

THE VOICE IN THE TWILIGHT.

I was sitting alone towards the twilight,
With spirit troubled and vexed,
With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
And faith that was sadly perplexed.

Some homely work I was doing
For the child of my love and care,
Some stitches half wearily setting,
In the endless need of repair.

But my thoughts were about the "building,"
The work some day to be tried;
And that only the gold and the silver,
And the precious stones, should abide.

And remembering my own poor efforts,
The wretched work I had done,
And, even when trying most truly,
The meagre success I had won.

"It is nothing but 'wood, hay, and stubble,'"
I said, "it will all be burned" —
This useless fruit of the talents
One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
And sometimes I know I have tried;
But I'm sure when He sees such building
He will never let it abide."

Just then, as I turned the garment,
That no rent should be left behind,
My eye caught an odd little bungle
Of mending and patch-work combined.

My heart grew suddenly tender,
And something blinded my eyes
With one of those sweet intuitions
That sometimes make us so wise.

Dear child! she wanted to help me,
I knew 'twas the best she could do;
But, oh, what a botch she had made it —
The gray mismatching the blue!

And yet—can you understand it?—
With a tender smile and a tear,
And a half-compassionate yearning,
I felt she had grown more dear.

Then a sweet voice broke the silence,
And the dear Lord said to me,
"Art thou tenderer for the little child
Than I am tender for thee?"

Then straightway I knew His meaning,
So full of compassion and love,
And my faith came back to its refuge,
Like the glad returning dove.

For I thought when the Master Builder
Comes down His temple to view,

To see what rents must be mended
And what must be builded anew.

Perhaps as he looks o'er the building
He will bring my work to the light,
And seeing the marring and bungling,
And how far it all is from right.

He will feel as I felt for my darling,
And will say, as I said for her,
"Dear child! she wanted to help me,
And love for me was the spur.

"And for the true love that is in it,
The work shall seem perfect as mine,
And because it was willing service,
I will crown it with plaudit divine."

And there in the deepening twilight
I seemed to be clasping a hand,
And to feel a great love constraining me,
Stranger than any command.

Then I knew by the thrill of sweetness
'Twas the hand of the Blessed One,
That would tenderly guide and hold me
Till all the labor is done.

So my thoughts are never more gloomy,
My faith no longer is dim,
But my heart is strong and restful,
And mine eyes are unto Him.

MRS. HERRICK JOHNSON.

From the 'Household,'

The funeral of the Countess of Lathom received an added touch of pathos by the fact that men who were members of her Sunday afternoon Bible-class carried her body to the grave. Old and bent some of them were, and though they were honored in being able to perform the last sad service to one whom they loved, their hearts were sad at their loss. It never transpired that the Countess held a bible-class in her own room until her death, and it may be well that in many of the stately homes of England similar work is done of which the world never hears. Baron Pollock was another example of the same kind of service. The Sunday-school in the home is a grand institution and we can imagine that even the invited scholars who study the Bible with their honored friends get less pleasure than those who are the hosts and teachers of the classes.—'S. S. Times' (English.)