

ST. JOHN THE AGED.

I'm growing very old. This weary head
 That hath so often leaned on Jesus' breast,
 In days long past that seem almost a dream,
 Is bent and hoary with its weight of years.
 These limbs that followed him, my Master, oft
 From Galilee to Judah; yea, that stood
 Beneath the cross and trembled with His groans,
 No longer bear me even through the streets
 To preach unto my children. E'en my lips
 Refuse to form the words my heart sends forth.
 My ears are dull; they scarcely hear the sobs
 Of my dear children gathered 'round my couch;
 My eyes so dim, they cannot see their tears.
 God lays his hand upon me—yea, His HAND,
 And not His ROD—the gentle hand that I
 Felt, those three years, so often pressed in mine,
 In friendship such as passed a woman's love.

I'm old, so old! I cannot recollect
 The faces of my friends, and I forget
 The words and deeds that make up daily life;
 But that dear face, and every word He spoke,
 Grow more distinct as others fade away,
 So that I live with Him and holy dead
 More than with living.

Seventy years ago
 I was a fisher by the sacred sea.
 It was at sunset. How the tranquil tide
 Kissed dreamily the pebbles! How the light
 Crept up the distant hills, and in its wake
 Soft purple shadows wrapped the dewy fields!
 And then He came and called me. Then I gazed
 For the first time on that sweet face. Those eyes
 From out of which, as from a window, shone
 Divinity, looked on my inmost soul,
 And lighted it for ever. Then his words
 Broke on the silence of my heart and made
 The whole world musical. Incarnate love
 Took hold of me and claimed me for its own;
 I followed in the twilight, holding fast
 His mantle.

Oh! what holy walks we had.
 Thro' harvest fields, and desolate, dreary wastes;
 And oftimes He leaned upon my arm,
 Weary and wayworn. I was young and strong,
 And so upbore Him. Lord! now I am weak,
 And old, and feeble. Let me rest on thee!
 So, put thine arm around me. Closer still!
 How strong Thou art! The twilight draws apace;
 Come, let us leave these noisy streets and take
 The path to Bethany, for Mary's smile
 Awaits us at the gate, and Martha's hands
 Have long prepared the cheerful evening meal.
 Come, James, the Master waits, and Peter, see,
 Has gone some steps before.

What say you, friends?
 That this is Ephesus, and Christ has gone
 Back to his kingdom? Ay, 't is so, 't is so.
 I know it all; and yet, just now, I seemed
 To stand once more upon my native hills
 And touch my Master! Oh! how oft I've seen
 The touching of his garments bring back strength
 To palsied limbs! I feel it has to mine.
 Up! bear me once more to my church—once more
 There let me tell them of a Saviour's love;
 For by the sweetness of my Master's voice
 Just now, I think he must be very near—
 Coming, I trust, to break the veil which time
 Has worn so thin that I can see beyond,
 And watch His footsteps.

So, raise up my head.
 How dark it is! I cannot seem to see
 The faces of my flock. Is that the sea
 That murmurs so, or is it weeping? Hush!

My little children! God so loved the world
 He gave His Son: so love ye one another;
 Love God and man, Amen. Now bear me back.
 My legacy unto an angry world is this.
 I feel my work is finished. Are the streets so full?
 What call the folk my name? "The holy John?"
 Nay, write me rather Jesus Christ's beloved,
 And lover of my children.

Lay me down
 Once more upon my couch, and open wide
 The eastern window. See! There comes a light
 Like that which broke upon my soul at eve,
 When, in the dreary Isle of Patmos, Gabriel came
 And touched me on the shoulder. See! it grows
 As when we mounted towards the pearly gates.
 I know the way! I trod it once before!
 And hark! it is the song the ransomed sang
 Of glory to the Lamb! How loud it sounds!
 And that unwritten one! Methinks my soul
 Can join it now. But who are those who crowd
 The shining way? Joy! joy! 't is the eleven!
 With Peter first; how eagerly he looks!
 How bright the smiles are beaming on James' face!
 I am the last. Once more we are complete
 To gather 'round the Paschal feast. My place
 Is next my Master. O my Lord! my Lord!
 How bright thou art, and yet the very same
 I loved in Galilee! 'T is worth the hundred years
 To feel this bliss! So, lift me up, dear Lord,
 Unto thy bosom, there shall I abide.

A PRAYER.

I CORINTHIANS, XIII, 13.

LORD JESU, give me faith
 That I may hold thy precious promise fast,
 That my strong confidence in thee may last,
 Firm and undimmed till death.

Good Jesu, give me hope,
 The anchor of my soul, its strength and stay,
 Set it before me that my weakness may
 With stormy trials cope.

Dear Jesu, give me love,
 That perfect love which casteth out all fear,
 Which seeketh not its own, the earnest here,
 Of perfect love above. R. R. J. E.

HIGH motives are worthier than low, and more effective too, I think. In advocating missions especially they will not only be more elevating to both hearers and speakers but far more influential in swelling the sum of the offerings. Those who cannot join the foremost ranks might be glad—by furnishing supplies—to swell those ranks and make them more efficient. Are private comfort and convenience to be considered at all in this connection? Is it not a shame even to suggest that it is worthy anyone who places his hope on Christ to calculate how he can promote missions with the least possible inconvenience to himself? I wish the missionary speakers would ring out the promises more clearly and frequently: appeal to enthusiasm; put the work before the people, and press upon their consciences the fact that it is a supreme Christian duty to give freely as they have freely received, and to give continually, as they are all the time receiving, and not only to give, but to work and pray.—*Spirit of Missions.*