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Poetry.

A PARABLE.

BY J. R. LOWELL.

Worn and footsore was the Prophet,
When he gained the holy hill;
"God has left the earth," he murmured;
"Here his presence lingers still."
"God of all the hidden prophets,
Wilt thou speak with men no more?
Have I not as truth served thee
As thy chosen ones of yore?"
"Hear me, guide of my fathers!
Lo! an humble heart is mine;
By thy mercy, I beseech thee,
Grant thy servant but a sign!"
Bowling then his head, he listened
For an answer to his prayer;
No loud bursts of thunder followed,
Not a murmur stirred the air.
But the tuft of moss before him
Opened, while he waited yet,
And, from out the rock's hard bosom
Sprang a tender violet.
"God! I thank thee?" said the Prophet;
"Hard of heart and blind was I,
Looking to the holy mountain
For the gift of prophecy."
"Still thou speakest with thy children
Freely as of old, sublime;
Humbleness, and love, and patience,
Still give empire over time."
"Had I trusted in my nature,
And had faith in lowly things,
Thou thyself wouldst then have sought me,
And set free my spirit's wings."
"But I looked for signs and wonders,
That o'er men should give me sway,
Thirsting to be more than mortal,
I was even less than clay."
"Hie I entered on my journey,
As I girt my loins to start,
Bran to me my little daughter,
The beloved one of my heart."
"In her hand she held a flower,
Like to this as like may be,
Which, beside my very threshold,
She had plucked and brought to me."

BE KIND.

Be kind to thy father: for when thou wast young,
Who loved thee so fondly as he?
He caught the first accents that fell from thy tongue,
And joined in thy innocent glee.
Be kind to thy father: for now he is old,
His locks intermingled with gray;
His footsteps are feeble, once fearless and bold—
Thy father is passing away.
Be kind to thy mother: for lo! on her brow
May traces of sorrow be seen;
Oh, well mayest thou cherish and comfort her now,
For loving and kind has she been.
Remember thy mother—for thee she will pray
As long as God giveth her breath;
With accents of kindness, then, cheer her lone way
Even to the dark valley of death.
Be kind to thy brother: his heart will have dearth,
If the smiles of thy joy be withdrawn;
The flowers of feeling will fade at their birth,
If the dew of affection be gone.
Be kind to your brother, whoever you are;
The love of a brother shall be
An ornament purer and richer by far
Than pearls from the depths of the sea.
Be kind to thy sister: not many may know
The depth of true sisterly love;
The wealth of the ocean lies fathoms below
The surface that sparkles above.
Thy kindness shall bring to thee many sweet hours,
And blessings thy pathway to crown;
Affection shall weave thee a garland of flowers,
More pleasant than wealth or renown.

Christian Miscellany.

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

"Lost! Lost!"

Nearly half a century ago, when I was a
small boy, I lived in the neighbourhood of
the Staffordshire coal-mines in England.—

One morning considerable excitement was
created by a statement, that on the preceding
night a man wandering among the old, worn-out
coal-pits was lost, and being unable to
grope his way longer in the dark, he stood
still and cried at the top of his voice,—
"Lost! lost! lost!" At length a poor man,
a collier, was awoken out of sleep by the
scream, and rising from his bed, proceeded
with a lantern to the spot, where he found
the lost man standing on the very edge of a
deep precipice. Had he, instead of standing
still and crying out as he did, taken another
step, he would have fallen in, and probably
been dashed to pieces. Much public interest
was felt in this great deliverance.

It was at that time my privilege to attend
the ministry of a venerable servant of Jesus
Christ, who displayed surprising ingenuity
in the selection of subjects for his sermons,
and if any thing remarkable occurred during
the week, it would be generally used on the
following Sabbath by way of instruction or
admonition. On the morning of the Lord's
day after the occurrence "at the coal-pits,"
instead of putting on his spectacles to read
his text, as usual, he laid them beside his
open Bible, looked with intense interest
over the whole church, and as the tears
streamed down his cheeks, exclaimed, in
tones which even now seem to ring in my
ears, "Lost! LOST! LOST! Yes, my dear
hearers, this is your condition—lost!" Then
did he go on to illustrate the depravity and
folly of man in departing from God, forsak-
ing the narrow path of righteousness and
duty, and wandering among the bogs and
pits of a corrupted world, in search of en-
joyment—ever disappointed, and yet eagerly
pursuing what had always eluded the grasp
of man. Clearly did he show the danger
of sinners thus straying from heaven, and in
millions of cases falling into eternal per-
dition before they were aware of their real state;
and in contrast, the safety of the man who
becomes acquainted with his real character
and prospects, and cries out in self-despair,
"Lost! lost!" "Happy, happy man," ex-
claimed he, "God is appearing for your deliv-
erance!"

Then with solemn dignity, as he put on
his spectacles, he said, "Brethren, I bring
to you a glorious message from heaven; will
you hear it? Matthew 18: 11: 'The Son
of man is come to save that which was lost.'"
He showed this passage of mercy to be
adapted to the circumstances of sinners lost
to all right feeling and happiness, to the
divine glory and usefulness among men, to
heaven and to God. While he presented
with graphic power the transgressor against
God standing on the very brink of the bot-
tomless abyss, we seemed to hear the voice
of infinite mercy saying to divine justice,
"Deliver him from going down to the pit; I
have found a ransom." The infinite dignity
of Jehovah, his boundless love in becoming
incarnate to die in the stead of the sinner,
and the inconceivable and eternal blessings
he bestows on the returning penitent, were
beautifully presented to our view. Nor with-
less clearness did he prove the ability and
willingness of Christ to save sinners; show-
ing the price, even that of his own blood
paid for their redemption, and the fact that
he is still engaged in the heavenly world in
interceding "for the transgressors." Every
one seemed to feel that Jesus is still able
and willing to save the vilest sinners; but
that if his salvation be rejected, there re-
mains no hope for the rebel—no hope!—
American Messenger.

The Sabbath sustains Civil Government.

1. By the general intelligence it is so
great an instrument of diffusing among all
classes of people.
2. The Sabbath powerfully enlightens
and invigorates the public conscience, and
secures its decisions upon the side of truth
and righteousness.
3. The Sabbath presents and keeps in
view the holy and glorious government of
God, unfolding its principles and showing its

infinite purity and rectitude, and thus sustain-
ing the idea of government in men's minds.

4. Sabbath ministrations bring to bear
directly upon the public mind the authority
and power which the Infinite Ruler gives to
civil government in our world, and causes
men to see and feel that resistance to rightful
human authority is rebellion against God,
and makes men obnoxious to his displeasure.

5. Sabbath ministrations unfold the na-
ture and value of human rights, and the ob-
ligation of man to his fellow, and thus enforce
all the enactments of man that defend and
secure those rights.

6. Sabbath influences, as they are all
based on the great principles of Christianity,
are all eminently favourable to civil and re-
ligious liberty, and men cannot feel the
power of such influences without being the
firmest friends of law and order.

7. The Sabbath sustains civil govern-
ment by creating a moral atmosphere, in
which all forms of law-violation, even every
species of vice and crime, become odious,
and the objects of severest condemnation.

8. The whole history of the Sabbath has
shown, that where that day has been most
highly honoured, and sacred duties faith-
fully discharged, there human government has
taken the strongest hold of the hearts of the
people, and been the best sustained.

9. Sabbath influences have been such
upon the intelligence and virtue of the
people, as to secure the enacting of such
laws as have met the wants, defended the
rights, and therefore have received the con-
fidence and sanction of the whole communi-
ty.

10. In no communities, save where the
Sabbath is hallowed, is there constant and
 fervent prayer that God would bless all in
authority, and cause all the countless bless-
ings of law and order to prevail and
abound.

11. No sooner has the Sabbath been in-
troduced, and its privileges been established
in any benighted land, and under any despo-
tic and oppressive government, than such
influence has been speedily seen in the ame-
lioration of injurious customs and laws, the
softening of the hearts of rulers, and the
introduction and diffusion of the blessings of
civil and religious liberty.

For such reasons as these, we believe that
there is no agency more powerful in intro-
ducing and sustaining the wisest and best
forms of civil government, with their un-
speakable blessings, than the honoured
SABBATH OF OUR LORD.

The Widow's Lamp.

Some years ago there dwelt a widow in a
lonely cottage on the sea shore. All around
her the coast was rugged and dangerous;—
and many a time was her heart melted by
the sight of wrecked fishing boats and coast-
ing vessels, and the pitious cries of perishing
human beings. One stormy night, when the
howling wind was making her loneliness
more lonely, and her mind was conjuring up
what the next morning's light might disclose,
a happy thought occurred to her. Her cot-
tage stood on an elevated spot, and her
window looked out upon the sea; might she
not place her lamp by that window, that it
might be a beacon light to warn some poor
mariner off the coast? She did so. All
her life after, during the winter nights, her
lamp burned at the window; and many a
poor fisherman had cause to bless God for
the widow's lamp, many a crew were saved
from perishing. That widow woman "did
what she could;" and if all believers kept
their light burning as brightly and steadily,
might not many a soul be warned to flee from
the wrath to come? Many Christians have
not the power to do much active service for
Christ; but if they would live as lights in the
world, they would do much. If those who
cannot preach to the old or teach the young,
would but walk worthy of him who hath
called them to his kingdom and glory, how
much would the hands of ministers and
teachers be strengthened, and their hearts

encouraged! We are told that the chief
priests consulted that they might put Laza-
rus to death, because that by reason of him
many of the Jews went away and believed
on Jesus. Lazarus does not seem to have
been either a teacher or preacher, yet his
very presence was a convincing proof of the
power of the Lord of glory. Should not all
who have known the power and grace of
him who still is the resurrection and the life,
so walk that men may take knowledge of
them that they have been with Jesus?

I Love the Bible.

For its Divinity.—It is the only book in
the world that has God for its author. Its
thoughts and words are all divine, all inspired
by God's Spirit, and all penned by His an-
ger. It comes with authority. It is a letter
from heaven bearing the seal of God; a
Father's letter to his children, breathing the
tenderest love, and filled with messages of
mercy. It has been assailed; but the more
the infidel has assailed it as merely human,
the more he has proved it to be entirely
divine. The learning, the arguments, the
art employed to overthrow it, have only in-
scribed its own title the more indelibly upon
it,—the word of God.

For its Veracity.—It contains the truth
and nothing but the truth. Not a solitary
falseness or fable stains its pages. It is in-
fallible in its very statements. Ministers
may err, churches may err, but the Bible can
never err nor deceive. He that appeals to it
shall never be put to shame.

For its Purity.—It breathes the spirit of
perfect holiness. It is unstained by a single
blot. Alike in its origin, in its manner, and
its design, it is absolutely pure. Neither in
word nor thought has it the least shade of
defilement.

Do We Know How to Pray?

The Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds, while
solemnly enforcing on the Church its duty
in reference to the conversion of the world,
asks the following significant questions:—
"And has not the Church almost to learn
what is the power of prayer? What con-
ception have we of believing prayer, before
which mountains depart? What of perse-
vering prayer, which causes us to stand con-
tinually upon the watch-tower in the day-
time, and which sets us in our ward whole
nights? What of importunate prayer, which
storms heaven with its violence and force?
What of united prayer, gathering us to-
gether to ask help of the Lord? What of
consistent prayer, which regards no in-
iquity in our hearts? What of practical
prayer, which fulfils itself? Let but such
prayer be understood, let our spirit but
break with such longing, and the expecta-
tions of our bosoms shall not be delayed.—
'And it shall come to pass that before they
call I will answer, and while they are yet
speaking I will hear.'

A Good Man's Wish.

I freely confess to you that I would rather,
when laid down in the grave, have some one
in his manhood to stand over me and say:—
"There lies one who was a real friend to
me, and privately warned me of the dangers
of the young; no one knew it; but he ad-
ded me in the time of need; I owe what I
am to him;" or would rather have some
widow, with choking utterance, telling her
children:—"There is your friend and mine,
He visited me in my affliction, and found
you, my son, an employer, an you, my
daughter, a happy home in a virtuous fam-
ily." I say, I would rather that such per-
sons should stand at my grave, than to have
erected over it the most beautiful sculptured
monument of Parisian or Italian marble.—
The heart's broken utterance of reflections
of past kindness, and the tears of grateful
memory shed upon the grave, are more va-
luable in my estimation, than the most cost-
ly cenotaph ever reared.—*Dr. Sharp.*