

### THE LAST HYMN.

The Sabbath day was ending  
 In a village by the sea,  
 The uttered benediction  
 Touched the people tenderly,  
 And they rose to face the sunset  
 In the glowing, lighted west,  
 And then hastened to their dwellings  
 For God's blessed boon of rest.

But they looked across the waters,  
 And a storm was raging there;  
 A fierce spirit moved above them,  
 The wild spirit of the air,  
 And it lashed and shook and tore them,  
 Till they thundered, groaned, and boomed,  
 And alas for any vessel  
 In their yawning gulfs entombed!

Very anxious were the people,  
 On that rocky coast of Wales,  
 Lest the dawn of coming morrows  
 Should be telling awful tales,  
 When the sea had spent its passion,  
 And should cast upon the shore  
 Bits of wreck and swollen victims,  
 As it had done heretofore.

With the rough winds blowing round her,  
 A brave woman strained her eyes,  
 And she saw along the billows,  
 A large vessel fall and rise;  
 Oh, it did not need a prophet  
 To tell what th' end must be!  
 For no ship could ride in safety  
 Near the shore on such a sea.

Then pitying people hurried  
 From their homes, and thronged the beach,  
 Oh, for power to cross the water,  
 And the perishing to reach!  
 Helpless hands were wrung for sorrow,  
 Tender hands grew cold with dread,  
 And the ship, urged by the tempest,  
 To the fatal rock shore sped.

"She has parted in the middle!  
 Oh, the half of her goes down!  
 God have mercy! Oh! is heaven  
 Far to seek for those who drown?"  
 Lo! when next the white shocked faces  
 Looked with terror on the sea,  
 Only one last clinging figure  
 On the spar was seen to be.

And near the trembling watchers  
 Came the wreck tossed by the wave,  
 And the man still clung and floated.  
 Though no power on earth could save.  
 "Could we send him a short message?"  
 Here's a trumpet—Shout away!  
 'Twas the preacher's hand that took it,  
 And he wondered what to say.

Any memory of his sermon,  
 Firstly—secondly—ah, no!  
 There was but one thing to utter  
 In the awful hour of woe;  
 So he shouted through the trumpet,  
 "Look to Jesus! Can you hear?"

And "Ay, ay, sir!" rang the answer  
 O'er the waters, loud and clear.

Then they listened; He is singing,  
 "Jesus, lover of my soul!"  
 And the winds brought back the echo,  
 "While the nearer waters roll,"  
 Strange indeed it was to hear him,  
 "Till the storm of life was past,"  
 Singing bravely from the waters,  
 "Oh, receive my soul at last!"

He could have no other refuge,  
 "Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;"  
 "Leave, ah, leave me not"—The singer  
 Dropped at last into the sea;  
 And the watchers, looking homeward  
 Through their eyes, with tears made dim,  
 Said, "He passed to be with Jesus,  
 In the singing of that hymn."

### A GRUDGE-KILLED CHURCH.

We were riding through a pretty village up in the hill country, when we came to what had once been a neat, attractive church.

"That is deserted; there has not been a meeting in it for five years," said my friend. "We call it 'the Grudge Meeting-House,' because old grudges held on to shut it up. Every minister tried to do something, but it was of no use. He was short-handed at best, and he had to do so much manoeuvring, not to put grudges together, that in the end each and all got discouraged and left the field. Sister Bibbins could not work with Betsy Haynes, because the aforesaid Bibbins' *pater familias* had a little unpleasantness in regard to the purchase of a calf. To be sure, both of these men had been quietly resting in the old graveyard for years, but their children held faithfully to the grudge legacy, and made it the leading article in their creed.

"Leading retired, monotonous lives, they had the habit of watching each other's movements, and looking for slights, and grew expert in finding them and magnifying trifles into monsters of offence. With these thoughts in their hearts they went to the Tuesday night meeting, and instead of taking the truths of God's Word to themselves, the little vestry became an exchange or Wall street, where choice hits or reproofs were snatched up as capital for the future increase of their stock of grudges. The minister meant Deacon Pinch, or he had such a one in his mind; no wonder, then, that I feel injured, they said to themselves.

"With one hand on the grudge, and lifting the other in prayer, they asked God for the gift of the Spirit, and wondered that the blessing did not come. It took years to do the work, but backbiting, fault-finding, and want of that charity which covereth, not uncovereth, sins and weaknesses, has accomplished the sad result."—*Watchman*.