

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

Earth's Angels.

Yes; Earth hath angels, though their forms are moulded
But of such clay as fashions all below;
Though harps are wanting, and bright pinions folded
We know them by the love-light on their brow.

Oh, many a spirit walks the world unheeded,
Who, when its robe of sadness is laid down,
Will soar aloft with pinions unimpeded,
And wear its glory like a starry crown.

And if my sight, by earthly dimness hindered,
Behold no hovering cherubim in air,
I doubt it not, for spirits know their kindred,
They smile upon the wingless watchers there.

It is the lives like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look, and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. No man or woman can really be strong, gentle, pure, and good, without the world being better for it, without somebody being helped and comforted by the very existence of that goodness,

If there should come a time, as well there may,
When sudden tribulation smites thine heart,
And thou dost come to me for help, and stay,
And comfort, how shall I perform my part?
How shall I make my heart a resting-place,
A shelter safe for thee when terrors smite?
How shall I bring the sunshine to thy face,
And dry thy tears in bitter woes despite?
How shall I win the strength to keep my voice
Steady and firm, although I hear thy sobs?
How shall I bid thy fainting soul rejoice,
Nor may the council of mine own heart-throbs?
Love, my love teaches me a certain way,
So, if thy dark hour come, I am thy stay.

To know that there are some souls, hearts and minds here and there who trust us, and whom we trust; some who know us, and whom we know, some on whom we can always rely, and who will always rely on us—makes a paradise of this great world. The only solid thing in this universe is love. This makes our life really life. This makes us immortal while we are here. This makes us sure that death is no end, but only a beginning, to us and to all we love. It is only love and insight which show us all we have ever done. Cold sagacity misjudges us, mere sympathy, feeble good nature, soothes, but does not essentially help us. But love illuminated by truth, truth, warmed through and through by love,—these perform for us the most blessed thing that one human being can do for another. They show us to ourselves; they show us what we really are, what we have been, may be, can be, shall be.

A Winsome Call to Worship.

"Rejoice in the Lord."—Phil. iii. 1.

Come to God's house, your every burden bring,
Lift up the heart, and think, and thank, and sing.
The Saviour waits, and He will gracious be
He gently whispers: "Come, O, come to me."

Come, hear His message, heed His call,
Glad tidings sent to you, to me, to all;
"Whoever will" may come and truly say,
Burdened I came, a song I bear away.

Go, tell the blessed tidings, joyful sound,
Here pardon, rest and lasting peace are found;
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice.
Receive His gracious gifts, in Him "Rejoice!"

I would have you invoke God often through the day, asking Him to kindle a love for your vocation within you, and saying with St. Paul: "Lord, what would'st thou have me to do? Would'st thou have me serve thee in the lowest ministries of thy house? Too happy if I may but serve thee anyhow." And when any special thing goes against you, ask: "Would'st thou have me do it? Then, unworthy though I be, I will do it gladly."

All the graces of the Spirit are, in prayer, stirred and exercised, and, by exercise, strengthened and increased; faith, in applying the Divine promises, which are the very ground that the soul goes upon to God, hope looking out to their performance, and love particularly expressing itself in that sweet converse, and delighting in it, as love doth in the company of the person beloved, thinking all hours too short in speaking with Him. O, how the soul is refreshed with freedom of speech with its beloved Lord! And as it delights in that, so it is continually advanced and grows by each meeting and conference, beholding the excellency of God, and relishing the pure and sublime pleasures that are to be found in near communion with Him.

Between the Lights.

A little pause in life, while daylight lingers
Between the sunset and the pale moonrise,
When daily labor slips from weary fingers,
And soft gray shadows veil the aching eyes.

Old perfumes wander back from fields of clover
Seen in the light of suns that long have set;
Beloved ones, whose earthly toil is over,
Draw near, as if they lived among us yet.

Old voices call me through the dusk returning,
I hear the echoes of departed feet;
And then I ask, with vain and troubled yearning,
What is the charm that makes old things so sweet?

Must the old joys be evermore withhelden?
Even their memory keeps me pure and true;
And yet, from out Jerusalem the Golden
God speaketh, saying, "I make all things new."

"Father," I cry, "the old must still be nearer;
Stifle my love or give me back the past!
Give me the fair old earth, whose paths are dearer
Than all thy shining streets and mansions vast."

Peace, peace—the Lord of earth and heaven knoweth
The human soul in all its heat and strife;
Out of his throne no stream of Lethe floweth,
But the clear river of eternal life.

He giveth life, ay, life in all its sweetness:
Old loves, old sunny scenes will He restore;
Only the curse of sin and incompleteness
Shall taint thine earth and vex thine heart no more.

Serve Him in earnest work and daily living,
And faith shall lift thee to His sunlit heights;
Then shall a psalm of gladness and thanksgiving
Fill the calm hour that comes between the lights.

Does your spirit faint? The Divine promises are a dropping honeycomb, better than Jonathan's. Dip your pilgrim staff into their richness, and put your hand to your mouth like him, and your faintness shall pass away. Are you thirsty? They are the flowing stream of the water of life, of which you may drink by the way, and lift up your head. Are you overcome by the sultry burden of the day? They are as the cool shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Have your steps well nigh slipped? They are a staff in your hand, or top of which, betimes, like Jacob, you may lean and worship God. Are you sad? There are no such songs to beguile the road, and to bear you on with gladness of heart. Put but a promise under your head by night, and were your pillow a stone like that at Bethel, you shall have Jacob's vision. The thiriest wilderness will become an Elisha, with palm trees and wells of water.

"For My Sake."

Three little words, but full of tenderest meaning;
Three little words the heart can scarcely hold;
Three little words but on their import dwelling,
What wealth of love these syllables unfold!

"For My Sake" cheer the suffering, help the needy,
On earth this was My work; I give it thee.
If thou wouldst follow in thy Master's footsteps,
Take up My cross and come and learn of Me.

"For My Sake" let the harsh word die unuttered
That trembles on the swift, impetuous tongue;
"For My Sake" check the quick, rebellious feeling
That rises when thy brother does thee wrong.

"For My Sake" press with steadfast patience onward,
Although the race be hard, the battle long.
Within My Father's house are many mansions;
There thou shalt rest and join the victor's song.

And if in coming days the world revile thee,
If "for My Sake" thou suffer pain and loss,
Bear on, faint heart; thy Master went before thee;
They only wear His crown who share His cross.

It is a solemn and serious thing to be made to see yourself as God sees you. It is a crisis in your life when you are made to know and feel just what you actually are. You are never the same person again. This is the solemnest fact in human life, since life began; since Adam and Eve tried to hide themselves from their own sight because they were made to know themselves; since Cain, maddened by his self-knowledge, slain his brother, who had held up the mirror to his sinful nature. You can never be the same person again; you must either be improved by the self-knowledge or be made worse by it. The consciousness of what you are must either impel you to seek relief, to seek to escape from yourself, by coming to Jesus; or it will impel you to antagonize with a view to justifying yourself, and with the purpose of stepping the annoyance which you feel at being disturbed by the Gospel.