

Devotional Poetry for the Children. Second Part

Various

FOR THE CHILDREN.

SECOND PART.

*“Make us beautiful within,
By Thy Spirit’s holy light;
Guard us when our faith burns dim,
Father of all love and might.”*

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DEVOTIONAL POETRY

FOR THE CHILDREN.

THE LIFE-CLOCK.

There is a little mystic clock,
No human eye hath seen,
That beateth on,—and beateth on,—
From morning until e'en.

And when the soul is wrapped in sleep,
All silent and alone,
It ticks and ticks the livelong night,
And never runneth down.

Oh! wondrous is that work of art,
Which knells the passing hour;
But art ne'er formed, nor mind conceived,
The life-clock's magic power.

[Pg 006]

Not set in gold, nor decked with gems,
By wealth and pride possessed;
But rich or poor, or high or low,
Each bears it in his breast.

Such is the clock that measures life,—
Of flesh and spirit blended,—
And thus 't will run within the breast,
Till that strange life is ended.

GOD IS LOVE.

Lo! the heavens are breaking,
Pure and bright above;
Light and life awaking,
Murmur, "God is love."

Music now is ringing,
Through the leafy grove,
Feathered songsters, singing,
Warble, "God is love."

Wake, my heart, and springing,
Spread thy wings above;
Soaring still, and singing,—
Singing, "God is love."

[Pg 007]

TIME.

A minute,—how soon it is flown!
And yet, how important it is!
God calls every moment His own,—

For all our existence is His:
And tho' we may waste many moments each day,
He notices each that we squander away.

We should not a minute despise,
Although it so quickly is o'er;
We know that it rapidly flies,
And therefore should prize it the more.
Another, indeed, may appear in its stead;
But that precious minute, for ever, is fled.

'Tis easy to squander our years
In idleness, folly, and strife;
But, oh! no repentance nor tears
Can bring back one moment of life.
Then wisely improve all the time as it goes,
And life will be happy, and peaceful the close.

THANKSGIVING.

There's not a leaf within the bower,—
There's not a bird upon the tree,—
There's not a dewdrop on the flower,—
But bears the impress, Lord, of Thee.

[Pg 008]

Thy power the varied leaf designed,
And gave the bird its thrilling tone;
Thy hand the dewdrops' tints combined,
Till like a diamond's blaze they shone.

Yes, dewdrops, leaves and buds, and all,—
The smallest, like the greatest things,—
The sea's vast space, the earth's wide ball,
Alike proclaim Thee, King of kings!

But man alone, to bounteous Heaven,
Thanksgiving's conscious strains can raise:
To favored man, alone, 'tis given,
To join the angelic choir in praise.

“THOU, GOD, SEEST ME.”

Thine eye is on me always,
Thou knowest the way I take;
Thou seest me when I'm sleeping,
Thou seest me when I wake.

Thine arm is round about me,
Thy hand is underneath;
Thy love will still preserve me,
If I Thy laws do keep.

Thou art my present helper,—
Be Thou my daily guide;
[Pg 009] Then I'll be safe for ever,
Whatever may betide.

Oh! help me, dearest Father,

To walk in wisdom's way,
That I, Thy loving child, may be
Through every future day,
And, by my loving actions, prove
That He who guardeth me is Love.

THE BEAUTIFUL WORKS OF GOD.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,—
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their shining wings.

The tall trees in the green wood,
The meadows where we play,
The rushes, by the water,
We gather every day,—

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips, that we may tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who doeth all things well.
[Pg 010]

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS.

Almighty Father! Thou hast many blessings
In store for every loving child of Thine;
For this I pray,—Let me, Thy grace possessing,
Seek to be guided by Thy will divine.

Not for earth's treasures,—for her joys the dearest,—
Would I my supplications raise to Thee;
Not for the hopes that to my heart are nearest,
But only that I give that heart to Thee.

I pray that Thou wouldst guide and guard me ever;
Cleanse, by Thy power, from every stain of sin;
I will Thy blessing ask on each endeavor,
And thus Thy promised peace my soul shall win.

THE DOVE'S VISIT.

I knew a little, sickly child,
The long, long summer's day,
When all the world was green and bright,
Alone in bed to lay;
There used to come a little dove
Before his window small,
[Pg 011] And sing to him with her sweet voice,
Out of the fir-tree tall.

And when the sick child better grew,
And he could creep along,

Close to that window he would come,
And listen to her song.
He was so gentle in his speech,
And quiet at his play,
He would not, for the world, have made,
That sweet bird fly away.

There is a Holy Dove that sings
To every listening child,—
That whispers to his little heart
A song more sweet and mild.
It is the Spirit of our God
That speaks to him within;
That leads him on to all things good,
And holds him back from sin.

And he must hear that “still, small voice,”
Nor tempt it to depart,—
The Spirit, great and wonderful,
That whispers in his heart.
He must be pure, and good, and true;
Must strive, and watch, and pray;
For unresisted sin, at last,
May drive that Dove away.
[Pg 012]

TEACH US TO PRAY.

Teach us to pray
Oh, Father! we look up to Thee,
And this our one request shall be,
Teach us to pray.

Teach us to pray.
A form of words will not suffice,—
The heart must bring its sacrifice:
Teach us to pray.

Teach us to pray.
To whom shall we, Thy children, turn?
Teach Thou the lesson we would learn:
Teach us to pray.

Teach us to pray.
To Thee, alone, our hearts look up:
Prayer is our only door of hope;
Teach us to pray.

DEEDS OF KINDNESS.

Suppose the little cowslip
Should hang its tiny cup,
And say, “I’m such a little flower,
I’d better not grow up.”
How many a weary traveler
Would miss the fragrant smell?
[Pg 013] How many a little child would grieve
To miss it from the dell!

Suppose the glistening dew-drop,

Upon the grass, should say,
“What can a little dew-drop do?
I’d better roll away.”
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

Suppose the little breezes
Upon a summer’s day,
Should think themselves too small to cool
The traveler on his way:
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were talking so?

How many deeds of kindness
A little child may do,
Although it has so little strength,
And little wisdom, too.
It wants a loving spirit,
Much more than strength, to prove,
How many things a child may do
For others by his love.
[Pg 014]

AN EVENING SONG.

How radiant the evening skies!
Broad wing of blue in heaven unfurled,
God watching with unwearied eyes
The welfare of a sleeping world.

He rolls the sun to its decline,
And speeds it on to realms afar,
To let the modest glowworm shine,
And men behold the evening star.

He lights the wild flower in the wood,
He rocks the sparrow in her nest,
He guides the angels on their road,
That come to guard us while we rest

When blows the bee his tiny horn,
To wake the sisterhood of flowers,
He kindles with His smile the morn,
To bless with light the winged hours.

O God! look down with loving eyes
Upon Thy children slumbering here,
Beneath this tent of starry skies,
For heaven is nigh, and Thou art near.
[Pg 015]

BE KIND TO THE POOR.

Turn not from him, who asks of thee
A portion of thy store;
Poor though in earthly goods thou be,

Thou yet canst give,—what's more,

The balm of comfort thou canst pour
Into his grieving mind,
Who oft is turned from wealth's proud door,
With many a word unkind.

Does any from the false world find
Naught but reproach and scorn?
Does any, stung by words unkind,
Wish that he ne'er was born?

Do thou raise up his drooping heart,
Restore his wounded mind;
Though naught of wealth thou canst impart,
Yet still thou mayest be kind.

And oft again thy words shall wing
Backward their course to thee,
And in thy breast will prove a spring
Of pure felicity.

[Pg 016]

THE LESSON OF THE LEAVES.

How do the leaves grow,
In spring, upon their stems?
Oh! the sap swells up with a drop for all,
And that is life to them.

What do the leaves do
Through the long summer hours,
They make a home for the wandering birds,
And shelter the wild flowers.

How do the leaves fade
Beneath the autumn blast?
Oh! they fairer grow before they die,
Their brightest is their last.

We, too, are like leaves,
O children! weak and small;
God knows each leaf of the forest shade:
He knows us, each and all.

Never a leaf falls
Until its part is done;
God gives us grace, like sap, and then
Some work to every one.

We, too, must grow old,
Beneath the autumn sky;
But lovelier and brighter our lives may grow,
Like leaves before they die.

[Pg 017]

Brighter with kind deeds,
With love to others given;
Till the leaf falls off from the autumn tree,

And the spirit is in heaven.

THE SPRING BIRD'S LESSON.

Thou'rt up betimes, my little bird,
And out this morning early,
For still the tender bud is closed,
And still the grass is pearly.

Why rise so soon, thou little bird,
Thy soft, warm nest forsaking?
To brave the dull, cold morning sky,
While day is scarcely breaking?

Ah! thou art wise, thou little bird,
For fast the hours are flying;
And this young day, but dawning now,
Will soon, alas! be dying.

I'll learn of thee, thou little bird,
And slothful habits scorning,
No longer sleep youth's dawn away,
Nor waste life's precious morning.
[Pg 018]

THE ORPHAN'S HYMN.

Father,—an orphan's prayer receive,
And listen to my plaintive cry:
Thou only canst my wants relieve,
Who art my Father in the sky.

I have no father here below,
No mother kind to wipe my tears,—
These tender names I never know,
To soothe my grief and quell my fears.

But Thou wilt be my parent,—nigh
In every hour of deep distress,
And listen to an orphan's sigh,
And soothe the anguish of my breast.

For Thou hast promised all I need,
More than a father's, mother's care:
Thou wilt the hungry orphan feed,
And always listen to my prayer.

MORNING.

Dear Lord, another day has come,
And through the hours of night,
In a good bed and quiet home
I've slept till morning light.

[Pg 019]

Then let me give Thee thanks and praise,
For Thou art very good;
Oh, teach my little heart to raise
The prayer that children should.

Keep me this day from faults and sin,
And make me good and mild;
Thy Holy Spirit place within,
Grant grace unto a child.

Help me obey my parents dear,
For they are very kind;
And when the hour of rest draws near,
Another prayer I'll find.

EVENING.

The day is gone,—the silent night
Invites me to my peaceful bed;
But, Lord, I know that it is right
To thank Thee, ere I rest my head.

For my good meals and pleasant hours,
That I have had this present day,
Let me exert my infant powers
To praise Thee, nor forget to pray.

Thou art most good. I can't tell all
That Thou hast ever done for me;
My Shepherd, now on Thee I call,
From dangers still preserve me free.

[Pg 020]

If I've been naughty on this day,
Oh! make me sorry for my fault;
Do Thou forgive, and teach the way
To follow Jesus as I ought.

And now I'll lay me down to rest,
Myself,—my friends,—all safely keep;
May Thy great name be ever blest,
Both when we wake, and when we sleep.

A MOMENT TOO LATE!

A moment too late, my beautiful bird,—
A moment too late are you now,
The wind has your soft, downy nest disturbed,—
The nest that you hung on the bough.
A moment too late,—that string in your bill
Would have fastened it firmly and strong;
But see, there it goes rolling over the hill!
Oh! you tarried a moment too long.

A moment too late,—too late, busy bee,
The honey has dropped from the flower;
No use to creep under the petals to see,—
It stood ready to drop for an hour.
A moment too late,—had you sped on your wing,
The honey would not have been gone;
But see what a very,—a very sad thing,
'Tis to tarry a moment too long.

[Pg 021]

A LITTLE SONNET ABOUT LITTLE THINGS.

The little, smoky vapors
Produce the drops of rain;
These little drops commingle,
And form the boundless main.

Then, drops compose the fountains;
And little grains of sand
Compose the mighty mountains,
That high above us stand.

The little atoms, it is said,
Compose the solid earth;
Such truths will show, if rightly read,
What little things are worth.

For, as the sea of drops is made,
So it is Heaven's plan,
That atoms should compose the globe,
And actions mark the man.

The little seconds soon pass by,
And leave our time the less;
And on these moments, as they fly,
Hang woe or happiness.

For, as the present hour is spent,
So must the future be;
Each action lives, in its effect,
Through all eternity.

[Pg 022]

The little sins and follies,
That lead the soul astray,
Leave stains, that tears of penitence,
May never wash away.

And little acts of charity,
And little deeds of love,
May make this world a paradise,
Like to that world above.

EXAMINATION.

Before we close our eyes to-night,
Oh, let us each these questions ask!
Have we endeavored to do right,
Nor thought our duty a hard task?

Have we been gentle, lowly, meek,
And the small voice of conscience heard?
When passion tempted us to speak,
Have we repressed the angry word?

Have we with cheerful zeal obeyed
What our kind parents bade us do?
And not by word or action said
The thing that was not strictly true?

In hard temptation’s troubled hour,
Oh! have we stopped to think and pray,
[Pg 023] That God would please to give us power
To chase the naughty thought away?

Oh, Thou! who seest all my heart,
Do Thou forgive and love me still
And unto me new strength impart,
And make me love and do Thy will.

GOD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE.

God is in His holy temple;
Thoughts of earth be silent now,
While with reverence we assemble,
And before His presence bow.
He is with us, now and ever,
While we call upon His name,
Aiding every good endeavor,
Guiding every upward aim.

God is in His holy temple,—
In the pure and humble mind;
In the reverent heart and simple;
In the soul from sense refined.
Then let every low emotion
Banished far and silent be;
And our hearts in pure devotion,
Lord, be temples worthy Thee.
[Pg 024]

MORNING GLORIES.

They said, “don’t plant them,” mother; “they’re so common and so poor;”
But of seeds I had no other, so I dropped them by the door;
And they soon were brightly growing, in the rich and teeming soil,
Stretching upward, upward, upward, to reward me for my toil.

They grew all o’er the casement, and they wreathed around the door,
All about the chamber windows, upward,—upward, ever more;
And each dawn, in glowing beauty, glistening with early dew,
Is the house all wreathed with splendor, every morning bright and new.

What, if they close at mid-day? ’tis because their work is done,
And they shut their crimson petals from the kisses of the sun;
Teaching every day their lesson to my weary, panting soul,
To be faithful in well doing, stretching upward for the goal,

Sending out the climbing tendrils, trusting God for strength and power,
[Pg 025] To support, and aid, and comfort, in the trying day and hour.
Ne’er spurn the thing that’s common, nor call homely flowers poor,
Each hath a holy mission, like my Glory o’er the door.

HOW BEAUTIFUL THE SETTING SUN.

How beautiful the setting sun!
The clouds, how bright and gay!
The stars, appearing one by one,
How beautiful are they!

And when the moon climbs up the sky,
And sheds her gentle light,
And hangs her crystal lamp on high,
How beautiful is night!

And can it be, that I'm possessed
Of something brighter far?
Glow's there a light within this breast,
Out-shining every star?

Yes, should the sun and stars turn pale,
The mountains melt away,
This flame within shall never fail,
But live in endless day.
[Pg 026]

SUMMER TIME.

I love to hear the little birds
That carol on the trees;
I love the gentle, murmuring stream;
I love the evening breeze.

I love to hear the busy hum
Of honey-making bee,
And learn a lesson,—hard to learn,—
Of patient industry.

I love to think of Him who made
Those pleasant things for me,
Who gave me life, and health, and strength,
And eyes, that I might see.

The child who raises, morn and eve,
In prayer its tiny voice
Who grieves whene'er its parents grieve,
And joys when they rejoice,—

In whose bright eyes young genius glows,
Whose heart, without a blot,
Is fresh and pure as summer's rose,—
That child's a sunny spot.
[Pg 027]

LIKE JESUS.

I want to be like Jesus,
So lowly and so meek;
For no one marked an angry word,
Whoever heard him speak.

I want to be like Jesus,
So frequently in prayer;
Alone upon the mountain top,
He met his Father there.

I want to be like Jesus:
I never, never find,
That he, though persecuted, was
To any one unkind.

I want to be like Jesus,
Engaged in doing good;
So that of me it may be said,
I have done what I could.

I HAVE A HOME.

I have a home in which to live,
A bed to rest upon,
Good food to eat, and fire to warm,
And raiment to put on.

[Pg 028]

Kind parents, full of gentle love,
Brothers and sisters, too,
With many faithful, loving friends,
Who teach me what to do.

How many little children have
No food, nor clothes to wear,
No house, nor home, nor parents kind,
To guide them by their care.

For all Thy bounty, O my God,
May I be grateful found,
And ever show my love to Thee,
By loving all around.

GOD.

God!—What a great and holy name!
Oh! who can speak His worth?
By saints in heaven He is adored,
Obeyed by men on earth
And yet a little child may bend
And say: “My Father and my Friend.”

The glorious sun, which blazes high,
The moon, more pale and dim,
And all the stars which fill the sky,
Are made and ruled by Him:
And yet a child may ask His care,
And call upon His name in prayer.

[Pg 029]

And this large world of ours below,
The waters and the land,
And all the trees and flowers that grow,
Were fashioned by His hand;
Yes,—and He forms our infant race,
And even I may seek His face.

THE BIRD’S NEST.

There’s a nest in the hedge-row,
Half hid by the leaves,
And the sprays, white with blossom,

Bend o'er it like eaves.

God gives birds their lodging,
He gives them their food,
And they trust He will give them
Whatever is good.

Ah! when our rich blessings,
My child, we forget;
When for some little trouble
We murmur and fret;

Hear sweet voices singing
In hedges and trees:
Shall we be less thankful,
Less trustful than these?
[Pg 030]

THE LARK.

Ah! little lark, I see you there,
So very, very high;
Just like a little, tiny speck
Up in the clear blue sky.

How good is He, who strengthens thus
Your slight and tender wing,
And teaches such a little throat
So sweet a song to sing.

EFFORT.

Scorn not the slightest word nor deed,
Nor deem it void of power;
There's fruit in each wind-wafted seed,
That waits its natal hour.

A whispered word may touch the heart,
And call it back to life;
A look of love bid sin depart,
And still unholy strife.

No act falls fruitless; none can tell
How vast its powers may be,
Nor what results, unfolded, dwell
Within it, silently.

Work on,—despair not,—bring thy mite,
Nor care how small it be;
[Pg 031] God is with all who serve the right,
The holy, true, and free.

THE SEA SHELL.

There is found a tiny sea shell,
Half-imbedded in the sand,
Sometimes flashing in the moonlight,
Like a diamond on the strand.

And from out the winding chambers

That are hid within the shell,
Ever steals a curious music,
That doth never sink nor swell.

But, like the far-off voice of ocean,
Murmurs forth its monotone,
Holding thus within its bosom
E'er an ocean of its own.

Thus the sea shells ever gather
Little oceans in their breasts,
Which do echo there for ever
Ocean's hymn, which never rests.

Thus the soul will echo music,
Born in heaven, and not of earth;
And give praises all, for ever,
To the One that gave it birth.
[Pg 032]

GOD IS GOOD.

Morn amid the mountains,
Lovely solitude,
Gushing streams and fountains,
Murmur, "God is good."

Now the glad sun, breaking,
Pours a golden flood;
Deepest vales awaking,
Echo, "God is good."

Wake and join the chorus,
Man with soul endued!
He, whose smile is o'er us,
God,—our God,—is good.

DESPISE NOT SIMPLE THINGS.

Despise not simple things:
The humblest flower that wakes
In early spring, to scent the air
Of woodland brakes,
Should have thy love as well
As blushing parlor rose,
That never felt the perfect breath
Of nature round it close.

[Pg 033]

Despise not simple things:
The poor demand thy love,
As well as those who in the halls
Of splendor move.
The beggar at thy door
Thou shouldst not e'er despise;
For that may be a noble heart
Which 'neath his tatters lies.

Despise not little things:

An ant can teach of toil;
The buttercup can light the heart
With its own pleasant smile;
'Tis not from towering heights alone
The noble thought within us springs;
There's something holy and sublime
In the love of simple things.

THE VIOLET.

“Oh, mother! mother! only look!
See what I've got for thee;
I found it close beside the brook,—
This pretty violet,—see.

“And father says there will be more
So, mother, when they come,
We'll pick my little basket full,
And bring them with us home.

[Pg 034]

“And, mother,—only listen now!
'Tis very strange, indeed,—
This pretty flower, with leaves and all,
Was once a little seed.

“When it was planted in the ground,
The sun shone very bright,
And made the little seed so warm,
It grew with all its might.”

“Yes, Charles: the bright sun made it warm,
'Twas wet with rain and dew;
The leaves came first, and then, ere long,
We found the violet blue.

“Charley, I think when we are good,
Obedient, and kind,
Good feelings, like the little flowers,
Are growing in the mind.

“But when we suffer evil thoughts
To grow and flourish there,
Then they are like the noxious weeds,
That choke the flowerets fair.”

CHILD'S TALENT

God intrusts to all
Talents, few or many;
None so young or small,
That they have not any.

[Pg 035]

Though the great and wise
May have more in number,
Yet my own I prize,
And they must not slumber.

Little drops of rain.
Bring the springing flowers;
And I may attain
Much by little powers.

Every little mite,
Every little measure,
Helps to spread the light,
Helps to swell the treasure.

THE STARS ARE COMING.

“See, the stars are coming
In the far blue skies;
Mother, look! they brighten;
Are they angels’ eyes?”

“No, my child; the lustre
Of the stars is given,
Like the hues of flowers,
By the God of heaven.”

“Mother, if I study,
Sure He’ll make me know
[Pg 036] Why the stars He kindled,
O’er our earth to glow?”

“Child! what God created,
Has a glorious aim;
Thine it is to worship,—
Thine to love His name.”

THE FLOWERS.

God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
Without a flower at all.

He might have made enough,—enough
For every want of ours,—
For luxury, medicine, and food,
And yet have made no flowers.

Then wherefore, wherefore were they made,
And dyed with rainbow light,
All fashioned with supremest grace,
Upspringing day and night.

In fertile valleys, green and low,
And on the mountains high,
And in the silent wilderness,
Where no one passes by.

[Pg 037]

Our outward life requires them not,—
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
And beautify the earth.

To comfort man,—to whisper hope,
Whene'er his faith is dim;
For He, who careth for the flowers,
Will surely care for him.

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

One step, and then another,
And the longest walk is ended;
One stitch and then another,
And the largest rent is mended
One brick upon another,
And the highest wall is made;
One flake upon another,
And the deepest snow is laid.

So the little coral workers,
By their slow, but constant, motion,
Have built those pretty islands
In the distant, dark blue ocean;
And the noblest undertakings
Man's wisdom hath conceived,
By oft-repeated efforts
Have been patiently achieved.
[Pg 038]

NEVER, MY CHILD, FORGET TO PRAY.

Never, my child, forget to pray,
Whate'er the business of the day;
If happy dreams have blessed thy sleep,
Or startling fears have made thee weep.

With holy thoughts begin the day,
And ne'er, my child, forget to pray;
Ask Him, by whom the birds are fed,
To give to thee thy daily bread.

If wealth her bounty should bestow,
Praise Him from whom all blessings flow;
If He, who gave, should take away,
Never, my child, forget to pray.

The time will come, when thou wilt miss
A father's and a mother's kiss;
And then, my child, perchance thou'lt see,
Some who, in prayer, ne'er bend the knee;
From such examples turn away,
And ne'er, my child, forget to pray.

THE CHILD'S PRAYER.

I am a very little child,
Yet God, who dwells above,
Will hear me, if I rightly pray,
And answer me in love.

Heavenly Father! wilt thou bless
My father and my mother;
And also bless my sister dear;
And bless my baby brother.

Forgive me, if I've been to-day
A very naughty child;
And teach me how I may become
A boy both good and mild.

And keep me out of every ill;
And teach me how to pray,
That I may be a better child
On every coming day.

A CHILD-LIKE SPIRIT.

Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me,
The changes that will surely come,
I do not fear to see;
I ask Thee for a present mind,
Intent on pleasing thee.

I ask thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes;
[Pg 040] A heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
And seeks for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know:
I would be treated as a child,
And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate;
A work of lowly love to do,
For Him on whom I wait.

I ask Thee for the daily strength
To none that ask denied;
A mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side;
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

And if some things I do not ask
In my cup of blessing be,
I'd have my spirit filled the more
With grateful love to Thee,—
More careful not to serve Thee much,
But please Thee perfectly.
[Pg 041]

LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

Live for something, be not idle,
Look about thee for employ,
Sit not down to useless dreaming,—
Labor is the sweetest joy.
Folded hands are ever weary,
Selfish hearts are never gay,
Life for thee hath many duties,—
Active be, then, whilst thou may.

Scatter blessings in thy pathway!
Gentle words and cheering smiles
Better are than gold and silver,
With their grief-dispelling wiles.
As the pleasant sunshine falleth
Ever on the grateful earth,
So let sympathy and kindness
Gladden well the darkened hearth.

Hearts there are oppressed and weary,—
Drop the tear of sympathy;
Whisper words of hope and comfort;
Give, and thy reward shall be
Joy unto thy soul returning,
From this perfect fountain-head;
Freely, as thou freely givest,
Shall the grateful light be shed.
[Pg 042]

THE BEAUTIFUL.

The beautiful! the beautiful!
Where do we find it not?
It is an all-pervading grace,
And lighteth every spot.

It sparkles on the ocean wave,
It glitters in the dew;
We see it in the glorious sky.
And in the floweret's hue.

On mountain-top, in valley deep,
We find its presence there;
The beautiful! the beautiful!
It liveth every where.

The glories of the noontide day,
The still and solemn night;
The changing seasons,—all can bring
Their tribute of delight.

There's beauty in the child's first smile;
And in that look of faith,
The Christian's last on earth, before
His eyes are closed in death.

And in the beings that we love,
Who have our tenderest care,
The beautiful! the beautiful!

How sweet to trace it there!

[Pg 043]

'Twas in the glance that God threw o'er
The young created earth;
When He proclaimed it very good,
The beautiful had birth.

Then who shall say this world is dull,
And all to sadness given,
While yet there grows on every side,
The smile that came from heaven?

If so much loveliness is sent
To grace our earthly home,
How beautiful! how beautiful!
Will be the world to come.

DON'T KILL THE BIRDS.

Don't kill the birds!—the little birds,
That sing about your door,
Soon as the joyous spring has come,
And chilling storms are o'er.

The little birds!—how sweet they sing!
Oh! let them joyous live;
And do not seek to take the life
Which you can never give.

Don't kill the birds!—the pretty birds,
That play among the trees!
'Twould make the earth a cheerless place,
Should we dispense with these.

[Pg 044]

Don't kill the birds!—the happy birds,
That bless the field and grove;
So innocent to look upon,—
They claim our warmest love.

LITTLE ACTS OF KINDNESS.

Little acts of kindness,
Trifling though they are,
How they serve to brighten
This dark world of care!
Little acts of kindness,
Oh, how potent they,
To dispel the shadows
Of life's cloudy day.

Little acts of kindness,
How they cheer the heart!
What a world of gladness
Will a smile impart!
How a gentle accent
Calms the troubled soul,

When the waves of passion
O’er it wildly roll!

You may have around you
Sunshine, if you will,
Or a host of shadows,
Gloomy,—dreary,—chill.
[Pg 045] If you want the sunshine,
Smile, though sad at heart;
To the poor and needy
Kindly aid impart.

To the soul-despairing
Breathe a hopeful word;
From your lips be only
Tones of kindness heard.
Ever give for anger,
Love and tenderness;
And, in blessing others.
You yourself will bless.

Little acts of kindness,
Nothing do they cost;
Yet when they are wanting,
Life’s best charm is lost.
Little acts of kindness,
Richest gems of earth;
Though they seem but trifles,
Priceless is their worth.

* * * * *

If wisdom’s ways you wisely seek,
Five things observe with care:—
To whom you speak,—of whom you speak,—
And how,—and when,—and where.
[Pg 046]

THE BLESSINGS.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
They the kingdom shall possess,
Rich in faith and heavenly blessings,
Let us ever forward press.

Blessed are the sad and mournful,
Weeping o’er their treasures gone
For the darkness gathered o’er them
Is the harbinger of morn.

Blessed are the meek and lowly,
They the green earth shall inherit;
Full of love, and peace, and gladness,
Fruits of God’s most Holy Spirit.

Blessed they who thirst and hunger;
All their wants shall be supplied;
Never yet have been forsaken
They, who on their God relied.

Blessed they who, loving mercy,
Joy not in another's pain;
All the mercy shown to others
They shall for themselves obtain.

Blessed are the pure and prayerful,
Seeking God in every place;
They shall in their home eternal
See Him ever face to face.

[Pg 047]

Blessed are the good peace-makers,
For God's children they shall be;
Of His glory full partakers,
When from earth their spirits flee.

Blessed ye, when men revile you,
Treat you falsely for My sake;
For the prophets gone before you
Did the self-same treatment take.

Let us then be ever mindful
Of the precepts Christ has given;
So that when this life is over,
We may dwell with Him in heaven.

WHEN FATHER COMES HOME.

When my father comes home in the evening from work,
Then I will get up on his knee,
And tell him how many nice lessons I learn,
And show him how good I can be.

He shall hear what number I know how to count;
I'll tell him what words I can spell;
And if I can learn something new every day,
I hope soon to read very well.

[Pg 048]

I'll repeat to him all the good verses I know,
And tell him how kind we must be,
That we never must hurt little creatures at all:
And he will be glad, and love me.

I'll tell him we always must try to please God,
And never be cruel or rude;
For God is the Father of all living things,
He cares for and blesses the good.

HARVEST-FIELD OF TIME

Children, all of us are gleaners
In the harvest-field of time;
Day by day the grain is ripening
For a sunnier clime.

Whether in the early morning,
Going forth with busy feet,

Or, as weary laborers, resting
'Mid the noon-day heat;

Let us strive, with cheerful spirits,
Each our duties to fulfil,
Till the time of harvest,—subject
To the Master's will.

Let us garner up sweet memories,
Bound with ties of love;
Pleasant thoughts to cheer the pathway
To our home above.

[Pg 049]

Trusting that these precious gleanings,
Bound with loving hand,
May in golden sheaves be gathered
To the spirit land.

PRAYER.

Watch o'er me, Heavenly Shepherd,
Extend Thy crook of love,
That so no germ of anger
A source of trial prove.

Keep me within Thy pastures,
And feed me from Thy hand;
Let no temptation snare me,
Or tear me from Thy hand.

May innocence and purity
My clothing ever be,
That though this earth is still my home,
I may walk close to Thee.

REFLECTIONS.

We're just starting into life,—
What shall arm us for its strife?
What shall lead our steps aright?
Whence shall come a guiding light?

[Pg 050]

Whence shall come the saving word?
How the voice of God be heard?
Not from sages,—not from books,
Nor twinkling stars, nor babbling brooks.

These all speak His power and love,
Who rules below, and rules above;
But to know His holy will,
Oft in silence deep and still,

We must turn an ear within;
There, midst life's disturbing din,
The "still, small voice," in whispers sweet
Shall point our way and guide our feet.

WHAT IS HEAVEN?

Love is heaven, and heaven is love,
This is all of heaven above;
There no envy, wrath, nor strife,
Mars the bliss of endless life.

There no anger swells the breast,
There no pride disturbs the rest;
Nor can hatred dwell above,
In that world of perfect love.

[Pg 051]

THE CHILD’S MONITOR.

The wind blows down the largest tree,
And yet the wind I cannot see.

Playmates far off, that have been kind,
My thought can bring before my mind.

The past, by it, is present brought,
And yet I cannot see my thought.

The charming rose perfumes the air,
Yet I can see no perfume there.

Blithe Robin’s notes,—how sweet! how clear!
From his small bill they reach my ear;

And while upon the air they float,
I hear, yet cannot see, a note.

When I would do what is forbid,
By something in my heart I’m chid;

When good I think, then quick and pat,
That something says, “My child, do that.”

When I too near the stream would go,
So pleased to see the waters flow,

That something says without a sound,
“Take care, dear child, thou mayst be drowned!”

[Pg 052]

And for the poor whene’er I grieve,
That something says, “A penny give.”

Thus spirits good and ill there be,
Although invisible to me;

Whate’er I do, they see me still,
But oh, good spirits! guide my will.

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD.

I knew a widow very poor,
Who four small children had;

The eldest was but six years old,
A gentle, modest lad.

And very hard this widow toiled
To feed her children four:
An honest pride the woman felt,
Though she was very poor.

To labor she would leave her home,
For children must be fed;
And glad was she when she could buy
A shilling's worth of bread.

And this was all the children had,
On any day to eat;
They drank their water, ate their bread,
But never tasted meat.

[Pg 053]

One day, when snow was falling fast,
And piercing was the air,
I thought that I would go and see
How these poor children were.

Ere long I reached their cheerless home,
'Twas searched by every breeze;
When going in, the eldest child
I saw upon his knees.

I paused, and listened to the boy,—
He never raised his head;
But still went on and said,—“*Give us
This day our daily bread.*”

I waited till the child was done,
Still listening as he prayed;
And when he rose, I asked him why
The Lord's Prayer he had said.

“Why, sir,” said he, “this morning, when
My mother went away,
She wept because, she said, she had
No bread for us to-day.

“She said, we children now must starve,
Our father being dead;
And then I told her not to cry,
For I could get some bread.

[Pg 054]

“*Our Father*, sir, the prayer begins,
Which makes me think that *He*,
As we have got no father here,
Would our kind father be.
“And then, you know, the prayer, sir, too,
Asks God for bread each day;
So, in the corner, sir, I went,
And that's what made me pray.”

I quickly left that wretched room,
And went with fleeting feet;
And very soon was back again
With food enough to eat.

“I thought God heard me,” said the boy;
I answered with a nod;
I could not speak; but much I thought
Of that child’s *faith in God*.

TRUE REST.

Sweet is the pleasure
Itself cannot spoil!
Is not true leisure
One with true toil?

[Pg 055]

Thou, that would taste it,
Still do thy best;
Use it, not waste it,
Else, ’tis no rest.

Wouldst behold beauty
Near thee, all round?
Only hath duty
Such a sight found.

Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to its sphere.

’Tis the brook’s motion,
Clear without strife,
Fleeing to ocean,
After its life.

Deeper devotion
Nowhere hath knelt,
Fuller emotion
Heart never felt.

’Tis loving and serving,
The highest and best!
’Tis onward,—unswerving,—
And that is true rest.

[Pg 056]

ONE BY ONE.

One by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going,—
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
Let thy whole strength go to each
Let no future dreams elate thee,

Learn thou first what these can teach

One by one (bright gifts from heaven)
Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given,
Ready, too, to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee.
Do not fear an armed band;
One will fade as others greet thee,
Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at life's long sorrow;
See how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for to-morrow,
Every day begin again.

Every hour that flits so slowly,
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
If thou set each gem with care.

[Pg 057]

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passing hours despond!
Nor, thy daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token,
Reaching Heaven; one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere the pilgrimage be done.

GOD SEEN IN HIS WORKS.

There's not a tint that paints the rose,
Or decks the lily fair,
Or streaks the humblest flower that blows,
But God has placed it there.

At early dawn, there's not a gale
Across the landscape driven,
And not a breeze that sweeps the vale,
That is not sent by Heaven.

There's not, of grass, a single blade,
Or leaf of loveliest green,
Where heavenly skill is not displayed,
And heavenly wisdom seen.

There's not a tempest, dark and dread,
Or storm that rends the air,
Or blast that sweeps the ocean's bed,
But God's own voice is there.

[Pg 058]

Around,—beneath,—below,—above,—
Wherever space extends,
There God displays His boundless love,

And power with mercy blends.

THE LITTLE SUNBEAM.

A little sunbeam stole
On a summer's day,
Through a tiny crevice,
To where a sick man lay.

It played upon the wall,
And upon his table:
With a smile he watched it
As long as he was able.

Much he loved the sunbeam,
Little dancing light;
It told of sunny hours,
Of skies and meadows bright.

Kind words are like sunbeams,
Stealing into hearts;
Scatter them most freely,
Ere light of life departs.
[Pg 059]

COMPASSION.

Oh! turn that little foot aside,
Nor crush beneath its tread,
The smallest insect of the earth,
Which has from God its bread.

If He, who made the universe,
Looks down in kindest love,
To shape a humble thing like this,
From His high throne above,

Thou shouldst not dare, in wantonness,
That creature's life destroy;
Nor give a pang to any thing
That He has made for joy.

My child, begin in little things
To act the gentle part;
For God may turn His love away
From the cruel, selfish heart.

I WILL BE GOOD TO-DAY.

"I will be good, dear mother,"
I heard a sweet child say,
"I will be good,—now watch me!
I will be good all day."

[Pg 060]

She lifted up her bright young eyes,
With a soft and pleasing smile;
Then a mother's kiss was on her lips;
So pure and free from guile.

And when night came, that little one,
In kneeling down to pray,
Said, in a soft and whispering tone,
“Have I been good to-day?”

Oh, many, many bitter tears
'Twould save us, did we say,
Like that dear child, with earnest heart,
“I will be good to-day.”

I’LL DO WHAT I CAN.

I may, if I have but a mind,
Do good in many ways;
Plenty to do, the young may find,
In these our busy days.
Sad would it be, though young and small,
If I were of no use at all.

One gentle word that I may speak,
Or one kind loving deed,
May, though a trifle, poor and weak,
Prove like a tiny seed;
And who can tell what good may spring
From such a very little thing?

[Pg 061]

Then let me try, each day and hour,
To act upon this plan;
What little good is in my power,
To do it while I can:
If to be useful thus I try,
I may do better by and by.

TIME TO ARISE.

Come, little sister, 'tis time to arise,
The sun has arisen to brighten the skies;
Every bird is singing high,—
Birds are glad, and so am I.

Merrily, merrily, those in the tree,
Bluebird and Robin, are singing to me;
Round the window see them fly,—
Birds are glad, and so am I.

Glad little robin, you never can know
Who is the Maker who fashioned you so;
Yet you cannot weep nor sigh,—
Birds are glad, and so am I.

He who created the birds of the air,
Surely will keep me from trouble and care;
He has taught the birds to fly,—
Birds are glad, and so am I.

[Pg 062]

DIVINE GUIDANCE.

O Thou, who hast at Thy command,
The hearts of all men in Thy hand!
Our wayward, erring hearts incline
To know no other will but Thine.

Our wishes, our desires control;
Mould every purpose of the soul;
O'er all may we victorious be,
That stands between ourselves and Thee.

Thrice blest will all our blessings be,
When we can look through them to Thee;
When each glad heart its tribute pays
Of love, and gratitude, and praise.

INDUSTRY.

Up, be doing, little children:
Up, be doing, while 'tis day;
Do the work the Master gives you,
Do not loiter by the way:
For we all have work before us,
Thou, my child, as well as I;
Let us seek to learn our duty,
And perform it cheerfully.

Be up and doing, little children,
Gentle be, and ever kind;
[Pg 063] Helpful to your loving mothers,
E'en their slightest wishes mind.
Let your little playmates love you,
For your care and gentle play;
And the feeble and more wilful,
Help them by your kindly way.

“PRAYER IS THE SOUL’S SINCERE DESIRE.”

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That glows within the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

ANGRY WORDS.

Angry words! O let them never
From the tongue unbridled slip;
[Pg 064] May the heart's best impulse ever
Check them, e'er they soil the lip.

Love is much too pure and holy,
Friendship is too sacred far,
For a moment's reckless folly
Thus to desolate and mar.

Angry words are lightly spoken,
Bitterest thoughts are rashly stirred;
Brightest links of life are broken
By a single angry word.

THE REQUEST.

Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at Thy throne of grace
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm, a thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessings of Thy grace impart,
And make me live to Thee.

Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end.

Transcriber's Note:

In the index, where two poems were listed on the same page, separate line entries were made so that each poem could have a unique link.