

The Workers at Rest.

THE workers were always busy,
And their heads were bent with care;
On their hearts lay many a burden,
Heavy and hard to bear;
They carried the griefs of others,
And their eyes were often dim,
And they looked on the world's great trouble,
Or joined in a prayerful hymn

The workers were brave of a spirit,
And would not succumb to fear;
They kept at their posts of danger,
Though the days were dark and drear;
Their hearts were strong and patient,
And they lived for truth and right,
And they met their work with courage,
And did it with their might.

The workers were often weary,
And they, sometimes sighed for rest,
But the calls of life were urgent,
And they needs must do their best;
So the loyal-hearted servants
Worked on from day to day,
And, as those who wait for a guerlon,
Pursued their onward way.

At last to the faithful spirits
Came a whispered word, "Well Done,"
And, finding the work was over,
They vanished one by one,
Leaving the tasks to others,
And, ending life's weary quest,
They sought the feet of the Master,
And entered the place of rest.

O! glad in that calm reposing
Are the workers who have gone!
Do they send a thought of pity
To us who still toil on?
Can they think of the burdens we carry,
Nor a shadow dim their smile?
If they spoke they would say "Take courage,
It is but for a little while."

Who weeps for the labours ended?
The hills were steep that they pre't,
But the tedious journey is over,
And now they have won their rest;
So they send us a cheery message,
Though still we are kept in thrall,
The peace and the joy of Heaven
Will make amend for all.

The Merchant's Dream.

BY MARION.

It was Sunday morning—a bright, sunny day in April. The sunshine, softened by the rich lace curtains, lit up the elegant parlours of the Houghten mansion. In one of these parlours, and reclining in one of the puffy cushions of an easy-chair, sat Charles Houghten, Esq., owner of several stores, mills, and factories.

Yes! Charles Houghten, Esq., was a rich man—this fact never slipped from his memory; and though he was too sensible to be offensively haughty, yet somehow he managed to let the public bear well in mind that he was the great man of the town. He was a shrewd, active, business man, who looked well after his own interests, and was considered by his friends as being "Not a bad sort of fellow."

He was very kind to his family, he was agreeable in society, and with his numerous employees, too, so long as they performed their duties faithfully. He was also an adherent of one of the leading churches, and hoped that, somehow, he would manage to enter heaven when he died.

On this particular Sabbath, and in the comfortable attitude previously mentioned, he perused, through a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, the newspaper. He had been occupied with business until late the previous evening, and was, therefore, too weary this morning to accompany his wife and daughter to church.

It was not long before Nature began to assert her rights, and the dignified head soon nodded in a very undignified manner, the paper fell from his hand, when, all at once, a golden light of radiance seemed to fill the whole room, startling the merchant by its brilliancy. On looking up, he was surprised to see a stranger standing near him.

There was something so mysterious about the presence of this person, that Mr. Houghten was strangely awed. Curiosity, however, prompted him to speak. He was about to do so when the visitor, by a sign, stopped him, and bade him follow him. After a short journey, by a very strange road, his guide conducted him to a wonderful scene. It seemed as if he had been suddenly translated into another sphere. The sight presented to his view was one of great beauty. He heard sounds of exquisite music and glad voices. A large number of happy looking people were there—some of whom he recognized as former acquaintances. They appeared surprised to see him there; and, indeed, he felt somehow so unsuited to the place that—although in the midst of so much happiness—he became greatly depressed and uncomfortable.

He noticed that there was One who seemed to be the centre of all attraction, and whom all regarded with great love and honour. His countenance was of surpassing majesty and brightness. It was also expressive of infinite love and tenderness.

"Who is that?" he asked of his guide.

"That is the King! This is his kingdom, and these happy people are his sons and daughters."

Strange to say, though every one seemed so glad to be near this great King, our friend was far more unhappy than ever when he became aware of the presence.

He saw that there were new comers continually entering. All seemed glad to get there. As they approached the King, they brought something or some person with them.

One came whose forehead was wreathed by a laurel crown. Taking it from his head, he calmly laid it down at the feet of the King, saying: "I have given thee the highest of what I deemed my earthly fame."

Another came, with harp in hand, out from an eager crowd, joyously exclaiming: "I have won these souls for thee by song."

Then another came, saying: "I have given largely of the wealth entrusted to me for thy glory."

And then the merchant saw one whom he remembered as having been a young servant in his household. As she drew near the throne, dressed in shining garments, she brought with her a companion. This one the merchant recognized as an orphan-girl, who had formerly worked in one of his factories. Said the first: "I had neither wealth nor genius, but I saw one who was sick and friendless. I cared for her, and I have brought her to thee."

All had received a smile of gracious approval and loving welcome; but when the last one brought her trophy, an expression of infinite tenderness spread over the countenance of the King, as he said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these least of my little ones, ye have done it unto me."

Then cheer after cheer echoed through the place, but everything seemed so perfectly harmonious that the merchant was now sure that this place was heaven.

"What have you brought for the King?" his guide asked of him.

"Alas, nothing!" he replied, hanging his head for very shame. "I never in my way extended a helping hand to any struggling brother. I never

made an effort to better the condition of those around me. I attended a fashionable church, partly because it was respectable to do so, and partly because I considered it good business policy. I criticised the preacher, but out of all my wealth I contributed but a trifle for the support of the Gospel. I have lived a selfish life, and I have had my reward. Take me out of this place, I pray you, for I am most unhappy here."

He hid his face in his hands for a moment. When he looked up, the strange scene had disappeared, and all the company—his visitor included; and he found himself back in his own parlour. The French clock was ringing the hour of twelve.

Shortly after, his wife and daughter returned from church. They noticed the unusual paleness of his face, and anxiously inquired if he were ill.

He made an effort to appear calm, and parried their questions with some inconsequential answers; but the impression of that dream clung to him all day with such persistency that he could not shake it off.

After a while he told his wife about it. Said he: "While I was alone this morning I fell asleep, and dreamed a most singular dream, which has strangely impressed me with the mean, selfish life I am leading. It was so exceedingly vivid, that I can scarcely consider it anything but a reality. I am a thousand times thankful to awake and find that I have still a chance to become a better man."

Mrs. Houghten was much impressed. "I think," said she, solemnly, "it was a voice from God."

Shortly after this, revival services were conducted in the church which the Houghtens attended. Everybody was so surprised to see Mr. Houghten attend these meetings, and publicly take upon him the vows of a Christian. How the good portion of the community rejoiced! There were some of another class, who jeered; but the merchant paid no attention to them—and even they became quiet in time; for Charles Houghten did become a changed man. He now proved to be an earnest, practical, benevolent, Christian gentleman.

His good principles really helped to increase his business. The public soon found that they were more fairly dealt with. His kindness won for him a new respect from his employees, and caused them to be more faithful in the discharge of their duties, so that in the end he found himself a richer man than ever.

Five years later, in the spring of the year, when the trees were bursting into leaf, and all Nature seemed rejoicing in a new resurrection, Mr. Houghten lay dying. There was sorrow in the town. Many testimonies were heard, which proved that the merchant had, during these five years, endeavoured to benefit those about him. Much sympathy was felt for the family; and many anxious glances went up to the Houghten mansion by its passers-by. Inside, anxious hearts were watching and waiting, but to both living and dying these last hours were brightened by the Divine presence.

"Do you regret your decision of five years ago?" asked his minister of him.

An emphatic "No!" came from the dying man's lips. "My only regret is, that I did not take that step long before. These five years have been the happiest years of my life."

He lay for some time in a stupor, then, all at once he opened his eyes and exclaimed: "I come, Lord! Here are some sheaves that I bring thee." Then he closed his eyes to open them no more until the resurrection morning.

"Truly," said one, "'The Lord works in mysterious ways.'"