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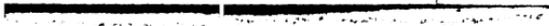
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Scovil

Evening
Comfort

Arranged by
Elisabeth
Robinson
Scovil

(A Saint John author)

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Henry Altemus Company

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First Evening.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort
you; and ye shall be comforted. ISAIAH lvi. 13.

Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother
while she blesses,
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of
her kisses.
That turns his fevered eyes around, my mother!
where's my mother?
As if such tender words and looks could come
from any other!

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Comfort comes to us in many ways: in the
peace that follows the lifting of a great anxiety,
in the relief on the cessation of acute pain, in the
calm after the storm of grief, sometimes most
truly in the sense of support under sorrow and
suffering that makes the bearing of it possible.

Second Evening.

Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my strength; think no scorn of me; lest if Thou make as though Thou hearest not, I become like them that go down into the pit.

PSALM xxviii. 1.

“Blest Redeemer, can one perish
Who has looked to Thee for aid?
Let me see Thee, let me hear Thee,
Through the gloomy midnight-shade.
Let me hear Thy voice of comfort,
‘It is I, be not afraid.’”

The answer to our prayer sometimes seems long in coming, and we begin to doubt whether God really has heard, or heeded, the cry that went up to Him with such passionate earnestness. Even David was haunted by this fear; that it was removed for him we know, because a little farther on in the same psalm he says: “Blessed be the Lord, because He hath heard the voice of my supplications.” So if we wait patiently it will be for us.

Third Evening.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and
I will give you rest. ST. MATTHEW xi. 28.

“And whosoever cometh,
I will not cast him out.”
Oh, welcome voice of Jesus,
Which drives away our doubt!
Which calls us, very sinners,
Unworthy though we be
Of love so free and boundless,
To come, O Lord, to Thee.

WILLIAM C. DIX.

In this sad world there are many who say,
“Who will show us any good?” Most of us have
to labor; all of us at times are heavy-laden. Here
is a promise of rest with no conditions attached;
if we will come we may have it. How? Go as
to an earthly friend and leave the burden and
claim the fulfilment of the promise. It shall be
yours.

Fourth Evening.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

PSALM li. 17.

Broken heart and downcast eyes
Dare not lift themselves to Thee ;
Yet Thou canst interpret sighs ;
God be merciful to me.
From this sinful heart of mine
To Thy bosom I would flee ;
I am not my own, but Thine ;
God be merciful to me.

J. S. B. MONSELL.

It is when we are most despondent, most tired of self, most sick of failure, that we come nearest to God. Casting ourselves on Him, asking only a little strength to keep us from failing utterly, then He gives us exceeding abundantly, more than we can ask or think, and we are strengthened and forgiven.

Fifth Evening.

If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. St. JOHN vii. 17.

If any man will do Thy will, to him
Shall knowledge come, enough to guide aright.
It solves no subtle problems; these must wait
Another world, where faith is lost in sight.

Doing the will is of infinitely more importance than knowing the doctrine. Yet some of us refuse to follow God because we cannot understand all the mysteries of His Word, or of His works. We cannot solve the simplest problems that lie in our daily path. We do not know how the grass grows, nor why the swallows migrate, and can we expect to understand the dealings of the Infinite with men? Let us be more humble and apply ourselves to doing our duty.

Sixth Evening.

Though He be not far from every one of us.

ACTS xvii. 27.

Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and spirit with
spirit can meet ;
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than
hands and feet.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

We are too much in the habit of thinking of God as if He were very far off, high in the heaven above us, and having little to do with our humble, daily affairs on earth. We forget that in Him we live and move and have our being. That the welfare of every immortal soul is His immediate and intimate concern. That He is near enough to help us in our perplexities as well as in our temptations, if we will only ask Him. By the very constitution of our being, though He is so near, He cannot help us unless we ask Him.

Seventh Evening.

I am the Lord, I change not.

MALACHI iii. 6.

What, have fear of change from Thee, who art
ever the same ?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy
power expands ?

There shall never be one lost good !

What was shall live as before ;

The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying
sound ;

What was good shall be good with, for evil, so
much good more ;

On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven a
perfect round.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Amid the changes and chances of this mortal
life we may look up to Him who changeth not,
with perfect confidence in His goodness and power.

Eighth Evening.

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. ST. LUKE i. 78, 79.

Holy Jesus! every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

WILLIAM C. DIX.

God, Who in His tender mercy sent His Son to be our perfect pattern and example, will help us to follow Him if we earnestly desire to do so, and care enough about it to walk by the light when it is vouchsafed to us. Do we not sometimes turn away and wilfully follow darkness instead?

Ninth Evening.

The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I
fear? the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I
be afraid? PSALM xxvii. 1.

Go forward, Christian soldier !
Fear not the secret foe ;
Far more o'er thee are watching
Than human eyes can know ;
Trust only Christ, thy Captain ;
Cease not to watch and pray ;
Heed not the treacherous voices
That lure thy soul astray.

LAWRENCE TUTTIET.

If our eyes could be opened that we might see
the light surrounding us and Who is on our side,
we should not so often fear and be afraid of the
powers that are arrayed against us. Ridicule,
opposition, would seem too trivial to raise one
pang of alarm.

Tenth Evening.

So He giveth His beloved sleep. PSALM cxxvii. 2

Sleep sweet within this quiet room,
O thou! whoe'er thou art;
And let no mournful yesterday
Disturb thy peaceful heart.
Nor let to-morrow scare thy rest
With dreams of coming ill;
Thy Maker is thy changeless friend,
His love surrounds thee still.
Forget thyself and all the world,
Put out each feverish light;
The stars are watching overhead;
Sleep sweet—good night! good night!

ELLEN M. H. GATES.

Let us leave all our anxieties, our griefs and sorrows with Him who has promised to bear them for us, and sleep, to wake refreshed for another day.

Eleventh Evening.

Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.

ST. MATTHEW xxvi. 39.

“Not as I will!” The sound grows sweet
Each time my lips the words repeat.
“Not as I will!” The darkness feels
More safe than light when this thought steals,
Like whispered word, to calm and bless
All unrest and all loneliness.

HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

We may pray, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” if we are also ready to say “nevertheless.” Human weakness shrinks often from the stern ordeal, the pain, the loneliness, the unkindness, the putting away of self, the acceptance of the cross. It is not sin to falter, if only we do not turn back and choose the easier way, following our own wills. Peace lies in the other road.

Twelfth Evening.

There shall be no night there ; and they need no candle,
neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them
light.

REVELATIONS xxii. 5.

There no cloud nor passing vapor
Vies the brightness of the air :
Endless noonday, glorious noonday,
From the Sun of suns is there ;
There no night brings rest from labor,
For unknown are toil and care.

Translated by JOHN MASON NEALE.

There will be no need of rest in that blessed,
glorious land, which is very far off and yet near
to every one of us. Whatever our employments
may be—and that all our faculties will be fully
employed we may be sure—they will be appor-
tioned to our strength and our abilities, and the
doing of them will be a delight, not a weariness.

Thirteenth Evening.

Lord, Thou knowest all things. ST. JOHN xxi. 17.

Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow
Of the sad heart that comes to Thee for rest ;
Cares of to-day, and burdens of to-morrow,
Blessings implored and sins to be confest ;
We come before Thee at Thy gracious word,
And lay them at Thy feet : Thou knowest, Lord.

JANE BOTHWICK.

It is a comfort, when we are worn with many cares, that we need not tell over separately each sorrow, each anxiety, to the merciful ear that is ever open to us. We need only kneel and lay the whole burden at His feet who has said, "I will give you rest." The worst bitterness passes away, fresh strength comes, we rise strengthened and comforted.

Fourteenth Evening.

Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.

I. ST. PETER v. 7.

Should thy mercy send me
Sorrow, toil and woe,
Or should pain attend me
On my path below,
Grant that I may never
Fail Thy hand to see;
Grant that I may ever
Cast my care on Thee.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

If we could always look through the outward circumstances of our daily lives and see God's guiding hand, it would not be hard to submit to them. It is just here that the trial of our faith comes in. Our Saviour has told us the very hairs of our head are all numbered; how much more, then, are these greater events controlled by the loving care of our Father which is in Heaven!

Fifteenth Evening.

He that keepeth thee will not sleep. PSALM cxxi. 3.

He gives His angels charge of those who sleep :
But He Himself watches with those who wake.

—*The Sermon in the Hospital.*

HARRIET ELEANOR HAMILTON KING.

How long are the watches of the night when sleep will not come ! Instead, every vague fear that has ever tormented us in daylight takes to itself a body and all throng about us. Anxieties press heavily ; the future looks dark indeed ; we can see no way of escape from the troubles that surround us. Then let us remember that the love which has guarded all our lives is still watching over us, unsleeping, untiring, and will never suffer us to be overwhelmed.

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Sixteenth Evening.

God is not unrighteous to forget your work.

HEBREWS vi. 10.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 't were done!
Not till the hours of light return
All we have built do we discern.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

When we look back at night over the work of the day, it seems such a wearisome round of trivial, unimportant duties; yet they all go to making up some indispensable whole—the keeping of a home, the care of the children whom we are preparing to carry on the work of the world, the unnumbered acts of service which life makes necessary. If we fail in our part, something is missed, is lost, which no other one can supply as well. “Drudgery is the gray angel of success.”

Seventeenth Evening.

Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. ST. MATTHEW vi. 32.

Could we but kneel, and cast our load,
E'en while we pray, upon our God,
Then rise with lightened cheer;
Sure that the Father, who is nigh
To still the famished raven's cry,
Will hear in that we fear.

JOSEPH ANSTICE.

Straitened means are a sore trial of faith. To know not how the daily wants of ourselves and those we love are to be provided for tries the soul of the strongest. Yet David's experience has been that of many and many another since his day. "I have been young, and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging their bread." There is always a way, and it opens sometimes when hope is gone. God knows and does not forget.

Eighteenth Evening.

There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be
feared. PSALM CXXX. 4.

There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
And a freedom in His service
That is more than liberty.
We make His love too narrow
By false limits of our own,
And we magnify His strictness
With a zeal He will not own.

FREDERICK W. FABER.

Souls require many different methods to draw them to God. Some are led in one way, some in another. We cannot see the guiding hand, let us be very careful how we assert that it is not there. He willeth not that any should perish; we must not limit His power, or His mercy, either for others or ourselves. He can make all things work together for good as He wills.

Nineteenth Evening. •

He knoweth whereof we are made;
He remembereth that we are but dust.

PSALM ciii. 14.

The day is gone, its hours have run,
And Thou hast taken count of all.
The scanty triumphs grace hath won,
The broken vow, the frequent fall.
Through life's long day and death's dark night,
O gentle Jesu, be our light.

FREDERICK W. FABER.

He accepts the faulty service if it is offered in love, as mothers accept the little offerings of their children. Their imperfections only bring a tender smile of loving sympathy, a desire to help them to do better, to teach them to make their work more perfect. He does not need our poor service, He who made all things, but He accepts and blesses it if we give our hearts with it.

Twentieth Evening.

Yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him.

II. SAMUEL xiv. 14.

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er :
I am nearer my home to-day
Than I ever have been before.
Nearer the bound of life
Where we lay our burdens down ;
Nearer leaving the cross,
Nearer gaining the crown.

PHOEBE CARY.

Struggling, tempted souls, God is on your side!
He is not a stern judge watching for you to fall,
but a loving Father, desiring that you may triumph. He is waiting to take you home when the battle is over, to cover you with the robe of forgiveness, to wash away the stains of conflict. Do not resist Him.

Twenty-First Evening.

None of us liveth to himself.

ROMANS xiv. 7.

God did anoint thee with-His odorous oil
To wrestle, not to reign ; and He assigns
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,
For younger fellow-workers of the soil
To wear as amulets. So others shall
Take patience, labor, to their hearts and hands
From thy hand and thy heart and thy brave cheer,
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

So mysteriously are we linked with others in this world of mystery that we cannot fail in our duty without harming others, nor bear ourselves bravely that others are not benefited. Our victory may mean an example that will turn the scale towards good for some struggling, tempted soul that else had fallen.

Twenty-Second Evening.

When the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on everyone of them and healed them.

ST. LUKE iv. 40.

O Saviour Christ, Thou, too, art man ;
Thou hast been troubled, tempted, tried ;
Thy kind, but searching, glance can scan
The very wounds that shame would hide.

Thy touch has still its ancient power ;
No word from Thee can fruitless fall ;
Hear, in this solemn evening hour,
And in Thy mercy heal us all.

HENRY TWELLS.

Our Lord did not disdain the special, personal touch that conveyed healing. So He comes to us still forgiving our sins, healing our infirmities, giving us life.

Twenty-Third Evening.

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

ST. MATTHEW xxv. 40.

Then the righteous shall make question,

“When have we beheld Thee poor,
Lord of glory? When relieved Thee
Lying needy at our door?”

Whom the Blessed King shall answer,

“When ye showed your charity,
Giving bread and home and raiment:
What ye did was done to Me.”

Translated from the Latin.

We often do nothing for the poor and needy because we can do little. There is not one of us so poor that he cannot give as much as the cup of cold water of which our Lord deigned to speak with approbation. If there is first the willing mind, we shall always be able to find out ways of helping our brethren.

Twenty-Fourth Evening.

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

EPHESIANS iv. 26.

A love that gives and takes—that seeth faults
Not with flaw-seeking eyes, like needle-points,
But loving, kindly ever looks them down
With the o'ercoming faith of meek forgiveness!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

If we have quarrelled during the day, let us look back quietly at night and try to see if we were not in some measure in fault. Let us resolve on the morrow to acknowledge our share in the transgression and try to make peace. Above all, let us beware of cherishing the unforgiving spirit; let us be ready to meet advances half-way, and not be discouraged if our own are rejected. Good-humor is a most powerful solvent.

Twenty Fifth Evening.

I pray for them . . . for they are Thine.

ST. JOHN xvii. 9.

And then for those, our dearest and our best,

By this prevailing presence we appeal ;

Oh, fold them closer to Thy mercy's breast !

Oh, do Thine utmost for their souls' true weal !

From tainting mischief keep them white and clear,

And crown Thy gifts with strength to persevere.

W. BRIGHT.

We would give so many gifts to our beloved if we had our way ! Yet those gifts might only work them harm. God, who is their Father as well as ours, knows what is best for them, and *that* we may ask Him to give them.

Twenty-Sixth Evening.

We glory in tribulations also.

ROMANS v. 3.

Thou art gone up on high ;
But Thou didst first come down,
Through earth's most bitter agony
To pass unto Thy crown ;
And girt with griefs and fears
Our onward course must be ;
But only let that path of tears
Lead us at last to Thee.

EMMA TOKE.

We must try to rise above our tribulations ; mastering them, not letting them overwhelm us ; knowing that they are all means to that one end that is ever in view, the forming of our characters for that next life, where character will mean so much. Tribulation worketh patience and finally hope. We must not let despair at the means shut out the end.

Twenty-Seventh Evening.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed
on Thee.

ISAIAH xxvi. 3.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus—this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and
ours?

Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

E. H. BICKERSTETH.

The peace must be inward—from the mind
tayed on God. The surface may be ruffled by
outward circumstances, cares and worries, but
these are only passing cloud-shadows; the deeper
depths are untroubled, and there we shall find
comfort.

Twenty-Eighth Evening.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ;
and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.

ISAIAH xliiii. 2.

Deeper, deeper grow the shadows,
Paler now the glowing west,
Swift the night of death advances ;
Shall it be the night of rest ?

Let me hear Thy voice behind me,
Calming all these wild alarms ;
Let me underneath my weakness
Feel the everlasting arms.

C. L. SMITH.

When death comes near, the interests of this world fade from sight. We are conscious only of the desire for rest. We seem to feel that all is well ; the waters bear us gently on and do not overwhelm us. God Himself holds the tired hand and shuts the weary eyes.

Twenty-Ninth Evening.

It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be
light. ZECHARIAH xiv. 7.

The day is gently sinking to a close,
Fainter and yet more faint the sunlight glows ;
O Brightness of Thy Father's glory, Thou
Eternal Light of Light, be with us now :
Where Thou art present darkness cannot be ;
Midnight is glorious noon, O Lord, with Thee.

CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH.

When the evening of life comes and our cares
fold their wings and slip away, our active duties
grow fewer and our strength declines, there comes
to the penitent soul a time of peace, when the
light of the coming world shines on this and
brightens the path that leads to it.

Thirtieth Evening.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil : for Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy
staff they comfort me. PSALM xxiii. 4.

And oh ! if yet one arrow more,
The sharpest of the Almighty's store,
Tremble upon the string—a sinner's death—
Art Thou not by to soothe and cure,
To lay us gently in the grave,
To close the weary eye and hush the parting
breath ?

JOHN KEBLE.

The love that has guarded us through our lives,
supported us under trials, shielded us in temptation,
watched over us in danger, will not forsake
us in the hour of death. The last long wave will
only bear us gently home to the dear ones who
are gone before us and wait our coming.

Thirty-First Evening.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promises.

HEBREWS x. 36.

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God, see all, nor be
afraid!"

ROBERT BROWNING.

We are often disappointed because effects do not immediately follow causes, because we do not at once receive the guerdon to which we think ourselves in a measure entitled. We must strive for patience. God will not forget; in His own time He will abundantly perform every promise.



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