

THE FIRE BY THE SEA.

There were seven fishers with their nets
in their hands,
And they walked and talked by the sea-
side sand ;
Yet sweet as the sweet dew-fall
The words they spake, though they spake
so low,
Across the long, dim centuries flow,
And we know them, one and all—
Ay! know them and love them all.

Seven sad men in the days of old,
And one was gentle and one was bold,
And they walked with downward
eyes ;
The bold was Peter, the gentle was John,
And they all were sad, for the Lord was
gone,
And they knew not if He would rise—
Knew not if the dead would rise.

The live-long night, till the moon went
out
In the drowning waters, they beat about ;
Beat slow through the fog their way ;
The sails drooped down with the
wringing wet,
And no man drew but an empty net,
And now 'twas the break of the day—
The great, glad break of the day.

"Cast in your nets on the other side!"
('Twas Jesus speaking across the tide.)
And they cast and were dragging
hard ;
But that disciple whom Jesus loved
Cried straightway out, for his heart was
moved,
"It is our risen Lord—
Our Master and our Lord!"

Then Simon, girding his fisher's coat,
Went over the nets and out of the boat,
Ay! first of them all was he ;
Repenting sore the denial past,
He feared no longer his heart to cast
Like an anchor into the sea—
Down deep in the hungry sea.

And the others, through the mists so dim,
In a little ship came after him,
Dragging their net through the tide ;
And when they had gotten close to the
land
They saw a fire of coals on the sand,
And with His arms of love so wide,
Jesus, the crucified!

'Tis long, and long, and long ago
Since the rosy lights began to flow
O'er the hills of Galilee ;
And with eager eyes and lifted hands
The seven fishers saw on the sands
The fire of coals by the sea—
On the wet, wild sands by the sea.

'Tis long ago, yet faith in our souls
Is kindled just by that fire of coals
That streamed o'er the mists of the
sea ;
Where Peter, girding his fisher's coat,
Went over the nets and out of the boat,
To answer, "Lov'st thou me?"
Thrice over, "Lov'st thou me?"

—Alice Cary.

THE POWER OF A TRUE LIFE.

I remember an incident which
occurred during my boyhood in
Tennessee. Old General A., a
man of great force of character,
but a wicked man, was desperately
sick, and at last the physician told
Mrs. A. that all hope of her hus-
band's recovery was gone. She
went to him at once and said :

"Tom, the doctor says you are
dying, and I cannot bear to see you
die unsaved ; shall I send for my
minister to talk and pray with you ?"
"No," said the dying man "send
for old Uncle Ben."

Ben was a plantation blacksmith,
and a powerful exhorter, whose holy
life illustrated his doctrine.

When the old slave came in,
General A. said.

"Ben, they say your master has
got to die ; and, Ben, I can't die in
my sins ; what must I do ?"

"Mahs Tom," said the old man,
solemnly, "I'se mighty sorry to see
yo' so poorly ; but, Mahs Tom, yo'
done been a powerful sinnah, and
yo' gotter do some powerful 'pente-
ment and b'lieven ef yo' gwine to git yo'
soul saved."

"Well, Ben," said the dying
master, "I will, I will. Now Ben,
you get right down here, and pray
for your old master."

And Uncle Ben knelt down by
the general's bedside and poured
out his heart with strong crying and
tears to Him who is able to save,
and when the prayer was ended the
two old men, the white master and
the faithful black slave, were brethren
in Christ Jesus.—*Record of
Christian Work.*

TO US IS LEFT THE CHOICE.

To be in the world and yet not
of it ; to have the world and not
let the world have us ; to be the
world's masters, and not the world's
slaves, is the true standard for all
who confess the name of Christ.
Centuries ago the Evil One offered
the Son of God the kingdoms of
this world if He would but fall
down and worship him, and in this
age the same seductive wiles are
thrown around the children of God.
By the glamour of wealth, pleasure,
social position, fame, and many
other kindred devices, Satan lures
the Christian, tempting him from

time to time until the real desire of
the heart is not bent with single-
minded longing upon the attain-
ment of God's approval or of his
celestial rewards, but has become
diverted to an excessive degree on
temporal objects, chained down to
earth, and made earthly by the
over-eager pursuit of success, or by
an over-warm delight in the pur-
sue of enjoyment. "No man
can serve two masters." God leaves
the choice with us. We must settle
it once for all whether it shall be
God or whether it shall be mam-
mon.—*Christian Work.*

HE CARETH FOR THEE.

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."—1. Peter v. 7.

What can it mean? Is it aught to Him
That the nights are long and the days are
dim?

Can He be touched by the griefs I bear,
Which sadden the heart and whiten the
hair?

Around His throne are eternal calms,
And strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss untroubled by any strife.
How can He care for my poor life?

And yet I want Him to care for me,
While I live in this world where the sor-
rows be

When the lights die down on the path I
take ;

When strength is feeble, and friends for-
sake ;

When love and music, that once did bless,
Have left me to silence and loneliness ;
And life-song changes to sobbing prayers—
Then my heart cries out for a God who
cares.

When shadows hang o'er me the whole
day long ;

And my spirit is bowed with shame and
wrong ;

When I am not good, and the deeper
shade

Of conscious sin makes my heart afraid ;
And the busy world has too much to do
To stay in its course to help me through,
And I long for a Saviour—can it be
That the God of the Universe cares for
me?

Oh, wonderful story of deathless love !
Each child is dear to that heart above ;
He fights for me when I cannot fight ;
He comforts me in the gloom of night ;
He lifts the burden, for He is strong ;
He stills the sigh, and awakens the song ;
The sorrow that bowed me down He
bears,

And loves and pardons, because He cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again.
We are not alone in our hours of pain ;
Our Father stoops from His throne above
To soothe and quiet us with His love.
He leaves us not when the storm is high,
And we have safety, for He is nigh.
Can it be trouble which He doth share?
Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord *does* care.