints, and will walk
in white among the angels when
they die.

ATTRACTIVE OR AGGRESSIVE.

The great aim of some good people
seems to be to make the church
attractive. They want fine archi-
tecture, fine preaching, fine music.
They want a place of worship that
people will admire, and services that
they will declare are 'perfectly
splendid.' In this way they hope
to draw those who are cultivated
and refined. But, having done this
much, they stop, as if all was done.
They don't go out into the highways
and hedges, and compel them to
come in. Indeed, if people of that
kind should come, they would not
be welcome. The Salvation Army
goes to the opposite extreme. Its
headquarters are as plain as possi-
ble. The seats are rough benches,
and the music is horrible. But the
brethren and sisters are terribly
aggressive. They go out into the
streets with drums and tambourines,
and try to gather in the gamins and
the hoodlums. They meet with
some success, but with far less than
if they were not quite so rude and
uncultivated. What we need is to
combine the attractive and the
aggressive in our church work. We
can not make our sanctuaries too
comfortable or even elegant, if it is
understood that they are for all who
will come, and that we who build
them not only want everybody to
come, but will go out and invite the
poor as well as the rich, so that our
houses may be full. A house of God
should be built as our heavenly
Father built the world—not for a
select few, but for all his children.
The poorest beggar can enjoy the
golden sunset and the bright-hued
flowers as well as the millionaire.
When we practically make religion
exclusive and aristocratic, it is no
longer the religion of Christ.—*Journal and Messenger.*

Little Things.

A serpent's fang is a little thing,
but death is its victory.
A baby is a wee little thing, but
a constable was once a baby.
A tongue is a little thing, but it
fills the universe with trouble.
A cross word is a little thing, but
it is what stirs up the elephant.
An orange-peel on the sidewalk
is a little thing, but it has upset
many a giant.
A word is a little thing, but one
word has been many a man's destiny
for good or for evil.
The acorn is a little thing, but
the black bear and his family live in
the oak that springs from it.—*Ad-
vance.*

A Large "Mite."

One day in the early summer
something happened near the great
post-office in New York which
reminded those who saw it of the
widow's mite, though it may be that
this poor woman had never heard of
the one who threw all that she had
into the treasury of the temple.

About two o'clock in the after-
noon a wretched and very old woman
was seen walking up and down Park
Row trying to sell the five magnolia
blossoms she carried in her withered
hands. Thousands of people hurried
by, justling her often as she held
out her flowers, but few of them
even looked at her, and it took three
hours in the hot sun to sell four of
the flowers. She tried very hard to
sell this last one, but had not suc-
ceeded when a drayman drove a thin,
miserable horse up to the curb and
ran into the saloon on the corner.
The horse snatched at the flower the
old woman held, and she quickly
jerked it away; then she looked
again at the tired, starved looking
beast, which was wet with perspira-
tion and hung its head, the picture
of wretchedness and despair. Her
heart was touched, she forgot her
own sorrows for the moment in pity
for the horse, and going up to him
held out her flower as eagerly as she
had ever offered it to a purchaser,
while she said: 'Poor old fellow,
it's mighty seldom ye're gettin' any
thing grane. Here, take this.' The
horse did not wait for a second invi-
tation, but took the flower, leaves,
stems, and all, and they quickly dis-
appeared down his throat. Then the
woman who had given the 'mite'
turned with a smile that was almost
happy, and made her wrinkled
face look young to go home.

This little incident would proba-
bly never have been noticed but a
young man engaged as reporter on
one of the daily papers saw the
woman as he went into the building,
and thought if she were still there
when he came out he would buy a
flower for his wife who was very
fond of magnolias. He was detain-
ed longer than he had expected, and
when he reached the street saw the
woman with one flower in her hand
standing near the horse. Before he
could reach her to buy it she had
given it to the hungry quadruped;
but as she turned away he overtook
her and pressing a half a dollar into
her hand said: 'Here, auntie, I
meant to buy that flower, but I'm
glad you gave it to the horse, and
hurried away before she could
recover from her astonishment
enough to realize what had happen-
ed. Her little act of generosity was
performed without any expectation
of reward, but it is as pleasant to
know that she had the reward, as it
is to know that for once in his life
the horse had something 'grane'
to eat.

Achievements of Young men.

It was the young David who
stood forth as the champion of Israel.
Alexander when not twenty-one
changed the destinies of the world
by his conquest of Persia. Napoleon
was the recognized military leader
of his age and conqueror of Italy at
twenty-seven. Gustavus Adolphus
died at thirty-eight, and Frederick
the Great was conqueror of Silesia
and the most conspicuous figure in
Europe at the age of thirty-three.
The same fact appears in literature.
Ruskin says that the most beautiful
works of art are done in youth. Pitt
was prime-minister of England and
Fox the lord of parliament before
they were thirty-one. Newton made
his greatest discoveries before he was
twenty-five, and Franklin laid the
foundation of his renown before he
was thirty-two. Byron died at thirty-
seven and Shelley at twenty-nine.
Nor is this less true in religion.
Luther was only thirty-five when he
won Germany for the Reformation.
John Calvin was twenty-six when he
published his famous 'Institutes,'
which shaped the theology of the
Reformed Church. John Wesley
was only a student when he inaugu-
rated one of the greatest religious
movements of modern times. And
last, and most significant of all, the
world's Redeemer was a young man
entering upon his career at the age
of thirty. But I need not weary
you with names and dates. The
fact remains beyond dispute that
young men have been the world's
leaders in its best progress.—*Select-
ed.*

Keep Your Promises.

Heredity may be made altogether
too much of a scapegoat. A child
develops, for instance, a most un-
countable habit of lying or deceit.
The parents are distressed, and
charge the blame to some remote
ancestor. At the same time they
are unconsciously teaching prevari-
cation by breaking promises made
to the child. 'Be a good boy,' says
the mother, 'and you shall go to
drive with papa this afternoon.' The
child struggles bravely to fulfil the
condition. To him the hours of
waiting seem like days. At length
the eagerly anticipated time arrives,
and the parents drive gayly off,
comforting the sobbing boy with a

promise to bring him 'some candy.'
Possibly this pledge also they fail to
fulfil. President Lincoln was ex-
ceedingly strict in keeping faith
with his children, and required the
same fidelity in others. At one
time a visitor at the White House
persuaded little Tad to sit on his
knee; by promising as a reward the
charm on his watch chain. Shortly
after, as the man was about dismis-
sing the child with no further
thought of the lightly-spoken prom-
ise, the President said sternly,
'Give him the charm, sir!' In con-
fusion the man obeyed the bidding.
Lord Holland, the father of Charles
James Fox, once told his boy that he
should witness the pulling down of
a stone wall on the estate. For-
getting the promise, he had the
masonry restored after it was de-
molished, that he might not fail in
keeping his word to his son. Such
scrupulous regard for the truth on
the part of parents will go far to-
ward counteracting an inherited
tendency to falsehood on the part of
children.—*Congregationalist.*

Practical Religion.

To-day we saw an old negro going
about seeking jobs of calcimining
and whitewashing—adding to the
light and sweetness of homes. That
man was doing good service, there-
fore, he was in God's service.

To-day we saw a man cheery,
hopeful, pleasant, courageous, not at
all afraid of sickness, disease, failure
in business, or of hell. He was a
picture—a living realization of
health and usefulness. That man
was in the service of God—the good.

To-day we saw a woman going
about her home singing, whistling,
chatting pleasantly with her helpers
in the house, who are termed ser-
vants, laughing with her children,
and dispelling all fear of all things
from their thoughts. She was help-
ing them to life, to health, to
strength, and to happiness. She was
doing God's work.

To-day we saw a man come into
his home. He came in sober. He
scrapped the dirt from his shoes and
left it outside the house. He hung
his hat in its place. He brought
no doubt, disgust, gloom, despond-
ing disease in with him. He romped
with his children. His wife, chil-
dren, servants, the dog, the cat, and
the birds all welcomed him, and his
coming gave life to all. He had no
thought to make others sick, fearful,
morose, sad, gloomy, or distrustful.
He had no words of cowering. No
silent, mean, lowering, angry looks
because a child had torn a dress or
dropped a book. He was a man of
thought, and one who delights in
leading his family and friends on to
higher and better things, instead of
opening chambers and dens of doubt,
grief, and worryment, and plunging
others therein.

Some of these days we will meet
this man Over There. Then he will
stand and show us his far-reaching
possessions—the broad fields dotted
with flowers and covered by rivulets,
—his orchards and his lawns,—his
home and its millions of beauties
and conveniences—will show a prize
for every kind word spoken, for
every encouragement given to any
and all who he saw struggling in
good efforts, for every bit of help he
gave the poor to broaden themselves
by thinking and acting, not for the
so-called glory of God, but for better
health, happiness, and harmony of
humanity. 'If ye love me, feed my
sheep.' Help those who are hungry
and who need care. That is, 'if ye
love me.'—*Brick Pomeroy.*

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a seed that shall add a new species to
the vegetable family of a continent;
and just so a word, a thought from
a living soul, may have results im-
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