

## THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

## A SOLITARY WAY.

There is a mystery in human hearts,  
And though we be encircled by a host  
Of those who love us well, and are beloved  
To every one of us, from time to time,  
There comes a sense of utter loneliness.  
Our dearest friend is stranger to our joy,  
And cannot realize our bitterness.  
"There is not one who really understands,  
Not one to enter into all I feel;"  
Such is the cry of each of us in turn,  
We wander in a "solitary way,"  
No matter what or where our lot may be;  
Each heart mysterious even to its self,  
Must live its inner life in solitude.

And would you know the reason why this is?  
It is because the Lord desires our love;  
In every heart He wishes to be first.  
He therefore keeps the secret key Himself,  
To open all its chambers, and to bless,  
With perfect sympathy and holy peace,  
Each solitary soul which comes to Him.  
So when we feel this loneliness it is  
The voice of Jesus saying, "Come to Me;"  
And every time we are "not understood,"  
It is a call to us to come again;  
For Christ alone can satisfy the soul,  
And those who walk with Him from day to day  
Can never have a "solitary way."

And when beneath some heavy cross you faint,  
And say, "I cannot bear this load alone,"  
You say the truth. Christ made it purposely  
So heavy that you must return to Him  
The bitter grief, which "no one understands,"  
Conveys a secret message from the King,  
Entreating you to come to Him again,  
The Man of Sorrows understands it well,  
In all points tempted He can feel with you.  
You cannot come too often, or too near.  
The Son of God is infinite in Grace,  
His presence satisfies the longing soul,  
And those who walk with Him from day to day  
Can never have a "solitary way."

No one can follow Christ without leading somebody else.

Patient suffering for Christ's sake is one of the highest possible tests of loyalty to Him.

Every true treasure that is laid up in Heaven it does somebody good on earth.

Every good deed that is done simply and only to honor God will have something to do with making us more like Christ.

Christ came to minister, not to be ministered unto. The follower of Christ who is willing to enjoy his religion all by himself has failed to catch the significance of Christ's example.

A Christian man's plain duty is not so much to answer the question, "How can I get the most out of my religion?" as "How can I conduct myself so that others may get the most out of my religion?"

Many Christians, in a very important sense, will go to heaven alone. Others will there be surrounded by scores whom they have pointed to the Saviour. The first class will have been saved, but without having saved others. The second class will bring sheaves with them.

But Christ ministered daily while upon the earth. So may we. The comforts of our religion may be made the solace of another's sorrow. In many very practical ways others may enjoy the benefits of our religion. Thus, whether it is for time or eternity, Christ may come to others through us.

## BE NOT CONTENT.

Be not content. Contentment means inaction

The growing soul aches on its upward quest,

Satiety is twin to satisfaction;

All great achievements spring from life's unrest.

The tiny roots, deep in the dark mold hiding,

Would never bless the earth with leaf and flower

Were it not an inborn restlessness abiding

In seed and germ to stir them with its power.

Were man contented with his lot forever,

He had not sought strange seas with sails unfurled,

And the vast wonder of our shores had never

Dawned on the gaze of an admiring world.

Prize what is yours, but be not quite contented,

There is a healthful restlessness of soul

By which a mighty purpose is augmented

In urging men to reach a higher goal.

So when the restless impulse rises, driving

Your calm content before it, do not grieve;

It is the upward reaching and the striving

Of the God in you to achieve, achieve.

Never speak anything evil of a man if you do not know it for a certainty; and if you do not know it for a certainty, then ask yourself.—"Why should I tell it?"

Above all things, be kindly; kindness is a grace very near to the likeness of God, and one which disarms men above all else, gentle charitable thoughts of others gradually stamp the countenance and help to win hearts.

Sympathy, love and unselfishness give happiness. It matters not what our physical condition, what our material surroundings. With these as our ingredients we shall extract the glorious elixir of life.

Do not be afraid of spoiling anyone with kindness. It can't be done. Instead of spoiling, it beautifies the character, cheers the heart and helps to raise the burden from shoulders which, though brave, sometimes grow very, very tired. Let not a little adversity frighten you away, for under the most frigid exterior there is always to be found a tender chord which can be touched by kindness and which responds in beautiful harmonies to those little acts of courtesy that are as sunshine to a struggling plant.

Love is given us to help us onward nearer to God. The most blessed is that which draws us nearest to Him. The essence of true love is not its tenderness, but its strength, power of endurance, its purity, its self-renunciation. Never forget, a selfish heart desires love for itself—a Christian heart delights to love, without return.

## INCOMPLETION.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be.

Oh, vision of perfect beauty,

That fades from our eager sight;

Oh, strain of sweetest music,

Half heard in thine airy flight

Say, why should the best we yearn for

Elusive forever be—

A mirage over the desert,

A sail on the distant sea?

Rejoice! 'Tis the surest token

Of glory to man revealed;

Not yet, on all, completeness,

Is solemnly set and sealed

And ev'ry desire and longing,

That no fruition knows,

Is pledge of a larger future

As onward the pilgrim goes.

## IDEAS OF LIFE.

He lives long that lives well.—Fuller.

Life is as serious a thing as death.—Bailey.

Man's life is an appendix to his heart.—South.

Life is good, but not life in itself.—Owen Meredith.

Live well; how long or short, permit to heaven.—Milton.

Christian life consists in faith and charity.—Luther.

Life is a crucible. We are thrown into it and tried.—Chapin.

A handful of good life is worth a bushel of learning.—Herbert.

Life is given to no one for a lasting possession; to all for use.—

Lucretius.

Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us.  
Browne.

## GOD KNOWS BEST.

Sometime when all life's lessons have been learned  
And sun and stars forever more have set  
The things which our weak judgements here have burned  
The things over which we grieve with lashes wet,  
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,  
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue,  
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,  
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how while we frown and sigh,  
God's plans go on as best for you and me,  
How when we called He heeded not our cry  
Because His wisdom to the end could see,  
And even as prudent parents disallow  
Too much sweet to craving babyhood,  
So God, perhaps is keeping from us now  
Life's sweetest things because it seemeth good.

And if sometime, co-mingled with life's wine,  
We find the wormwood and rebel and shrink,  
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine  
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink,  
And if someone we love is lying low,  
Where human kisses cannot reach the face,  
O, do not blame the loving Father so,  
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you will shortly know that lengthened breath  
Is not the sweetest gift God gives His friend,  
I that sometimes the sable pall of death  
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.  
If we could push ajar the gates of life  
And stand within, and all God's workings see,  
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,  
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content poor heart,  
God's plans, like lilies, pure and white unfold,  
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart,  
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.  
And if through patient toil we reach the land  
Where tired feet with sandals loose, may rest,  
When we shall clearly know and understand  
I think that we will say—"God knew the best."