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## Poetry.

### THE BEAUTY OF LIFE,

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."—Solomon.

Life is beautiful: its duties  
Cluster round each passing day,  
While their sweet and solemn voices  
Warn to work, to watch, to pray.  
They alone such blessings forfeit,  
Who through sloth their spirits cheat;  
Or, in selfish torpor sitting,  
See the rust their armour eat.

Life is beautiful: affections  
Thrill with joy its golden string,  
In its opening blossoms nestle,  
Birdlike 'mid its branches sing,  
Smiling rock its cradle slumbers,  
Guard with pride its youthful bloom,  
Fondly kiss its snow-white temples,  
Dew the turf that decks its tomb.

Life is beautiful: with promise  
Of a crown that cannot fade;  
Life is fearful: with the threatening  
Of an everlasting shade.  
May no thoughtless worldling scorn it,  
Wandering wide in folly's maze;  
Duty, love, and hope adorn it,  
Let its latest breath be praise.

American Messenger.

## Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—DR. SHARPE.

### Old Moses.

Mr. B. was a merchant in Baltimore, and did a very heavy business, especially in grain. One morning as he was passing over the vessels that lay at the wharf with their various commodities for sale, he stepped upon the deck of one at the stern of which he saw a negro man sitting, whose dejected countenance gave sure indication of distress; and he accosted him with—

"Hey! my man, what is the matter with you this morning?"

The negro lifted up his eyes, and looking at Mr. B., replied—

"Ah, massa, I see in great trouble."

B. "What about?"

N. "Kase I see foteht up here to be sold."

B. "What for? what have you been doing? have you been stealing? or did you run away? or what?"

N. "No, no, massa, none o' dat; its because I didnt mind de audes."

B. "What kind of orders?"

N. "Well, massa stranger, I tell you, Massa William werry stricker man, and werry nice man too, and ebery body on de place got to mine him, and I break trow de rule, but I didnt tend to break de rule doe; I forgot myself, and I got too high."

B. "It is for getting drunk, then, is it?"

N. "O no, sah, not dat nother."

B. "You are the strangest negro that I have seen for a week. I can get no satisfaction from you. If you would not like to be pitched overboard you had better tell me what you did."

N. "Please, Massa, don't frow de poor flicted nigga in de wata."

B. "Then tell me what you are to be sold for."

N. "For prayin, sah."

B. "For praying, that is a strange tale indeed. Will your master not permit you to pray?"

N. "O yes, sah, he let me pray easy, but I hollers too loud."

B. "And why did you halloo so in your prayer?"

N. "Kase de Sperit comes on me, and I gits happy fore I knows it; den, den, I goe; kase trol meself den; den I knows nothin about massa's rule; den I holler if old Sautin hisself come wid all de rules of de 'quisition."

P. "And do you suppose your master will really sell you for that?"

N. "O yes; no help for me now; all de men in de world couldnt help me now; kase when massa William say one ting he no do anoder."

B. "What is your name?"

N. "Moses sah."

B. "What is your master's name?"

Moses. "Massa's name Colonel William C."

B. "Where does he live?"

M. "Down on de Eastin Shoah."

B. "Is he a good master, does he treat you well?"

M. "O yes, massa William good; no better massa in de world."

B. "Stand up and let me look at you."

And Moses stood up and presented a robust frame, and as Mr. B. stripped up his sleeve his arm gave evidence of unusual muscular strength.

B. "Where is your master?"

M. "Yander he is, jis comin to de wharf."

As Mr. B. started for the shore he heard Moses give a heavy sigh, followed by a deep groan. Moses was not at all pleased with the present phase of affairs. He was strongly impressed with the idea that B. was a trader and intended to buy him, and it was this that made him so unwilling to communicate to Mr. B. the desired information. —

Mr. B. reached the wharf just as Col. C. did. He introduced himself, and said—

"I understand you wish to sell that negro man yonder on board the schooner."

Mr. C. replied that he did.

B. "What do you ask for him?"

C. "I expect to get \$700."

B. "How old is he?"

C. "About thirty."

B. "Is he healthy?"

C. "Very; he never had any sickness in his life, except one or two spells of the ague."

B. "Is he hearty?"

C. "Yes, sir; he will eat as much as any man ought, and it will do him as much good."

B. "Is he a good hand?"

C. "Yes, sir, he is the best hand on my place. He is steady, honest and industrious. He has been my foreman for the last ten years, and a more trusty negro I never knew."

B. "Why do you wish to sell him?"

C. "Because he disobeyed my orders. As I said, he is my foreman, and that he might be available at any moment I might want him, I built his quarter within a hundred yards of my own house, and I have never rung the bell at any time in the night or morning that his horn did not answer in five minutes after. But two years ago, he got religion, and commenced what he terms family prayer—this is, prayer in his quarter every night and morning; and when he begun his prayer it was impossible to tell when he would stop, especially if (as he termed it) he got happy. Then he would sing, and pray, and halloo for an hour or two together, that you might hear him a mile off. And he would pray for me and my wife and children, and all my brothers and sisters and their children, and our whole family connection to the third generation; and sometimes when we would have visitors, Moses' prayers would interrupt the conversation, and destroy the enjoyment of the whole company. The women would cry, and the children would cry, and it would get me almost frantic; and even after I had retired, it would sometimes be nearly daylight before I could go to sleep, for it appeared to me that I could hear Moses pray for three hours after he had finished. I bore it as long as I could, and then forbade his praying so loud any more, and Moses promised obedience, but he soon transgressed; and my rule is never to whip, but whenever a negro provs incorrigible I sell him. This keeps them in better subjection, and is less trouble than whipping. And I pardoned Moses twice for disobedience in praying so loud, but the third time I knew I must sell him, or every negro on the farm would soon be perfectly regardless of all my orders."

B. "You spoke of Moses's quarter; I suppose from that he has a family."

C. "Yes, he has a woman and three chil-

dren, or wife I suppose he calls her now, for soon after he got religion he asked me if they might be married, and I presume they were."

B. "What will you take for her and the children?"

C. "If you want them for your own use I will take \$700; but I shall not sell Moses nor them to go out of the State."

B. "I wish them all for my own use, and will give you the \$1400."

Mr. B. and Col. C. went to B's store, drew up the writings and closed the sale; after which they returned to the vessel, and Mr. B. approaching the negro, who sat with his eyes fixed upon the deck, seemingly wrapt in meditations of the most awful forebodings said—

"Well, Moses, I have bought you."

Moses made a very low bow, and every muscle of his face worked with emotion as he replied—

"Is you, massa? where is I gwine, massa? is I gwine to Georgy?"

"No," said Mr. B., "I am a merchant here in the city; yonder is my store, and I want you to attend on the store; and I have purchased your wife and children too, that you may not be separated."

M. "Bress God for dat; and massa kin I go to meetin sometimes?"

B. "Yes, Moses, you can go to church three times on Sabbath and every night in the week, and you can pray as often as you choose, and as loud as you choose, and as long as you choose, and get as happy as you choose; and every time you pray, whether it be at home or in church, I want you to pray for me, my wife, and all my children, and single-handed too; for if you are a good man your prayers will do us no harm, and we need them very much; and if you wish you may pray for every body of the name of B. in the State of Maryland. It will not injure them."

While Mr. B. was dealing out these privileges to Moses, the negro's eyes danced in their sockets, and his full heart laughed outright for gladness, exposing two rows of as even, clear ivories as any African can boast; and his heart's response was, "Bress God, bress God all de time, and bress you too massa; Moses neber tinks bout he gwine to have all dese commodiations; dis make me tink about Joseph in de Egypt." And after Moses had poured a few blessings on Col. C., and bidding him a warm adieu, and requesting him to give his love and farewell to his mistress, the children, and all the servants, he followed B. to the store, to enter upon the functions of his new office.

The return of the schooner brought to Moses his wife and children.

Early the next spring, as Mr. B. was one day standing at the store door, he saw a man leap upon the wharf from the deck of a vessel, and walk hurriedly towards the store. He soon recognized him as Col. C. They exchanged salutations, and to the Colonel's inquiry after Moses, Mr. B. replied that he was up stairs measuring grain, and invited him to walk up and see him. Soon Mr. B.'s attention was arrested by a very confused noise above. He listened and heard an unusual shuffling of feet, some one talking violently, and some one talking very hurriedly; and when he reflected on Col. C.'s singular movements, and the peculiar expression of his countenance, he became alarmed and determined to go up and see what was transpiring.

When he reached the head of the stairs he was startled by seeing Moses in the middle of the floor, down upon one knee, with his arms around the Colonel's waist, and talking most rapidly, while the Colonel stood weeping audibly. "So soon as the Colonel could sufficiently control his feelings he told Mr. B. that he had never been able to free himself from the influence of Moses' prayers, and that during the past year he, and his wife, and all his children had been converted to God."

Moses was not far wrong in his reference to Joseph. For when Joseph was sold to Egypt, God overruled it to his good, and he

obtained blessings that were far beyond his expectations; so with Moses. Joseph eventually proved the instrument of saving the lives of those who sold him. Moses proved the instrument in God's hands of saving the man's soul who sold him.

Old Moses is still living and doing well. He long since obtained his freedom, and at present occupies a comfortable house of his own; and I suppose sings, and prays, and shouts to his heart's content.

### Joshua's Resolve.

"As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

Will not you imitate this example? The venerable man who made this resolve, was one in high station; no less than the chief ruler of Israel. He had long experience that the service of the Lord was good. He urged the people to choose whom they would serve, but he assured them that his mind was made up, even if he should be alone: "We will serve the Lord." Will not you also serve the Lord?

When? "This day." What other time can you choose? Yesterday was, but is not. Tomorrow may be, and yet it may not be for you. This day is your time to choose as it was the time for Israel.

But why should you serve the Lord? He is Jehovah, the maker of heaven and earth, possessed of all goodness, excellence, and glory; worthy of all love, obedience, confidence, and praise. Of him we receive all things richly to enjoy. And above all things he is our Redeemer, "who loved us, and gave himself for us," that he might deliver us from all evil, from all enemies, and from the wrath of God. And finally, he assures us that his servants shall be preserved unto life eternal, and for ever enjoy and glorify him. On the contrary, if we forsake him he will forsake us, and give us over to all evil and final ruin with his enemies, who can neither deliver nor help themselves nor us. "Choose you, therefore, this day, whom ye will serve."

But what is it to serve the Lord? "To love him with all the heart," to obey, trust in, and honour him. This is the plain simple truth. This God requires.

Is there not some difficulty in the case?—Joshua said to Israel, when they readily promised: "Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God." He knew how men are more ready to promise than to perform, and therefore stayed them in their eagerness, that they might ponder well their undertaking. So every one should "count the cost," and engage in the work with deliberation, and beware of the difficulties. Not difficulties in the nature of his service, but in our unholiness, our associations, and the course of this world. By the grace of God and the help of his Spirit, we may engage to serve God and be sure of success. His loving-kindness is rich, free, and abundant; his Spirit working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

Set up the stone, then, or some monument as a witness that you have chosen the Lord to be your God, and that you are bound unto him in an everlasting covenant. Write it in a book, that you may read it in time to come, and keep it always in mind. Thus will the Lord be your God, and you will be his people.—American Messenger.

### Time.

Time is the cradle of hope, but the grave of delusion. Time is the stern corrector of fools, but the salutary counsellor of the wise. Wisdom walks before it, opportunity with it, and repentance behind it. He that has made Time his friend, will have little to fear from his enemies; but he that has made time his enemy, will have little to hope from his friends. Hear this, ye young! It is high time even for you to awake; for the hours of youthful hope and spirits bear but a small proportion, in "memory's backward view," to the whole of life. But be assured that they do bear to it a most important proportion, if even now you become formed to love and serve your God.