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## Poetry.

### A more Convenient Season.

BY MRS. SPOONER.

Alone he waits. That very night  
The ambassador of God, with earnest zeal  
Of eloquence, had warned him to repent;  
And like the Roman at Drusilla's side,  
Hearing the truth he trembled, conscience  
wrought  
Yet sin allured. The struggle shook him sore.  
The dim lamp waned; the hour of midnight  
told.  
Prayer sought for entrance, but the heart had  
closed  
Its diamond valve. He threw him on his  
couch  
And bade the spirit of his God depart.  
But there was war within him, and he sighed,  
"Depart not utterly, thou Blessed Spirit!  
Return when youth is passed, and make my  
soul  
Forever thine."

With kindling brow he trod  
The haunts of pleasure, while the viol's voice,  
And beauty's smile, his joyous pulses woke.  
To love he knelt, and on his brow she hung  
Her freshest myrtle wreath. For gold he  
sought,  
And winged wealth indulged him, till the  
world  
Pronounced him happy. Manhood's vigorous  
days  
Swelled to its climax, and his busy days  
And restless nights swept like a tide away.  
Care strook deep round him, and each  
about  
Still striking eastward like the Indian tree,  
Shut out with women shades the eyes of Heaven,  
When lo! a messenger from the East,  
"Look unto me and live." Pleading he speaks  
Of weariness and hate, and want of time,  
And duty to his children, and brought  
A longer space to do the work of Heaven.  
God spoke again when age had shed its snow  
On his wan temples, and the palsied hand  
Shrank from gold gathering. But the right  
chain  
Of habit bound him, and he still implored  
"A more convenient season."

"See, my step  
Is firm and true; my unquenched eye delights  
To view this pleasant world; and life with me  
May last for many years. In the calm hour  
Of lingering sickness, I can better fit  
For vast eternity."

Disease approached,  
And reason fled. The maniac strove with  
Death,  
And grappled like a fiend with shrieks and  
cries,  
"Ill darkness smote the eyeballs," and thick ice  
Closed in around his heart-strings. The poor  
ghy  
Lay wretched and distorted. But the soul—  
The soul whose promised season never came  
To hearken to his Maker's call, had gone!  
To weigh his sufferance with his own abuse,  
And hide the audit.

### Religious Miscellany.

#### The Wayfaring Man.

The village service at which I had been officiating, being concluded, I wended my way homeward. It was a cool autumn evening, the moon shedding her silvery light on hill and valley; and my journey was somewhat long and lonely. Quietly pursuing my way along the sequestered lane, and little thinking of meeting with a human being, I was startled, at a turn of the road, by the approach of the tall figure of a man, dressed in a dingy smock, who thus abruptly accosted me: "Have you seen a donkey pass this way?" On my answering in the negative, the stranger said, "Then I will go no further;" at the same time turning, and becoming for a while my travelling-companion. Although not perfectly satisfied with my new acquaintance, not knowing what his further intentions respecting me might be, yet wishing to do him good and not evil, I at once began conversing with him on religious matters. As nearly as I can recollect, our conversation was as follows:

M.—'Tis a very pleasant night—How sweetly the goodness of God shines in the moonlight!

Stranger.—Yes, 'tis a pleasant night. M.—I often think, when looking at the beautiful world, what a pity it is we are not more thankful to our kind Creator,—what a pity we should be so sinful, whilst God is so bountiful!

M.—Why, yes, it is so. M.—And yet how merciful the Almighty is, in sparing our lives, and continuing to bless us, even though we are so ungrateful and sinful; and not only so, but that he offers to pardon all our sins, if we will only forsake them, and give our hearts to him.

S.—Ay, 'tis all very good; but I am no scholar, I am sorry to say; and yet I like to hear these good things. You see, Sir, I am very badly; I am in a consumption.

M.—Indeed, I am sure you must begin to be anxious to make your peace with God. S.—Well, to tell you the truth, I have felt very troubled lately. You see, I have been a very wicked man for most of my life; but I expect it will be all over for me soon. It's getting very cold by nights now, and I don't think I can last very long. I can't in these lanes, and I have hard work to keep myself warm. But, to say my mind, I should much rather be hitting good-bye to this world, if I were only ready.

M.—Well, now, my friend, I am glad to hear you say you would like to be prepared for a better world; for none of us can be prepared, if we don't desire to be; but if we are anxious about the matter, there is not one of us that may not be made ready, and be so very happy.

S.—Well, it seems very odd; for I have been wanting somebody to talk to me, but I didn't know of any one that could.

M.—You may depend upon it, my friend, the great and merciful God, who reads all our hearts, and who has known all you have been thinking and feeling, has caused you to be brought to meet this night; and he sends by me a very merciful message to you, if you will only receive it, and act upon it.

From what you say, I judge you don't know much about the Bible. But there are several cases spoken of in that blessed book, of poor sinners being anxious to have their

sins forgiven, and to begin serving their Maker, without knowing how; to whom God, in great mercy, sent some one or other of His servants, to speak to them words by which they might be saved. There was a man called Cornelius, who became very anxious to know about God, and to be ready to meet him in the other world. Well, this man prayed to God in the best way he could; and the Almighty heard his heart, and heard his prayer; and He sent His servant Peter to tell him all he wanted to know.—Then there was another man reading the Bible, without being able to understand it. God sent him, and Philip, another of His servants, to go and explain the meaning to him. The words he was looking at, and trying to understand, were these: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth." In His humiliation His judgment was taken away; and with one voice He shall declare His generation; for His life is hid from the earth." (Acts viii. 32, 33.) The man reading said, "Of whom speaketh the Prophet this? of himself, or some other man?" Then Philip began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus; and he talked to him in such a way, that he soon became very happy, and went on his way rejoicing.—Depend upon it, my friend, if you, too, can get to know about Jesus Christ, you will become very happy also; and I doubt not that the God who sent Peter to Cornelius, and Philip to that other stranger, has sent me to tell you of the same Jesus that they spoke of. What the Prophet said about Jesus was very wonderful; but it was all true. Jesus Christ, you must know, is the Son of God; and He came into this world to be our Saviour. He was born at Bethlehem, and grew up a man, a God, a man, but not less a God; and He lived all His life, and had never done any thing wrong, yet he allowed Himself to be nailed to a wooden cross, and thus He died, that we sinners, for His sake, might be pardoned and made happy. He suffered a great deal, even unto death, with the greatest patience; but was all for us, because He loved us. It was the will of God that His blessed Son should do this for us, and He sent Him to do it. God might have punished us for our sins; but, instead of doing that, He sacrificed His only Son for us; and Jesus Christ really did die for every one of us. God was well pleased with His Son, who thus offered Himself to death for us; and He sends us word in the Bible, that, if we will only turn away from all our sins, and believe in Jesus Christ as slain for us, He will forgive all that we have done amiss, and make us good and happy, and receive us as children, in heaven. Jesus is in heaven already; for, being the Son of God, He rose from the dead, and went to heaven, where he speaks for us with God, and where He is waiting for us when we leave this world. Now this merciful message from God, which I have brought you, and which ought to comfort us every one. God tells us we are all sinners, and that we deserve His anger and punishment; and we feel this in our hearts. You, my friend, have said you have done wrong things, and that you feel troubled in your mind. God wants you to be better than you are, and to do His will; and He has sent me to you, to tell you of this blessed Saviour, and to tell you that He needs most to know, and ought most to rejoice in.

S.—'Tis very good; but I never heard of such a thing before. I do wish I had known it sooner.

By this time we reached a part of the lane where, at the side, on the green sward, was a low, mean-looking tent or hut, near which were dying out the embers of a flag-stone. The wayfaring man said, "This is my camp; I have a wife and three children dwell asleep in there—poor things! But I'll walk on with you, Sir; for I like to hear this good talk. I'm only sorry I've never heard it before."

M.—Very thankful am I to have this opportunity of talking with you, especially as you are so poorly, and so greatly needing comfort. And depend upon it, the gracious God who has sent me to you, rejoices over you, and will bless you, if you will only ask Him, and do as he teaches. Listen to the comforting words of Jesus Christ: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

A.—But do you really think, Sir, that the great God takes any notice of a poor fellow like me, that never goes to a church, a sort of outcast like?

M.—Believe me, my friend, God is looking upon you now, and he pities your sorrows, and will answer your prayer. He has not forgotten you, and does not despise you. Jesus Christ tells us He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Now, you are a poor, sinful, lost wanderer; but He, the great God Shepherd, is seeking you, and is trying to bring you into His fold. He is saying now, "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you; and, O how glad the merciful God will be if you only do as He says!" He would feel as if he had found a long-lost child; and the blessed angels would rejoice too; for the Bible says, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." You may think because your fellow-man has not taken much notice of you, that your God has not; but you are mistaken. As surely as He has seen you in your sins and wanderings, so does He see you if you return unto Him, just as if you were the greatest man in the world; for He is no respecter of persons, and he says, "He that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

S.—But what can I do? You see it would be different if I could hear persons, like folks that live in houses; but, living in this way, one can't do as one would like to.

M.—Well, now, don't you think you could manage to settle in some town or other, where you could take your wife and children to some church or chapel? It would be much better if you could.

S.—Why, you see, Sir, we get our living by travelling up and down the country, selling things, and sometimes begging. I don't see how we could carry on at all, if we were not to go about in this way. I wish we could.

M.—Well, my friend, God knows all about you; and he does not require what you cannot do. He says in His book that where much is given, much will be required; but were little given, comparatively little will be required. If you cannot get to His holy house, to hear His word and pray to

Him, He does not expect it. If you cannot read His blessed book, He does not require that. But the truth is, that God, who has made you feel uncomfortable about your sins, and who is of great mercy, and ready to forgive, will hear your prayer out of these lanes. God says to His servants, "Go ye into the highways and hedges, and gather them to turn to Me;" and what he tells them to teach the poor outcasts, is so clear and plain, that a wayfaring man, though he may know very little besides, need not mistake in this. Now, you have understood the simple words I have spoken to you; and I would further say, you need not know many words in prayer to God. If your heart is earnest, if you cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He will hear you. And what a comfort it is to think that, though you are a great sinner, God's own Son has laid down His life for you; and that God tells you to trust in Him, and to cheer up your mind by thinking about Him!

At this point the wayfarer turned an earnest look upon me, and said, with a sort of incredulous surprise, "Would you have talked, Sir, to a poor fellow like me in this way, if it had been daylight?" Returning a look equally earnest,—the earnestness of yearning compassion,—I replied, "Indeed I would; it would have given me as much pleasure to comfort you by day as it does by night. But, believe me, my kindness to you is nothing, compared with the kindness of my God and your God, who sends me to you. He is speaking to you, yearning over you, waiting to hear your prayer. Yet you must think, when I have said to you, 'My God is looking upon me, telling me to be sorry for my sins, and to ask his forgiveness, and to believe in His Son my Saviour.' My God is also telling me to pray for his Holy Spirit to make me good, and to give me strength to do those things that are right. Lord, have mercy upon me, and cleanse me from my sins, and help to keep Thy commands!" "Ay, and think of what the Bible says: 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.' And again, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' And now, my friend, before we part, let me intrust you to my prayer. Whenever you can, go into some church or chapel; and when you cannot do that, kneel down somewhere by yourself, two or three times a day, and ask God to save your soul for Jesus Christ's sake.—Don't any longer do wrong things, or say bad words, or give me any trouble. Jesus is in heaven already; for, being the Son of God, He rose from the dead, and went to heaven, where he speaks for us with God, and where He is waiting for us when we leave this world. Now this merciful message from God, which I have brought you, and which ought to comfort us every one. God tells us we are all sinners, and that we deserve His anger and punishment; and we feel this in our hearts. You, my friend, have said you have done wrong things, and that you feel troubled in your mind. God wants you to be better than you are, and to do His will; and He has sent me to you, to tell you of this blessed Saviour, and to tell you that He needs most to know, and ought most to rejoice in.

Reader! you may not be a gipsy wanderer; and yet, like the subject of this narrative, far from the fold of Christ. If so, you, too, need a friend, and perhaps you may be brought to that poor outcast, so he may be sending me, by this tract, to you. Would that I could induce you to meet that Good Shepherd, who is seeking to save that which is lost! O, suffer the word of exhortation. Perhaps you are a wicked person; if so, let me beseech you, as from your dress sleep in there—poor things! But I'll walk on with you, Sir; for I like to hear this good talk. I'm only sorry I've never heard it before."

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eye gone in certainty, and none could tell but that the other should share its fate.—The law had been his destined profession; and he was a junior in the University, and in a little more time would have completed the curriculum; and then he should enter the profession of his father, and been such a bright and shining light, and for which his own capacities had so eminently qualified him. All this was now impossible, and an insurmountable barrier was placed in his path which he might not overleap.—The best of surgical skill, the advice of doctors at home and abroad, was sought in vain. What a calamity! what a fearful abridging of the path of the young student, standing almost upon the threshold of a brilliant career! Nay, not so; not a calamity.—Suppose that William Hickling Prescott had been allowed to pursue the profession of the law, he might have been, as was his father, an eminent member of the bar, and gone down to the grave wept by a large circle of acquaintances, but his demise would not have sent a thrill of sympathy and pain throughout the civilized world. Nay, nay; the world was to stand as a mourner by the bier of one of the most catholic spirits, generous, and accomplished historians our nation or any nation, has ever produced, instead of a respectable company of the citizens of Boston standing by the grave side of a distinguished lawyer. And so gathering up his faculties and summoning all his resources, intellectual, moral, and social, with trust in God's vindictive providence and resignation to the Divine will with calmness and concentration and with imperturbable cheerfulness and invincible courage he betakes himself to those long studies which shall qualify him to teach his fellow-men. He gives ten years to liberal studies, and then he writes a book, and ten other years to special application. They that would build for long must lay broad their foundations; they that would rear structures that are to stand must pains to lay well the corner-stone. After twenty years of steadfast labor he sent forth a book, which is as general as the law, and his countrymen of civilized nations. Book after book has followed, and diligent and indefatigable, in the midst of quietness he wrought. Genial and sympathetic as a child, kindly and truthful, sweet and beautiful in every relation of life, faithful to his duties as a husband, father, a friend, and citizen. He lived, diffusing all around him the aroma of a noble life, and the lessons for the benefit of after ages the soaring of philosophy which are incorporated in the shape and example of history. He has been called away from us after nearly forty years of patient toiling, and he leaves behind him as I have said, the civilized world stands a mourner at his tomb. The calamity was transmuted into benediction; the misfortune under God's blessing, has become a glorious benediction, not only to himself but to his race. And we rejoice amid our tears, that while the torch of his genius is extinguished the light of his life remains. The man was greater than the author, and his highest nobleness is his well-won victory over misfortune.

Not many days after that interview, I heard of the death of a gipsy man, in one of the lanes, some miles from the town which I lived; and in all likelihood it was my poor outcast friend, to whom I had had the opportunity of preaching Christ.

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M.—Well, my friend, God knows all about you; and he does not require what you cannot do. He says in His book that where much is given, much will be required; but were little given, comparatively little will be required. If you cannot get to His holy house, to hear His word and pray to

him, He does not expect it. If you cannot read His blessed book, He does not require that. But the truth is, that God, who has made you feel uncomfortable about your sins, and who is of great mercy, and ready to forgive, will hear your prayer out of these lanes. God says to His servants, "Go ye into the highways and hedges, and gather them to turn to Me;" and what he tells them to teach the poor outcasts, is so clear and plain, that a wayfaring man, though he may know very little besides, need not mistake in this. Now, you have understood the simple words I have spoken to you; and I would further say, you need not know many words in prayer to God. If your heart is earnest, if you cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He will hear you. And what a comfort it is to think that, though you are a great sinner, God's own Son has laid down His life for you; and that God tells you to trust in Him, and to cheer up your mind by thinking about Him!

At this point the wayfarer turned an earnest look upon me, and said, with a sort of incredulous surprise, "Would you have talked, Sir, to a poor fellow like me in this way, if it had been daylight?" Returning a look equally earnest,—the earnestness of yearning compassion,—I replied, "Indeed I would; it would have given me as much pleasure to comfort you by day as it does by night. But, believe me, my kindness to you is nothing, compared with the kindness of my God and your God, who sends me to you. He is speaking to you, yearning over you, waiting to hear your prayer. Yet you must think, when I have said to you, 'My God is looking upon me, telling me to be sorry for my sins, and to ask his forgiveness, and to believe in His Son my Saviour.' My God is also telling me to pray for his Holy Spirit to make me good, and to give me strength to do those things that are right. Lord, have mercy upon me, and cleanse me from my sins, and help to keep Thy commands!" "Ay, and think of what the Bible says: 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.' And again, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' And now, my friend, before we part, let me intrust you to my prayer. Whenever you can, go into some church or chapel; and when you cannot do that, kneel down somewhere by yourself, two or three times a day, and ask God to save your soul for Jesus Christ's sake.—Don't any longer do wrong things, or say bad words, or give me any trouble. Jesus is in heaven already; for, being the Son of God, He rose from the dead, and went to heaven, where he speaks for us with God, and where He is waiting for us when we leave this world. Now this merciful message from God, which I have brought you, and which ought to comfort us every one. God tells us we are all sinners, and that we deserve His anger and punishment; and we feel this in our hearts. You, my friend, have said you have done wrong things, and that you feel troubled in your mind. God wants you to be better than you are, and to do His will; and He has sent me to you, to tell you of this blessed Saviour, and to tell you that He needs most to know, and ought most to rejoice in.

Reader! you may not be a gipsy wanderer; and yet, like the subject of this narrative, far from the fold of Christ. If so, you, too, need a friend, and perhaps you may be brought to that poor outcast, so he may be sending me, by this tract, to you. Would that I could induce you to meet that Good Shepherd, who is seeking to save that which is lost! O, suffer the word of exhortation. Perhaps you are a wicked person; if so, let me beseech you, as from your dress sleep in there—poor things! But I'll walk on with you, Sir; for I like to hear this good talk. I'm only sorry I've never heard it before."

M.—Very thankful am I to have this opportunity of talking with you, especially as you are so poorly, and so greatly needing comfort. And depend upon it, the gracious God who has sent me to you, rejoices over you, and will bless you, if you will only ask Him, and do as he teaches. Listen to the comforting words of Jesus Christ: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

A.—But do you really think, Sir, that the great God takes any notice of a poor fellow like me, that never goes to a church, a sort of outcast like?

M.—Believe me, my friend, God is looking upon you now, and he pities your sorrows, and will answer your prayer. He has not forgotten you, and does not despise you. Jesus Christ tells us He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Now, you are a poor, sinful, lost wanderer; but He, the great God Shepherd, is seeking you, and is trying to bring you into His fold. He is saying now, "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you; and, O how glad the merciful God will be if you only do as He says!" He would feel as if he had found a long-lost child; and the blessed angels would rejoice too; for the Bible says, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." You may think because your fellow-man has not taken much notice of you, that your God has not; but you are mistaken. As surely as He has seen you in your sins and wanderings, so does He see you if you return unto Him, just as if you were the greatest man in the world; for He is no respecter of persons, and he says, "He that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

S.—But what can I do? You see it would be different if I could hear persons, like folks that live in houses; but, living in this way, one can't do as one would like to.

M.—Well, now, don't you think you could manage to settle in some town or other, where you could take your wife and children to some church or chapel? It would be much better if you could.

S.—Why, you see, Sir, we get our living by travelling up and down the country, selling things, and sometimes begging. I don't see how we could carry on at all, if we were not to go about in this way. I wish we could.

M.—Well, my friend, God knows all about you; and he does not require what you cannot do. He says in His book that where much is given, much will be required; but were little given, comparatively little will be required. If you cannot get to His holy house, to hear His word and pray to

## Religious Intelligence.

### The Lairy Abroad.

Presbyterian Scotland is awake! She is losing her ecclesiastical swiftness—she is bending to the force of circumstances. The Presbyterians in America hear and ponder. The pulpits of Scotland are open to laymen; Brownlow, North, the earnest evangelist, is preaching (without orders!) to thousands of people, and the Holy Spirit witnesses to the apostolicity of his call and labors, by making him the instrument in the conversion of souls. Noblemen in the north of Scotland are presiding over prayer-meetings, and are exhorting sinners to turn unto the Lord. Ireland, too, acknowledges the claims of earnest laymen to preach Christ; and Mr. Guinness, the evangelist, preaches in Ireland, as Mr. North does in Scotland, to listening and impressive thousands. The principles being acknowledged in England, and earnest efforts made by both Congregational and Episcopal Churches to increase the public evangelistic power of Christian laymen. We clip from the Colonial Presbyterian the following extract of a letter of one of its intelligent correspondents, who we commend to the earnest and prayerful consideration of every Christian in our country:

"The Scottish lay-evangelist, Mr. Brownlow North, is only making occasional public appearances just now, his health having given way under his work, and you would not be at all surprised at that if you have seen as I have done, the intense bodily as well as mental exertion which he displays while preaching. His action and passion are scarcely less than that of Dr. Duff. A tract has just been published, written by Sir George Sinclair of Ulster, and addressed to the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, giving the past history of Mr. North. The following is the account of his conversion: 'Whit Sunday, 1854, Mr. North, when he was staying at cards one evening, suddenly experienced a sensation as if he were going to drop down his head. He rose up and said to his son, 'I am a dead man—take me up stairs.' As soon as he was alone, he threw himself down on the bed, and was convinced that he was going to die. His first reflection was, 'Where am I to go as soon as I am dead?' He thought that at once burst upon him in this season of trouble, and impressed itself deeply with his mind of mercy. He felt there were but a few minutes between him and hell, and how wretched and worthless did all the things for which he had sold himself at that moment appear! He felt conscious that he should kneel and ask for mercy, but he felt ashamed to do so, because it was in the room, lighting the fire, that he did not feel it, he would wait till the left, but he soon decided, and rose from his bed, and knelt down while he was still preoccupied. Sir George tells us that Mr. North is 'firmly persuaded that this was the turning point, and that if he had left that woman go out of the room before he prayed, he never should have prayed at all; the Spirit of God would have been gone