

## POETRY.

## Gentle Words.

BY C. D. STUART.

A young rose in the summer time,  
Is beautiful to me,  
And glorious the many stars  
That glimmer on the sea:  
But gentle words and loving hearts,  
And hands to clasp my own,  
Are better than the brightest flowers  
Or stars that ever shone!

The sun may warm the grass to life,  
The dew the drooping flower,  
And eyes grow bright that watch the light  
Of autumn's opening hour—  
But words that breathe of tenderness,  
And smiles we know are true,  
Are warmer than the summer time,  
Are brighter than the dew.

It is not much the world can give,  
With all its subtle art,  
And gold or gems are not the things  
To satisfy the heart;  
But oh! if those who cluster round  
The altar and the hearth,  
Have gentle words and loving smiles,  
How beautiful is earth!

(N. Y. Chrs. Messenger.)

The Closing Letter of  
FLY AND THOMAS' DISCUSSION.

DEAR SIR—The divinely inspired apostle Paul, in addressing Timothy, uses the following emphatic language: "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is Savior, of ALL MEN, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach," 1 Tim. iv. 10.

I desire you to notice, that God is here declared to be the *the Savior of all men*. There is no plausibility in the supposition, that this testimony merely expresses the Divine willingness or desire that all men should be saved—nor yet simply that he has provided a Savior for all. The declaration is explicit and absolute. No objection can be inferred from the present tense of the verb. The living God is the Savior of all men, in the sense that he "callesth those things which be not as though they were;"—Rom. iv: 17. So Abraham was styled "the father of many nations," pervicously to the birth of Isaac, in whom his seed was called. God is in purpose the Savior of all, though it is manifest that there are thousands who have not yet been born into the kingdom. In like good sense he is the Creator of all, even those who as yet exist only in the Divine purpose. And as God acts independently in constituting himself the Creator of mankind, so I judge that he is voluntarily and absolutely the Savior of all.

The human race is a family of which the Creator is the Father; and we are therefore the children or offspring of God, whatever may be our views or characters. There is also a sense in which the disciples of our Lord can claim special affinity with the Supreme Being. Every Israelite is a son of Abraham, while "they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham" in a spiritual relation, Galatians iii. 7. So every one who bears the image of Adam, is a child of the Universal Father, whatever his character may be; while "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," in a more exalted sense, Rom. viii. 14. *Those* are the children of God by simple creation; *these* are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," Gal. iii. 26. But *all men* are now in the purpose of heaven, what they all

shall be in fact, the children of God, in a still more exalted relation. "In the resurrection they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." In the first named sense, mankind are, and in the last they shall be, unconditionally and absolutely, the children of God. Hence, there is equal propriety in declaring that he is the Savior of all men, as in acknowledging that he is the Creator of all. And hence again, it would be equally improper to affirm, that God is the Creator of some who will never exist, as that he is the Savior of a greater number than will actually be saved.

I hinted above, that the disciples of our Lord can claim special affinity with the Supreme Being. So in the passage before us, God is declared to be *especially* the Saviour of those who believe—which he could not be were he not *actually* the Saviour of all.

Paul wrote to Timothy as follows: "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments," 2 Tim. iv. 13. It is manifest that Paul wished to receive the cloak and books, notwithstanding this special mention of the parchments. Again: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine," 1 Tim. v. 17. If the declaration that God is the Savior of all men, be nullified by the testimony that he is *especially* the Savior of those who believe, it will follow, by parity of inference that none of the elders were to "be counted worthy of double honor," *excepting* those who labored in the word and doctrine! Indeed, according to the objector's view of the text, the apostle intended to say, that God is *not* the Savior of all men, but *only* of those who believe!

The popular estimate of faith, and of the benefits accruing therefrom, is radically erroneous. I stated in a previous letter, that faith does not, and cannot, create any truth—and I will add that faith is simply the result of evidence which the mind deems conclusive. Whether the statement presented be true or false, it is not, it cannot be, affected either by acknowledgment or denial. Truth exists independently of the evidence of it, and independently also of the action of the mind. So when we read that God is *especially* the Savior of those who believe, we properly inquire for the truth the belief of which confers a special salvation.

Opposers of Universalism frequently speak of the essential truths of the Gospel—by which they mean, that there are truths the belief of which is essential to the happiness of the future state. What are those truths? Are they the trinity, vicarious atonement, or imputed righteousness?—You will not answer in the affirmative—for you admit that many persons will be saved who do not believe those items of your creed. Is the doctrine of endless punishment the essential truth for which we now inquire? If you reply that it is *not*, I ask, why do you so strenuously contend for a non-essential doctrine? But if you reply that it *is*, you must hold that it is not possible for any Universalist to be saved! Yea, and you must adopt the contradictory and absurd conclusions. You grant that all men may be saved; and you hold that salva-

tion is consequent only of believing or coming to the knowledge of the truth. Now suppose that all men were to become true believers—would they not all be saved? Certainly. Then surely if endless punishment be the thing to be believed, all men would be saved by believing a *lie*! Are you prepared to admit that Universal faith would falsify any Bible truth? If you are not prepared for this admission, you must grant that the belief of endless punishment is not essential to salvation—yea, that it is not in any sense an essential doctrine. And, sir, a faithful examination of this subject, in the light I have presented it, will satisfy you, that the happiness of the future state is not dependent on the exercise of faith in any doctrine whatever. The reception of immortal blessedness, by any of our race, depends solely and alone on the accomplishment of the gracious purpose of the living God. Were it otherwise—were the immortal condition of man contingent of faith or of the performance of good works, there would be no *certainty* of the salvation of any one of our race! For, even should it be conceded that they who fulfil the alleged conditions will certainly be the recipients of endless bliss, the uncertainty that even a single soul will fulfil those conditions, involves equal uncertainty of the final destination of mankind. There can be no certainty that a specified *end* will be attained, unless it be certain that the requisite *means* will be adopted. To contend that some of the human family will *certainly* be saved, is to admit the absolute purpose of God to that effect, excluding all all contingency; and to *deny* that some of our race will *certainly* be saved, is to admit the *possibility* that all may be irrecoverably lost! This conclusion is so discordant with all that we know of Divine benevolence, and so utterly irreconcilable with the governing providence of God, as to condemn the doctrine to which it belongs.

Should you desire to know in what the special salvation of believers consists, this is my reply: In believing the glorious truth that God is the Savior of all men, they "enter into rest," Heb. iv. 2: they are filled "with joy and peace," Rom. xv. 13; they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Peter i. 8. In believing the truth, they enjoy the presence and the blessing of "the Comforter," which is "the Spirit of truth," John xv. 26. Their faith works by love, and purifies their hearts, Gal. v. 6; Acts xv. 9. Enjoying "the full assurance of faith," they possess also "the full assurance of hope," Heb. vi. 11; x. 22; and they can set their seal to the truth of the record, that "perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love," 1 John iv. 18. There is *living faith*, because it is a faith in the living God; and in *believing* that the living God is the Savior of all men, they enjoy the special salvation mentioned in the text. Blessed, thrice blessed are they who know the joyful sound!

Universalists are frequently assailed with the following foolish objection: "If Universalism be true, it is strange that the apostles should so zealously and perseveringly labor to make the people acquainted with the fact, since it is manifest that such acquaintance with the doctrine could

have no influence on the final destination of our race. It is strange that they should be willing to labor, and to be reproached and persecuted by wicked men, if they believe that the final holiness and happiness of all mankind is secured by the absolute purpose of God." To this I reply, that the ministerial labors of the apostles, and the reproaches they suffered, are assigned to their faith in Universalism! "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe"—Moreover: the objection assumes, that no man can consistently labor to promote the temporal well-being of humanity! The history of John Howard (than whom, in my judgment, no better man has lived since John the Evangelist died,) evinces how much a philanthropist may be willing to do and suffer to meliorate the condition of men in the present life. He heard the cry of the prisoners and the clanking of the fetters forged by "the inhumanity of man to man;" and he went down into the gloomy dungeons to wipe away the tears of sorrow, to speak a word of comfort to the children of suffering, and to smooth down the straw pallets on which they reclined. He heard the groaning of the victims of "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and that wasteth at noonday;" and he went into the kingdoms of disease to stay the ravages of the angle of death. Eventually he was himself smitten of the plague, and died, a martyr in the cause of humanity. And if he could thus labor and die for the good of men, without reference to their immortal destiny, is it strange that the inspired servants of the Most High God should devote their lives and all their energies to the promotion of human happiness in the earth? Sir, I sincerely pity the man who is either so ignorant or perverse as to urge the objection in review.

Having already shown you in what the special salvation of the believer consists, I desire to direct your attention to an argument thence deducible in proof of Universalism. Since "the Spirit of truth" is styled "the Comforter," there can be nothing tormenting in the Christian faith. On the contrary, he who believes "the truth that is in Jesus," enters into rest; is filled with joy and peace; yea, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And now, sir, will you pretend that faith in the doctrine of endless woe, in any of its modifications, can fill the soul with the peace of God? Will you pretend that the prospect of interminable wretchedness for any of our race, can cause a believer to rejoice with unutterable joy? To what heart is the spirit of eternal wrath the Comforter? Let me come a little nearer to you: you love your children. He who touches them in the way of injury, touches the apple of their father's eye. You rejoice in their happiness. Your heart is inclined to them in all the tenderness of paternal love. Can you bear the thought that any of them should be the subjects of endless damnation? Can you rejoice in believing that a son or daughter shall be sentenced to the doom of darkness and despair for ever? Pardon me for asking these questions. You have a father's heart, I know that rejoicing is stranger to your soul, whenever you mentally grant that some of your offspring may be eternally lost!