

GOOD IN EVERYTHING

A TREASURY OF INSPIRATION,
JOY, AND COMFORT

by
H. I. GEE

SECOND EDITION



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GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THIS book is different from any other of its kind, and I should like to say at least two things about it:

First, it is a treasury of precious thoughts gathered from the ends of the earth and from the experience of at least twenty-five centuries; but it is no haphazard collection, for I have tried to arrange these ideas and stories into groups, each group, as it were, a gospel. Here, I believe, are thoughts 'to stab us broad awake' (as Robert Louis Stevenson would say), to give us a new view of life, to remind us that even the common day may be challenging and sweet, and to show us once again that humour, courage, chivalry, kindness, and understanding are with us still. Here, surely, we may find much to inspire and comfort. Here is consolation for those who sorrow, good cheer for those who are fighting hard battles, and at least a glimmer of hope for any who walk in the valley of the shadow.

Secondly, I want to explain how this book has been put together. Frankly, it is an anthology; and as such it is only one of many. But I know of no other anthology quite like this, for while many of the thoughts in the following pages are from men and women whose names are household words, many others are from very ordinary folk, the rank and file whose names count for nothing. As a journalist I am in constant touch with the daily and weekly Press, and one of my greatest joys and privileges is a very considerable correspondence. Thus, over a number of years, I have gathered thoughts and incidents from national and provincial newspapers,

from the hundreds of letters I have received. These are gleanings from both fields. The result may scandalize the critics, but it means that side by side with Confucius, Isaiah, Bernard Shaw, and Winston Churchill are very practical ideas from, say, a charwoman, a bootblack, a pilot, a schoolboy, an old gentleman of eighty, a courageous invalid, a typist, a housewife, a night-nurse, and a commercial-traveller. These may have no claim to immortality, but they certainly have a working knowledge of life; and their presence, I should like to think, makes this book the most human anthology ever devised, and robs it of any suspicion of complacency.

Good In Everything is a daring title. The cynic will challenge it at once. After all, *is* there good in everything?

Much in these pages, especially in the earlier pages, hints at what we might call the *obvious* good. Even the most sceptical among us will agree that birds and trees and flowers, sunny days, friends, pleasant memories, the laughter of little children, stars, and the wind on the heath are good things, good in themselves, and ours richly to enjoy. Well may we thank God for this fair earth and all its loveliness and joy.

But if sunshine be good, what of shadow? If we thank God for fine weather, how do we stand in the storm? If it is good to adventure, can it be good to stay at home with what is humdrum? and if we are glad that we are young and strong, what are we to say when we are old or in pain?

The longer I live the surer I become that there *is* good in everything. In some things there is the *obvious* good; in others the *hidden* good. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that *I believe we may find good in everything*. A brave and a patient spirit, a firm faith with courage and good cheer, these enable

us not only to enjoy what is good but also to turn (as by some conjuring within) what seems ill to good account. Even misfortune, loss, and difficulty can be regarded as highways to happiness—that inner happiness known only to men and women who, like President Roosevelt, lay hold on health through weakness, smile only after (or because?) they have suffered. I believe, indeed, that no one can know serenity of spirit in this hard and changeful life unless he has battled through the turmoil. I believe that often our bitterest foes are our greatest allies in disguise.

On my desk is an airgraph from a corporal in General Montgomery's Desert Army. It is dated February, 1943. I read:

There is everything here to make a man curse—heat and cold, sand, sand, sand, lack of water, tinned food every day of the week, creeping things beyond counting, and much more. I hate them all; and yet I wouldn't have missed this experience for worlds, for in it and through it and because of it I have felt my spirit grow. I came out a boy. I shall come back a man—*a man who knows the worst, and by that very knowledge has come to see and love the best.*

There you have it—and the hidden good is all the more precious when found, simply because it *was* hidden.

These are not easy days for any of us. Many are preyed upon by loneliness or depression or anxiety; many are finding the burden of bereavement hard to bear. Many are tired; many suffer. Some, feeling unequal to the struggle of life, are oppressed by a sense of failure. Here, then, is an epitome of the faith of some who, like us, heirs of adversity, pilgrims of the night, remain gloriously courageous and triumphant.

Surely it will be good for us to journey with them, to catch some spark from their burning torches, to feel the strength and inspiration of their fellowship, to walk in step with them, to think large thoughts, and to learn something of their secret.

I do not picture you reading this book from beginning to end. It is designed, rather, for those who have little time to spare and who, therefore, can do no more than turn a few pages at a time. My earnest hope is that some of the famous people here, or some of the humbler men and women, may give you a vital thought in the hour of your need, a thought that will help you to do what you have to do with a brave heart and a great hope.

H. L. GEE

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Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, *and good in everything.*

As You Like It

HOW YOU LOOK AT IT

DURING the Second World War I was greatly impressed by something a girl said. She was compelled to leave her home, her own town, and the profession she loved, in order to work in a munition factory over a hundred miles away. The night before she left for her new task she looked in to see us.

‘And what do you think of it all?’ I asked.

She made a little face; and then, with a smile, she said: ‘Oh, I shall get along quite well, I think. You see, *I’ve made up my mind that I’m going to like it.*’

It was one of the most sensible and gallant things of the war, and it reminded me of the profound truth which Shakespeare borrowed from the ancient Greeks and passed on to us in a dozen memorable words: *There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.*

A gospel is in these words, and the wisest and bravest folk all down the years have lived by the light of its courageous and common-sense faith. Some have expressed it one way, some another, but all have believed that in daily practice it is best in the long run to enjoy and make the most of whatever is good, and to face whatever is less good with determination and good cheer. Let us think together about this age-old touchstone by means of which the good things of life are enriched and the bad things turned, by spiritual alchemy, into things for which we may thank God:

There comes to mind a farmer. One of the wisest men I have ever known, he had little academic

knowledge, but was a great reader and a still greater thinker. Though he had had much trouble and many disappointments in life, he once said to me: 'There's good in everything . . . somewhere.'

'You really believe that?' I asked.

He nodded, smiling serenely as he did so. 'I'll admit,' he went on, 'that the good isn't always easy to see, but it's always there. May be you have to have faith and patience to find it, and often you've to be brave; but if you look long enough and carefully enough and expectantly enough, well, you'll find the best in the worst . . . and if you ask God to help you, you'll find it all the sooner.'

It takes God's weather to bring up God's flowers.

ST. ALEXANDER

The way to be cheerful is to smile when you feel bad, to think about somebody else's headache when yer own is 'most bustin', to keep on believin' the sun is a-shining when the clouds is thick enough to cut. Nothin' helps you to it like thinkin' more 'bout other folks than about yerself.

ALICE REGAN RICE

Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

JOHN KEBLE

An old lady who has spent years in a back bedroom had a smile for us when we called to see her the other day. Breathless with climbing so many stairs, we were willing for her to do the talking.

'Yes,' she said, 'I'm in luck's way. There has never been much of a view from this window, only roofs and dull walls, and a gasometer.'

'And now they have painted the gasometer. But that is not all. If only you would come towards evening you would see what has happened. It was a dull red before; now it is a glossy green, and when the setting sun shines on the fresh paint it lights up one side with a streak of pure gold. I lie here watching it for an hour till it turns to orange, and then slowly fades.'

She was smiling as she spoke.

'Don't you think I'm lucky?' she asked.

H. L. GEE

If you could see all the beautiful deeds which are being done at this moment, and gather up all the lovely thoughts, you would have no difficulty in believing that, in spite of appearances, this is a fine, brave world, after all.

From a newspaper

Darling, such great news: Here's one of your socks with only quite an ordinary sized hole in it!

The compiler's wife

A man was travelling along the road, riding his donkey. He met some one riding a horse. 'Ah!' said he to himself, '*he* can afford a horse, and all I have is a donkey.'

On he went, and presently met a poor fellow, wet with perspiration, pushing a heavily loaded barrow. 'Ah!' said he to himself again, 'I can afford a donkey, but that poor fellow has to push a barrow.'

Surely the saying is true: *If I look to those above me, I feel dissatisfied; but if I look to those below, I realize that I have plenty.*

From *China*, in the
'Practical Book' series

'How dismal you look,' observed a bucket to his companion as they were going to the well.

'Ah,' replied the other, 'I was reflecting on the uselessness of our being filled, for, let us go away never so full, we always come back empty.'

'Dear me, how strange to look at it that way,' said the other bucket. 'I enjoy the thought that however empty we come, *we always go away full!*'

Old tale

Always expect other people to do their best. Sometimes you will be disappointed, but usually you will be justified, for by expecting the best you do much to help people to give it.

From the *Children's Newspaper*

When you are suspicious of any one you make it hard for them to do what is right. When you expect the best from them you make it easy for them to be at their best.

Anonymous

Seeing the best in others, he drew from them their best.

Inscription on a monument to
William Rathbone of Liverpool

So far as I can, I try to forget yesterday's troubles and to look forward to to-morrow's joys.

A woman of eighty-three

Let good or ill befall,
It must be good for me;
Secure of having Thee in all,
Of having all in Thee.

HENRY FRANCIS LYTE

*What do you do when you are caught in the rain?
Grumble?*

*When old Izaak Walton was caught in the rain he
talked of sunny days. Listen to him:*

Turn out of the way a little, good scholar, toward
yonder high honeysuckle hedge. There we'll sit
and sing while this shower falls so gently upon the
teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the
lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

Look, under that broad beech tree I sat down when
I was last this way a-fishing, and the birds in the grove
seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo
whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree
near the brow of that primrose hill. There I sat,
viewing the silver streams glide silently toward their
centre, the tempestuous sea. And sometimes I
beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs leap-
ing securely in the cool shade, while others sported
themselves in the cheerful sun. As I thus sat these
and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with
content that I thought, as the poet has so happily
expressed it:

*I was for that time lifted above earth,
And possessed joys not promised in my birth.*

If it wasn't for the rain, there wouldn't be any hay
to make when the sun shines.

NEVILLE HOBSON

It ain't no use to grumble and complain,
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice;
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,
W'y, rain's my choice.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

If you count the sunny and cloudy days of a round

year, you will find that there is more sunshine than cloud.

ovid, writing about the time
of Christ

The only argument available with a keen east wind
is to put on your overcoat.

NEVILLE HOBSON

I have a friend, his name is Jim,
And everyone is kind to him.
He's never out of step with life,
And rarely nagged at by his wife.
I've heard him say in pouring rain:
'Oh, well, the sun will shine again.'
If things go ill he has the will
To keep on bravely smiling still.
When trouble comes—why, Jim can take it.
He says that life is what you make it!

Source unknown

No one who reads the papers can fail to be troubled
in these days when so much is happening that we
deplore; but there are two good things to remember.

One is that destruction is always more spectacular than construction: the crash of a great building more arresting than the slow process of raising it stone by stone. The breaking down of old constitutions and institutions and the shattering of nations command more attention than the steady maturing of a new and better social order, a process which is always going on.

The other thing to remember is that change and decay are not necessarily either bad or sad. Old ways of doing things have often to fall into disuse that something better may rise in their place.

Change and decay are among the laws of nature, and though they are so often regarded as deplorable, they are the mainspring of growth and improvement, the very energy of progress. The world and life are for ever crumbling, for ever being made anew.

From a national newspaper

'Ah,' murmured an old lady as she walked in the dark street, 'I *like* the black-out. It reminds me of how things used to be when I was a girl. And, of course, *it is easier to see the stars, isn't it?*'

Said during the Second World War

There isn't enough darkness in the universe to extinguish the light of one small candle.

Old saying

After all, the kind of world one carries about within one's self is the important thing, and the world outside takes all its grace, colour, and value from that.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

When the worst comes the worst is going.

JOHN MASEFIELD

The tide turns at low water as well as at high.

HAVELOCK ELLIS

Much of what we call evil is really good in disguise, and we should not quarrel rashly with adversities not yet understood, nor overlook the mercies often bound up in them. Pain, for instance, is a warning of danger, a very necessity of existence. But for it, but for the warnings which our feelings give us, the very blessings by which we are surrounded would soon and inevitably prove fatal.

LORD AVEBURY

Bilious and headache this morning. A dog howled all night and left me little sleep. Poor cur, I dare say he had his distresses as I have mine.

SIR WALTER SCOTT in his *Journal*

When I am engaging lodgings I do not inquire of my prospective landlady as to her terms; I ask one thing only. I ask her, *What is her total view of the Universe?*

For, obviously, if she is right there she is right everywhere; and if in that matter, her final understanding of the purpose of all human life, she holds a perverse view she is to be trusted nowhere.

G. K. CHESTERTON

It is a comfort that the medal has two sides. There is much vice and misery in the world, I know; but more virtue and happiness, I believe.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Since I must be old and have the gout, I have long turned those disadvantages to my own convenience, and pleaded them to the utmost when they will save me from doing anything I dislike.

HORACE WALPOLE in a letter
to Sir Horace Mann, 1785

Here is old Jeremy Taylor talking pleasantly of the art of finding good where we might scarcely think it worth looking for:

I have fallen into the hands of thieves. What then?

They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me. I can still discourse; and, unless I list, they have not taken away my merry

countenance and my cheerful spirit and a good conscience. He that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down on his little handful of thorns.

Count your many blessings—name them one by one.

REV. J. OATMAN

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked at my sullen heart in vain;
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

The worst turns best to the brave, says Browning, and often we can make something good out of something bad if we go the right way about it.

Opening an exhibition of Rabindranath Tagore's drawings in London, Lord Zetland told how the famous Indian writer found, by accident, that he had a gift for making pictures. He had given up his best years to his pen, writing books and plays and verses, and enriching the world with noble thoughts finely and beautifully expressed; *but one day he made a blot.*

A sheet of paper was apparently ruined by this unsightly circle of ink. Instead, however, of the blot being the end of a little piece of work, it became the beginning of a big piece, for the poet began to

draw round the blot in order to change it from a blemish to a thing of beauty, and in so doing he found his skill in drawing, and developed it.

From a newspaper

The war has done China a world of good; it has driven the educated population from the coast to the interior.

MISS PEARL TEH-WEI-LIU

No one in the Army likes doing fatigues, but every private ordered to do one knows that he has to do it.

One day, not long ago, there was astonishment in a north of England military camp when a dozen men were given an unusual fatigue.

Their orderly sergeant is noted for the unorthodox way in which he gets the best out of his squad of fine and very willing men; but even the most willing privates were taken aback when, instead of commanding a number of them to do a fatigue, the sergeant mildly inquired if any man there would *care* to do one? Some of the men were suspicious. Some were quite frankly unwilling to do any fatigue for any one—even for their orderly sergeant, great favourite though he was. After a time one or two privates stepped forward; then two or three more. 'I want a dozen volunteers,' urged the sergeant, and at last twelve men were standing in a line, all of them feeling ridiculously virtuous, all of them uncomfortable because the other men were grinning at them.

Then, looking along the line, the sergeant said crisply: 'Your fatigue is to sit in the stalls at the local cinema—the manager has sent me a dozen free tickets. Good luck!'

From the *Yorkshire Post*, 1943

'Between you and me, I'm a frightfully lucky fellow! It's just the way I'm made, I suppose. Anyhow, the fact is, I'm always, or nearly always, happy.

'Queer, in a world like this! I don't mean I'm always amused; I mean that almost always I'm happy deep down inside.

'It works this way, you see: If I get what I want, or have my own way, well, naturally, I'm pleased about it. And if I don't get my own way, if I have to fall in with someone else, do something for somebody else instead of for myself, well, usually they are so grateful or so nice to me that I get a big thrill out of it.

'Somehow, for me it's heads I win, tails you lose!'

A plumber's assistant in
conversation with the compiler

Whenever you are in danger of becoming depressed by the apparent sordidness of life, consider that a man has only to be drunk and disorderly once to get his name in the local newspaper, whereas a man may go home sober every night for forty years and never once blossom into print.

A magistrate

There is so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,
That it hardly becomes any of us
To talk about the rest of us.

Attributed to EDWARD WALLIS HOCK

I plead guilty, your honour. Yes, I did break into the shop, an' I stole mostly all I could lay hands on; but I'm not altogether bad, your honour. There was some toys behind the counter, an' I let 'em be.

I'm not that far gone, your honour, not that far gone as I'd rob little 'uns.

An alleged thief in court

Just because so many divorce cases are in the news is no proof that domestic happiness to-day is in greater peril than it was years ago; and it is worth bearing in mind that for every matrimonial shipwreck, at least ten thousand vessels, love-laden and smooth-sailing, come safely into port.

H. L. GEE

From my experience I have found men worse in commercial dealings, more disposed to cheat, than I had any notion of; but more disposed to do one another good than I had conceived.

And, really, it is wonderful, considering how much attention is necessary for men to take care of themselves and ward off immediate evils which press upon them, it is wonderful how much they do for others. As it is said of the greatest liar that he tells more truth than falsehood, so it may be said of the worst man that he does more good than evil.

DR. JOHNSON

Though waves and storms go o'er my head,
Though strength, and health, and friends be gone,
Though joys be withered all and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn,
On this my steadfast soul relies—
Father, Thy mercy never dies!

Translated by JOHN WESLEY

There is no harm in confronting our misfortunes. Much of what we dread is really due to indistinctness of outline. If we have the courage to say to our-

selves, 'What *is* this thing, then? Let the worst come to the worst and what then?' we shall frequently find that, after all, it is not so terrible. It is perhaps not too much to say that any calamity, the moment it is apprehended by the reason alone, loses nearly all its power to disturb and unfix us.

MARK RUTHERFORD

Through the tall latticed windows a sunbeam has strayed into the room and seems to lie asleep upon the floor. Grandmother slumbers, resting in her wide armchair. You wonder which is the whitest, her hair, her lovely old face, or the delicate hands that have been so diligent and tended so many grand-children.

Baby is delightfully busy close by. He has possessed himself of Granny's crutch as it fell from her hand when she dozed. He rides upon this hobby-horse. Prancing, rearing, unmanageable, the steed and rider gallop across the room. Joy and rapture! Woe to the chairs and the earthen jar on the table. Puss, much disturbed, after shifting from one place to another, has found a refuge on the top of the cupboard. From her high pedestal she gazes on the scene in fear and amazement. Baby, forgetful of everything but his enjoyment, gallops on with wild excitement.

But the mad race has awakened Grandmother. Her eyes open, and the strange sight makes her wonder. Her crutch turned into a horse, a toy—the crutch she had been so loath to accept and which still weighed heavily on her mind?

She had always looked on it as a necessary evil, one of those things you long to do without because you cannot dispense with them. Does it not recall her lost strength and her present weakness?

And now she saw the objectionable crutch held tightly in the baby hands, grasped with joy, and

carried triumphantly as the most delightful plaything. It seemed to her that behind the pretty picture of a child's glee appeared some hidden meaning, some kindly message for herself. Unconsciously her thoughts looked through what lay before her eyes to the Holy Will that rules our destinies, toward the Wisdom that knows what man ignores. She thought of Him Who makes the young ivy grow round the trunk of the oak, Who hangs the wild rose on the crumbling wall, and sends to old grandmothers merry baby boys.

But Baby, now weary, was slackening his pace.

'May I have my crutch back, my darling?' said Grandmother.

'You may, Granny, but you promise to lend it to me when I want a horse again?'

And Grandmother, for the first time that she remembered, smiled at her crutch.

PASTOR CHARLES WAGNER

Once upon a time there was a wicked baron who hated a little cobbler for being a cheery soul, and for singing all day long while mending boots and shoes in his wretched little shop.

So the wicked baron threw him into prison, but the little cobbler sang as merrily as ever, for he said: 'I'm delighted not to have any work to do!'

So the wicked baron sent him into the castle yard, and made him chop wood all day, but the little cobbler sang like a bird, for he said: 'It's fine getting all this exercise!'

So the wicked baron flung him into a cell as dark as midnight, but the little cobbler went on singing, for he said: 'This is just the sort of place I like—nothing to distract one's attention, and all my thoughts on God and His goodness!'

Then the wicked baron had a fit, and died, after which the little cobbler went back to his shop, where he sang, as before, while mending boots and shoes.

From the *South Wales Argus*

The sunshine slanting down a dingy street—its evening glow laying gold on the common pavement.

Rippling shadows, blue and purple, in a canal.

A geranium in a cottage window.

Two tired harvesters asleep with their backs against the stooks.

A small girl playing on a bit of common land—her face radiant with excitement, her golden curls like a halo.

An old man helping an old woman across the road, each courteous and considerate.

A smart shop-girl against a background of coloured bales.

A back yard with concrete, and a boy peering at his rabbits in a hutch.

Stars.

There are pictures everywhere for those with eyes to see.

From the *Paisley Daily Express*

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.

St. Paul writing to the
Philippians (*Philippians* iv. 8)

OUT OF DOORS

IF there is one place where it is easier than another to have a glad heart and free, that place is out of doors. Making friends with birds and flowers and trees, with hills and streams, and all the fair beauty of God's good world is perhaps one of the surest recipes for happiness. It is when we find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, and sermons in stones that we are assuredly in the mood to believe there is good in everything. Nature speaks persuasively to all but the dullest of us; and there can be few who have adventured hopefully by meadow, grove, and stream, in a springtime wood, or over the moors in a golden sunset without feeling that where'er they trod was haunted, holy ground.

Here, then, are a few thoughts upon whose wings we may travel far afield and in pleasant company:

Where'er we turn Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

THOMAS MOORE

God, I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

We thank Thee, Lord, for this fair earth,
The glittering sky, the silver sea;
For all their beauty, all their worth,
Their light and glory, come from Thee.

Thanks for the flowers that clothe the ground,
The trees that wave their arms above,
The hills that gird our dwellings round,
As Thou dost gird Thine own with love.

GEORGE EDWARD LYNCH COTTON

Life is sweet, brother.

Do you think so?

Think so! There's night and day, brother, both
sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all
sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath.
Life is sweet, brother; who would wish to die?

I would wish to die . . .

You talk like a gorgio, which is the same as talking
like a fool. Wish to die, indeed! A Romany Chal
would wish to live for ever!

In sickness, Jasper?

There's the sun and the stars, brother.

In blindness, Jasper?

There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could
only feel that I would gladly live for ever.

GEORGE BORROW in *Lavengro*

He loved birds, and green places, and the wind
upon the heath, and saw the brightness of the skirts
of God.

W. H. Hudson's epitaph

A wind arose among the pines; it shook
Their clinging music from their boughs, and then
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
Were heard: *Oh, follow, follow, follow me!*

SHELLEY in *Prometheus Unbound*

The wind bloweth where it listeth.

ST. JOHN (iii. 8)

The wind of the Kingdom of Heaven has blown
over the world, and shall blow for centuries yet.

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

There's nothing I like better or enjoy more than
a good long walk against the wind on a dry day in
spring—it makes a new man of me; and, incidentally,
it's cheap.

A Yorkshireman

To plough is to pray.

R. G. INGERSOLL

The Snob: Take Byron, for instance. He was a
Harrow boy.

Charles Lamb: Yes, and take Burns. He was a
ploughboy.

I know of no country sight so beautiful, so full of
meaning, so worthy, so utterly satisfying as a plough-
man with his hands upon the hales, his eyes fixed on
some distant landmark, his horses pulling in step
with unhurrying strength, birds following in their
wake, and the great heave of the good, dark earth
stark against a winter sky. It is a sight to bring a
man to his knees. However contemptible and de-
pressing life may seem in some quarters, it has a
grandeur and a sweetness wherever an honest plough-
man ploughs his furrows deep and straight.

H. L. GEE

He ploughed a straight furrow.

Epitaph at Ganton, Yorkshire on a
farm labourer, William Watson

Out of the deep a shadow,
Then a spark;
Out of the cloud a silence,
Then a lark;
Out of the heart a rapture,
Then a pain;
Out of the dead cold ashes
Life again.

JOHN TABB

Spring, you must wait before I come
To see your world to-day.
I am not ready yet to walk
Along your magic way.

The hawthorn burns with flame so pure,
So wonderfully white,
I dare not yet come out of doors
To see so fair a sight.

It seems that angels have come down
And nested here below;
The cherry trees are full of wings,
The chestnut spires glow;

So bright the world which you have made
(Hark how your heralds sing!),
So holy all your woods and fields,
Who ventures out in Spring?

First let me then take off my shoes,
For hallowed is the way:
Spring, you must wait, for ere I come
I will kneel down and pray.

H. L. GEE

My faith is all a doubtful thing,
Wove on a doubtful loom,
Until there comes each showery Spring
A cherry tree in bloom.

DAVID MORTON

Now that the snowdrops are with us again we like to call to mind something which happened last year at snowdrop time.

A friend of ours received by post a brown-paper parcel with a bunch of snowdrops inside. She lives in Lancashire, and the snowdrops were from Cornwall.

Our friend had been in bed for weeks, but was now convalescent. She was so thankful to be feeling stronger that she sent the snowdrops to a friend who was bedridden. The friend had received a bunch the day before, so she sent her maid with them to a poor woman who lived in an unlovely quarter of the town, hoping they would make a brave show there.

The poor woman thought them so lovely that she wanted to hand them on to someone else, so she went next door and gave them to her neighbour, a char-woman, who thanked her and put them on the table. Next day she happened to glance at them as she was tidying up before going out to work. Suddenly she decided to take them with her, for she thought the lady of the house where she was going to scrub would be glad to have a few snowdrops, as she had been ill so long.

'Please, ma'am,' she said, 'I had these snowdrops given yesterday; they're from Cornwall, and they looked so nice I thought you'd like to have them.'

So the snowdrops found their way back to our friend's house. It was some days before their journey was traced out, and a week before somebody down in

Cornwall heard of the joy that had come from a
bunch of Cornish snowdrops up in Lancashire.

'The Pilgrim'

All things bright and beautiful
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.
They toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say
unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not
arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so
clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and
to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much
more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Jesus (*St. Matthew*, vi. 28-30)

Wunnerful things, cows. Not much of a pictur'
to look at, mebbe, but when you come to know 'em
one by one they sort of grow on yer. Wunnerful
things is cows.

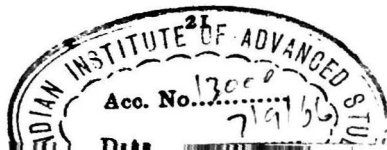
A farm hand

And all the meadows, wide unrolled,
Were green and silver, green and gold,
Where buttercups and daisies spun
Their shining tissues in the sun.

JULIA C. R. DORR

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

LORD TENNYSON



I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

JOYCE KILMER in *Trees*

On such a night, such a night as this in June,
surely man must sigh out his soul for more than
Grecian tents and terrestrial love.

The beauty of the summer earth, and the risen
moon that grows brighter in the deepening blue of
the sky, minute by minute; the swallows wheeling
in an ecstasy of flight, and the haze of great heat cast
over the trees—these must make us aware that the
year has reached the height of its loveliness, and
cannot long remain in such a state of perfection.

The hour is poignant with the transiency of living
things, and it is this consciousness that must send
our longing far beyond the Earth in a flight more
perilous and more ecstatic than the swallow's. But
love goes too, accompanying and comforting.

MARION ACTON-BOND

I didn't think the country was like *this*!
A slum child in Ashstead
Woods

Do you think God would mind if I gathered just
one or two and took them home for Mummy?
A child in a field of daisies

It is said that when for the first time the great
botanist Linnæus saw the mass of golden gorse at
Putney Heath, he fell down on his knees and thanked
God for having created a plant of such wondrous
beauty.

I once saw a botanist most tenderly replace a plant which he had inadvertently uprooted, though we were on a bleak hillside in Tibet, where no human being was likely to see the flower again.

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

‘And what are *you* up to?’

‘Nothing, sir. I wasn’t going to take ’em, sir—I wouldn’t do that. I’m just looking in the nest, sir. When I was this way a week ago there were five eggs, and now there are five baby thrushes, sir—and, gosh, what hungry mouths they’ve got!’

‘I see. So you like tramping in the country?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Why?’

‘I dunno, sir. I just do. I like birds, sir, and rabbits, and flowers, and trees. I like to find out about them, sir. I’m never so happy as when I’m getting to know the things that live in the fields.’

‘The things God made?’

‘Yes, sir. And He made ’em jolly well, too!’

Conversation reported by a
naturalist after meeting a
schoolboy

Yes, it’s a hard life, and the pity of it is that I’m rushed off my feet most of all in summer—just when the weather is, or ought to be, at its best. But I keep on; and sometimes very early in a morning, and sometimes after I’ve washed up in the evening, I put my hat on, and slip out of the kitchen for an hour. I nearly always come to this point on the cliffs to watch the sea. It does me a world of good—a breath of fresh air, you know, and all the wideness of the horizon instead of a brick wall facing my kitchen. And the music! I am not sure I should be able to

keep on all the summer through if I did not get an hour off sometimes—an hour by the sea, alone with the bigness of it, and my thoughts.

A woman who runs a seaside
boarding-house at Scarborough

I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself now and then finding a smother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON shortly before his death

I like playing on the sand. It makes my feet feel funny, and the sea is so big.

Written in school by a boy of seven

Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed
Where'er I turn mine eye,
If I survey the ground I tread,
Or gaze upon the sky.

ISAAC WATTS

If any man says there is no ugliness in the world he is a liar, but if any man declares there is no beauty he is a fool.

J. R. FLINTOFF

God, I thank Thee for the changing sky, for the sweet fresh wonder of spring, the richness of a summer noon, the glory of the golden autumn, and the clear and exquisite pencilling of winter with its scenes in black, white, and grey. I thank Thee for the singing birds, the music of wind and ocean and rippling

stream, the stillness of a lake at sunset, the challenge of every new day, the humility I feel when I look up at the stars by night. When I see small flowers praising Thee with sweetest looks, and when I turn aside from life's pressing duties to gaze upon the trees lifting up their sacrifice of loveliness, I dare not tread upon the earth which Thou hast made without thanking Thee at every step.

Found among the effects
of Jane Turnbull, spinster

My Dear, I do not know that I shall live to see another spring, but I do know that a thousand nights of suffering and a thousand days of weariness can never rob me of the priceless treasure I gathered to-day—a myriad golden daffodils in Hayburn woods, God's happy sentinels gathered in battalions round my bathchair! Poor Flossie kept asking if she should push me a little further, but I kept saying, 'No, no . . . I want to take them all back home with me and keep them there for ever and ever.'

From a letter written by
an invalid

The war was getting on my nerves, and I was losing my faith—all this bombing and all this suffering, and our street looking like a ruin. But this afternoon I went into the woods and saw the bluebells like a magic lake under the trees, and my heart began to sing again for I knew that God was awake after all.

From a letter written by a girl in the
Forces during the Second World War

To persons standing alone on a hill during a clear midnight such as this, the roll of the world eastward

is almost a palpable movement. The sensation may be caused by the panoramic glide of the stars past earthly objects, which is perceptible in a few minutes of stillness, or by the better outlook upon space that a hill affords, or by the wind, or by the solitude; but whatever be its origin, the impression of riding along is vivid and abiding. The poetry of motion is a phrase much in use, and to enjoy the epic form of that gratification it is necessary to stand on a hill at a small hour of the night, and, having first expanded with a sense of difference from the mass of civilized mankind, who are dream-wrapt, and disregarding of all such proceedings at this time, long and quietly watch your stately progress through the stars. After such a nocturnal reconnoitre it is hard to get back to earth, and to believe that the consciousness of such majestic speeding is derived from a tiny human frame.

THOMAS HARDY in *Far From
the Madding Crowd*

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the
firmament showeth his handiwork.

Psalm xix. 1

‘Dull? But, my dear, I have a window, and lying here in bed I can see the sky—God’s sky—day and night. No one in all the town is quite so fortunate, I think, for I pay not a penny for this endless panorama before me . . . the blue of noon, the deeper blue of midnight, the fleecy flocks of dawn tinged with rose-pink or flame yellow; the light clouds of April, the great billowing masses of cumulus in July; the shapes with which my fancy peoples this mighty stage of the heavens, all these bring joy to me, help me to forget my loneliness, and speak of God the kindly

magician who makes His clouds ministers for my good.'

'But there are dark clouds and grey skies, Jenny. What do you do then?'

'Do? Why, what can I do here in bed but wait for the silver lining . . . and every cloud *has* one, you know!'

Told to the compiler by the
invalid's friend

Didst thou never espy a cloud in the sky
Which a centaur or leopard might be,
Or a wolf, or a cow?

ARISTOPHANES writing about 400 B.C.

The little cares that fretted me,
I lost them yesterday,
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play . . .
Among the hushing of the corn,
Where drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born—
Out in the fields of God.

Author unknown

Whenever the stain of the city sinks into my soul
I take a walk in the woods and fields. I leave the
noise behind me. I forget the strain. I walk alone
in the wind and sunshine, and when I'm tired I lie
down under a hedge and look across a field. It
always does me good. I feel cleaner and sweeter
inside; and though I don't go back to the crowded
streets with the snobbish notion that I'm a saint,
at least I'm not so ready to dub every other person I
meet a sinner.

JOHN A. COUSINS

Nature, which is the time-vesture of God, reveals
Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

THOMAS CARLYLE

God, the Great Giver, can open the whole universe
to our gaze in the narrow space of a single lane.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

It's hard work being an atheist when you're setting
up stooks in a harvest field.

A university student
on a farm in August

Bright robes of gold the fields adorn,
The hills with joy are ringing,
The valleys stand so thick with corn
That even they are singing.

WILLIAM CHATTERTON DIX

Thank you, God, for everything.

A child's prayer

The vicar's wife took grapes to church; Farmer Thompson sent along some sheaves of corn, and Miss Winceby, up at the Hall, helped to decorate the font with flowers from her own garden. There were apples and marrows and vegetables by the stone. But Mrs. Crawford, an Old-Age Pensioner, down at Low Moor, brought a jug of water; and at first some of us laughed, and then the vicar frowned at us, and said: 'Mother, we'll put it on the altar, right in front of the Cross, for there would be no harvest at all but for God's good rain.'

And there it stayed all Sunday, and though it was a bit chipped, that old jug of Mrs. Crawford's was the very centre and soul of our harvest thanksgiving

services, and the vicar preached about the wedding at Cana in Galilee, and how Jesus turned the water into wine.

From a parish magazine

It's a sad thing when a man hasn't time to stand by a five-barred gate and smoke a pipe, and do nothing at all except keep on standing there and smoking his pipe till his pipe goes out, and the wonder and the beauty of the country sink into his soul.

A commercial traveller in a letter to the compiler

Sloes are so plentiful here that it is only necessary to walk across the field at the back of my house to gather all I could possibly require. But crabs, although these also are fairly plentiful, are an adventure in themselves. Six trees in the middle of a balk that runs across a forty-acre field yielded me the fruit for my jelly that year; and clear as yesterday I remember the journey we made to fetch them in.

A flare of autumn colour ran along the hedges—maple and spindle and dogwood. Rooks and clouds were being blown pell-mell across the sky. And from a rickyard far away came the drone of a threshing-machine, the only sound in that mellow afternoon. The stubble had all been ploughed in, and the gleaming waves of the furrows still lay just as the share had turned them, shining with moisture, waiting till the wind and the frost should crumble them into a kindly tilth.

As we trudged over the heavy ploughlands to the crab-apple trees on the horizon, our boots gathered the clay in such quantities that their weight seemed like a magnet drawing us from the earth's centre. We were, as they say hereabouts, 'all barm'd up',

but the fallen apples, speckling the clay with their blood-warm red, were a more than sufficient reward for our endeavour.

We had filled our baskets from the windfalls among the furrows, when somebody discovered that the best were in the ditch by the balk. And what I recall most of that afternoon's rich harvesting is the crunch of apples under my feet in the bottom of the ditch and the strong smell of water-mint as I picked them out. Who shall analyse why one detail of such an adventure is destined to stand out stronger than any other? At any rate, every time we opened the crab-apple jelly that year I seemed to smell again the crushed mint under my feet; and now, when the jelly is all eaten, like a fume drifting across the mind that smell still remains.

C. HENRY WARREN in
England is a Village

When the drone of the thresher breaks through the autumn singing of the trees and wind, or through the stillness of the first frost, I get restless and more restless, till, throwing down my pen, I have gone out to see. For there is nothing like the sight of threshing for making one feel good—not in the sense of comfort, but at heart. There, under the pines and the already leafless elms and beech trees, close to the great stacks, is the big, busy creature, with its small black puffing engine astern; and there, all around it, is that conglomeration of unsentimental labour which invests all the crises of farm-work with such fascination. The crew of the farm is only five all told, but to-day they are fifteen, and none strangers, save the owners of the travelling thresher.

From The Inn of Tranquillity
by JOHN GALSWORTHY

There is a time in Autumn when Spring seems to return—it is the time when the pine wood puts forth vivid emerald shoots which shiver like delicate tassels at the end of the dark branches. Such a day it was when the dog and I wandered through a wood. Oak and elm, birch and sycamore, spoke of waning life, but the pine-tree had kept Springtime hidden in her heart to gladden us when Autumn should touch everything else with sleepy fingers.

No wood is quite like a pine wood—with its carpet of pine-needles, dark brown, save where a stray sunbeam fires its brown into copper. Overhead the dark green canopy of leaves sways with majestic rhythm, sensitive to the slightest breath of the south wind, yet too proud to stoop even before the onslaught of the savage north-easter. I can see the young saplings, self-sown, standing beyond the edge of the wood, the ling and heather at their base claiming the territory which the young pines intended to make their own. In the wood itself the heather has had its day—the tall giants half starved it of sunshine, and it simply is not.

Here and there patches of bracken, straining up to catch the sun, look like graceful crinolines round the tree trunks, but other vegetation only gleams in small oases—the rest is brownness.

In some woods I allow Raq to race about as he will, but in a pine wood I feel it to be sacrilege, and keep him 'to heel'. There is always a hushed awesomeness, and an aromatic breath pervading all things. The tall trees arch over the rides, and the golden glory of the sun at the end of each shadowed aisle glows and shimmers.

Romany of the B.B.C. (REV.
G. BRAMWELL EVENS) in *A
Romany On the Trail*

A misty blue sky, the air still, as if *listening*, the fields silent and bare for the harvest is now safely gathered in; a few birds on the lawn, and one bird (hidden somewhere in the bushes) trying out a note or two as if shy of his own voice but wishful to sing. And leaves.

Leaves on the lawn. Leaves on the paths in the park. Leaves in the busy street—red leaves newly fallen after a pinch of frost; and there, under the beeches on the hillside where the sun is breaking through, a carpet of red and russet glowing like fire.

Autumn with its leaves . . . My thoughts have wings. And the little bird hidden in the bush goes on singing as if to assure me that every winter turns to spring.

A countryman's diary

Chill winter's coming on, my friend,
With dismal days and drear;
The sleet and rain and clammy fogs,
The long, black nights are near.

But if you feel depressed, take heart,
And like a hero sing:
There never was a winter yet
But changed at last to spring!

Anonymous

When the pale winter sunshine falls upon the bare branches of an avenue of elms—such as so often ornament parks—they appear lit up with a faint rosy colour, which instantly vanishes on the approach of a shadow. This shimmering mirage in the boughs seems due to the myriads of lesser twigs, which at the extremities have a tinge of red, invisible at a distance till the sunbeams illuminate the trees.

Beyond this passing gleam of colour, nothing relieves
the blackness of the January landscape, except here
and there the bright silvery bark of the birch.

From *The Gamekeeper at Home*
by RICHARD JEFFERIES

They have no doubts, the quiet trees,
Though stripped of autumn's gold.
Unquestioningly they wait release
From winter's grip. Though old
They know the Spring to them shall bring
Green leaves again, and birds will sing.
They have no doubts of anything.

JAMES RHYND

O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

All things praise Thee; high and low,
Rain and dew and seven-hued bow,
Crimson sunset, fleecy cloud,
Rippling stream and tempest loud;
Summer, winter, all to Thee
Glory render: Lord, may we.

GEORGE WILLIAM CONDER

SUNRISE

HERE is a little handful of forenoon thoughts. Perhaps they will be superfluous on a sunny day when all is well and life seems good, but should you rise with a headache when the day breaks bleak and forbidding, why not finger this rosary of morning inspiration before breakfast?

From an old and unknown writer, for example, comes this trumpet-call:

Every morning is a challenge. Waking from sleep is like being born again; and leaving our bed and faring forth means that we have a new opportunity—an opportunity to do better than we have ever done before.

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Psalm xxx. 5

Here's a new day. What are you going to do with it?

From a motto-card

For all your days prepare,
And meet them ever alike;
When you are the anvil, bear;
When you are the hammer, strike.

EDWIN MARKHAM

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove,
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

JOHN KEBLE

I think the greatest reformer of modern times is surely William Willett, for by his happy idea of Daylight Saving he managed to do the hardest task any man has ever attempted—that of getting millions of people out of bed an hour earlier.

A newspaper leader, 1938

Eulogies of famous people may or may not be sincere, but I think the finest and most sincere bit of praise I have ever heard given to the dead came from the lips of a harassed boarding-house keeper. Speaking of one of her boarders who had died a week or two before I met her, she said: 'He was the best boarder I've ever had, and that's the truth. He was always easy to please—even *before breakfast*.'

Reported to the compiler

How you begin the day makes all the difference to the kind of day it will be. If you begin truculently, if you begin half-heartedly, if you begin in the mood for finding the worst and missing the best, any day of the week may become a trial. But if only you have courage to begin, as one might say, with a flying start, in a good temper, and with a cheerful spirit, why, it is a thousand to one that things will fall out fortunately for you, people will be pleasant, and the end of the day will find you thanking God for all that has happened.

The first half-hour is vital.

A shopkeeper

When morning gilds the skies,
My heart awaking cries:
 May Jesus Christ be praised!
Alike at work and prayer
To Jesus I repair:
 May Jesus Christ be praised.

Anonymous

I'm glad most folks don't get up very early. If they did, they'd rob chaps like me of the best bit of all the day. As it is, early morning's the time I like best—you can cross the road without looking right or left; you don't hear a lot of noises what get on your nerves; if there's a grand sunrise you can stand and look at it without everybody thinking you're off your head; and even in the middle of the city you can hear sparrows chirping fit to bust, most of 'em too shy to make a fuss about praising God when there's folks about. I like mornings, and it may be selfish, indeed, I know it is, but I like having 'em all to myself.

A night watchman
to the compiler

O white wind of the dawn,
The path that you have trod
From night to night is drawn
From godhead unto God!

Your face is made aware
Of ardour and surprise;
The stars are in your hair,
The sun is in your eyes.

And all my blood is stung
To follow and to find
Another world as young
As you are, and as kind.

Ah me, how more than sweet
To shake off weight of ills,
And follow where your feet
Have danced upon the hills!

GERALD GOULD

. . . As I came to school this morning the sun was very bright, and the clouds were like angels high above the houses. A lot of birds were singing, and I stopped to listen. It was nice to hear them, and they all sounded happy. In the gardens there were crocuses, all like yellow egg-cups, except the ones that were other colours, white and mauve, for example. There were buds on the trees; and the hedge on one side of the lane was tipped with little green points. I saw a man ploughing, and he waved his hand to me. I don't know him, but I expect he felt like that. People often do on a sunny morning in springtime. I was sorry when the school bell rang.

From an essay written in
school by a boy of twelve

It's hard in wintry weather
To face the biting cold
When dawn is scarcely breaking,
And one is growing old.
It's hard, but oh how gallant,
How welcome everywhere,
Are folk who do it smiling
As if they didn't care!

Written in a penny exercise
book by a charwoman

There are few lamplighters left, and soon our towns
and cities will have no need of them at all.

We like that old story told of the lamplighter of a

Lancashire town. He had not lived very finely, but he turned over a new leaf. There was a new joy singing in his heart, a new radiance shining in his face. Some of his friends made fun of him. 'What is it like getting converted, Charlie?' they asked.

'It's like turning round in a street with half the lights off and half the lights on,' he said. 'Early in the morning I begin turning out the lights, and when I look back it is all dark, but when I look forward I see the lights shining ahead.'

'Very good,' said someone; 'but where will you be when you get to the last lamp?'

'By the time I reach the last lamp,' said Charlie, 'the sun is always up, and I need no lamps.'

. . . What a morning! Raining cats and dogs—and bitterly cold, and *such* a wind. Just as wretched as it could be; I don't think I've ever known a worse. But, my dear, what a sunset! Just a great and glowing mass of gold and crimson—it made me breathless to look at it; and I felt that God really must have taken this morning and turned it inside out.

Part of a letter to the
compiler's wife

As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

JOHN ELLERTON

SUNDOWN

THE sun went down and the stars came out
And the noisy day grew still,
And I met my God and he spoke to me
Up there on the lonely hill.

The windows of Lord Tom's mansion are very fine
and stately, and what a many of them there be; but
for all their grandeur, the sun shines no brighter on
his windows than on the kitchen window of *my*
cottage about the time I'm plodding home across the
fields to sit down at table when my work is done.

A farm labourer

Touched by a light that hath no name,
A glory never sung,
Aloft on sky and mountain wall
Are God's great pictures hung.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER in
Sunset on the Bearcamp

Come, watch with me the azure turn to rose
In yonder west: the changing pageantry,
The fading alps and archipelagoes,
The spectral cities of the sunset-sea.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

For twopence the bus brought me out of the fever
and fog of the busy city, beyond the houses and
through the smoke to a spot where I stood a few
minutes in awe and wonder. Such a glory there was
beyond the roofs and chimneys, such wealth of
crimson and gold and flaming cloud in a stupendous
arc of light, that I forgot my weariness, the fret of

harassing hours, and all the turmoil of the anxious day. I was bathed in that silent splendour. Presently the sun went down and the glory began to fade—but not before the shroud about my soul was rent in twain, and I felt something stir within me as if upon another resurrection morn. I walked home, not a tired city man, but with all the majesty of an ancient god striding down the corridors of eternity.

A business man in a
letter to his wife

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy—
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH in *Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey*

I'm thankful he wasn't bedfast more 'n a week, and that a'most to the end, even when he were fair plagued with rheumatism, he could take his cap down from the peg, open the back door, and shuffle a bit way into the yard just to see the sun go down. It was one of the things he liked most . . . and he always came in saying he felt better for it.

An auld body speaking
of her late husband

The rain had cleared away—and then
The setting sun broke through;
The shining world was all aflame,
Old scenes were strangely new.

So still it was, so fair, so sweet,
So bright the blazing sod,
I bowed my head, and said a prayer,
And walked a mile with God.

H. L. GEE

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking
in the garden in the cool of the day.

Old Testament (*Genesis* iii. 8)

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as if content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.
So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

The Passing by W. E. HENLEY

STARSHINE

now twilight lets her curtain down
And pins it with a star.

LYDIA MARIA CHILD

Though my soul may set in darkness, it
will rise in perfect light,
I have loved the stars too fondly to be
fearful of the night.

An old astronomer to his
pupil, Galileo

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

JOSEPH ADDISON

The stars shine for comforting.

MARGARET WIDDEMER

Dusk wraps the village in its dim caress;
Each chimney's vapour, like a thin grey rod
Mounting aloft through miles of quietness,
Pillars the skies of God.

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

The time I like best of all is when Daddy comes home just after the sun has gone behind Mr. Green's house, and just before the stars come out over our roof. We don't switch the light on till the room is nearly dark, except for the fire, and Daddy sits in

his chair and makes funny shadows with his hands,
and I sit on a stool near the hearth and laugh like
anything.

A child of six

And whiter grows the foam,
The small moon lightens more;
And as I turn me home,
My shadow walks before.

ROBERT BRIDGES in

The Clouds Have Left the Sky

Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

SHAKESPEARE

(The Merchant of Venice, Act 5)

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades,
or loose the bands of Orion?

Old Testament (*Job xxxviii. 31*)

The Sun could contain about 1,300,000 bodies the
size of the Earth. . . . But Betelgeuse and Canopus
are giants compared with the Sun. Betelgeuse, for
instance, is so large that it could contain 24,000,000
bodies the size of the Sun.

SIR H. SPENCER JONES in

Worlds Without End

I reckon the desert's made an old crock of me. At
any rate, my fighting days are done, and I don't
suppose I'll ever drive a tank again. That's what
the desert's done to me.

But that's not all. It's robbed me and it's en-
riched me, for I'll never forget those nights out there,
sometime when we could stand on the tank and see

the Med. a mile or two away. Many and many a night when I couldn't sleep for sand and biting things I'd sit on a bit of rock, and look up at God's sky with its stars like jewels, and I'd wonder how big they were, and how many there were, and how old they were, and what was in the blue depths between them. I reckon I did more thinking under the stars—when the enemy gave me chance—than in all the years before; and I fancy I've come home a more deeply religious man than I went out. It was the stars. I just couldn't look up at them without knowing in my heart that God was behind them.

A soldier invalided out of
the Army in 1944

Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble—
Trust in God, and do the right!

NORMAN MACLEOD

The gods sell all things at a fair price, said the old poet. He might have added that they sell their best goods at the cheapest rate. . . . There is no entrance fee to the starlit hall of Night.

AXEL MUNTHE in

The Story of San Michele

The Dog-star and Aldebaran, pointing to the restless Pleiades, were half-way up the southern sky, and between them hung Orion, which gorgeous constellation never burnt more vividly than now, as it swung itself forth above the rim of the landscape. Castor and Pollux with their quiet shine were almost on the meridian; the barren and gloomy Square of Pegasus was creeping round to the north-west; far

away through the plantation Vega sparkled like a lamp suspended amid the leafless trees, and Cassiopeia's chair stood daintily poised on the uppermost boughs.

'One o'clock,' said Gabriel.

THOMAS HARDY

Funny thing, guv'nor, but when I've been hanging around waiting for fares—mostly in winter—I've taken a turn or two along the pavement and looked down at the pools in the gutter, and blow me if I haven't seen the stars there, shining for all the world as if they'd just dropped into the water while my back was turned.

A London taxi driver

SLEEP

HE giveth His beloved sleep.

Psalms cxxvii, 2

Heaven trims our lamps while we sleep.

AMOS BRONSON ALCOTT

Sleep is better than medicine.

JOHN RAY

One can sleep in the daytime, of course, but one's rest is rather like a hurried meal. To sleep at night when the world is hushed and the stars keep watch is a banquet of repose.

A night-nurse

And the night shall be filled with music,

And the cares that infest the day

Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,

And as silently steal away.

From *The Day is Done*

by LONGFELLOW

It's queer, sir, but somehow I always seem to sleep more soundly if I go to bed knowing I've washed in the corners as well as in the middle of the floors.

A charwoman

Blessings on him that first invented sleep! It covers a man, thoughts and all, like a cloak.

CERVANTES

The lady in her curtained bed,
The herdsman in his wattled shed,
The clansmen in the heathered hall,
Sweet sleep be with you, one and all!
We part in hope of days as bright
As this gone by: *Good night, good night!*

JOANNA BAILLIE

Like a pillow to a tired head, like light to watching
eyes, be Thou, our God, to us this night.

Wearied by the conflict of life, worn by the burden
of the day, we seek Thee as our resting-place. May
Thine eternal calm descend upon our troubled spirits,
and give us all Thy peace.

Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh;
Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky.

Jesu, give the weary
Calm and sweet repose;
With Thy tenderest blessing
May their eyelids close.

S. BARING-GOULD

If I had a ship
I would sail upon the sea;
If I had a gun
Then a soldier I might be;
If I had a horse
I'd go hunting; but instead,
As I've only got a candle,
I am going up to bed.

The little prayer before we sleep
Is marvellous with wonders deep,
It leaves our lips a whispered word,
And by the Heart of God is heard.

The starry sky is full of pleas
From little children on their knees,
And angels stay their heavenly mirth
To catch this music of the Earth.

A wish may be a stronger thing
Than all the swords that serve a king;
A thought God answers with His grace
May bless and save the human race.

God bless all tired folk.

May they go to bed to-night feeling sure that God
is caring for them, watching over them, and that,
come what may, no harm can ever reach the fortress
of the soul moated by God's presence.

May they enjoy a sweet sleep, a wholesome sleep,
a sleep untroubled by anxious fears.

God give them an escape from all their anxieties—
the sleep which has no dreams to haunt the shadowy
corridors of the mind, that carries the weary spirit
beyond all fret and care, all doubt and fear, the sleep
that gives strength to bear heavy burdens, and courage
to face life's hardest battles.

God give them all a happy waking on a brave, new
day.

H. L. GEE

It is quite a business getting David off to bed.
Even when he is washed and brushed, even when
supper is over and he has at last gone up to his room,
we are never sure that the little imp is settled. He

will plead for what he calls 'a dink'. Then he asks what we are doing. Then there are more questions until sometimes I get quite cross with him.

The other evening he capped all this artful interrogation by calling still again after the usual order of service had been gone through most religiously. I went to the foot of the stairs.

'Well?' I demanded—not too pleasantly, I fear. 'What do you want *this* time?'

'Nofing!' he replied.

I was exasperated. 'Then why in the world did you call?' I demanded.

There was a queer little pause, and then a rather subdued voice said: '*I jus' wanted to know you were there. It's nice to know, you know!*'

Two minutes later he was fast asleep.

A mother writing to a friend

When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid; yea,
thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet.

Old Testament (*Proverbs* iii, 24)

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

Anonymous

I will lay me down in peace, and sleep, for Thou,
Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

Psalms iv, 8

The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.

Ecclesiastes v, 12

When I can't sleep at night I settle down to enjoy

thinking . . . thinking what I'll do when I'm well again, and how I'll oil Ellen's sewing-machine, and mend the clothes'-horse, and smoke a pipe with old Bert Matson who lives across the way. Or I lie here thinking of all the pleasant things I can remember—the day Ellen and I walked on the Cotswolds and had muffins in a cottage, and the odd things our little laddie used to do when he was between two and three . . . So I go on; and nine times out of ten the nurse has no end of a bother to wake me in the morning!

A patient in hospital

When I am weary, I do not try to pray;
I shut my eyes and wait to hear
What God will say.
Such rest it is to wait for Him
As comes no other way.

Anonymous

Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the coming
night,
Turn Thou for us its darkness into light;
From harm and danger keep Thy children free,
For dark and light are both alike to Thee.

JOHN ELLERTON

Courage for the great sorrows of life, and patience for the small ones; and then when you have accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace—God is awake.

VICTOR HUGO

This is thy room, my guest. All bid thee welcome,
door and walls and ceiling. Sweet be thy body's
rest, and for thy spirit—healing.

Whatever cares hadst thou before thou camest here,
Guest! shed them now. Cast out all fear, and let
thy hidden grieving cease. This room would bring
thee peace.

This is thy room, my guest. Because its walls
enfold thee, it feels thrice blest. Ah happy walls
to hold thee!

Whatever joys thou knowest and hadst brought
here to-day, may they, before thou goest, before
thou tak'st thy way, be doubled for thee, friend so
dear—because thou hast, a little while, been here!

From *Morning Glory*
by WILHELMINA STITCH

HOME

THERE is an old tale of a man who travelled far and wide in distant lands for many years in search of the most beautiful thing in the world. He was successful in his quest, for he found what he was looking for—*but he found it at home*. 'Fool that I have been,' said he, 'to look abroad while an angel sits at my own fireside!'

It is only a legend, but it serves to remind us that indeed there is no place like home, and that sometimes we are in danger of missing the best in life, not because it is far away and therefore out of reach, but because it is so close at hand.

Perhaps a few homely thoughts may help us to come freshly to what we see every day beneath our own roof:

My home, and those whom God has given me to cherish, is the most intimate reflection in little of God's family. My true relation is sustained in Love, ever thoughtful and courteous and hospitable; and self is enriched and enlarged through acceptance of Love's restraints.

Let me consider my life this day as the expression of the spirit of Christ.

The Five Minutes' Interval
by P. J. FISHER

A man can bear all manner of disappointments, overcome countless difficulties, stand bravely while the world mocks him or his hopes crumble in the dust, if only he knows that he can go home, shut the door,

and be sure of a sympathetic and understanding wife who will be loyal to him and patient with him whatever happens.

A town councillor

Joy dwells beneath a humble roof;
Heaven is not built of country seats
But little, queer suburban streets.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Mr. Greenwell—young Mr. Greenwell who was married the week before last—went to business this morning like a knight of old setting forth upon some lofty and adventurous quest. I watched him from my window, and it was deliciously amusing to note how June hung upon his arm as they walked down the garden path, how she made him stand still a minute while she adjusted his tie, and flecked a bit of dust, real or imaginary, off his coat sleeve. (Spying upon folk in this way, of course, is most reprehensible, and I hope you never do it.) Then they must needs linger to look at the herbacious border with its half-dozen polyanthus—the ones *he* bought and *she* planted. After that she opened the gate for him, and he turned to kiss her—he would have done it even if he had seen me peeping from my window, I am sure. Then I heard him say: ‘I’ll be home early, dear!’ Finally this gallant Sir Jim took his last look at his front door, his house, his garden, his little, adoring wife (with the morning sunshine on her springtime face) and mounted his bicycle as if he had been Alexander the Great going to the wars. It must be wonderful to be newly married, and to go off to be a second clerk in a lawyer’s office with all the enthusiasm of Captain Scott for the Antarctic (forgive me for using so many similes) . . . and to

look forward to coming home more than you look forward to anything else in the world.

From a letter to the compiler's wife

What is there worth while in life, what worth living for, but love? And the sweetest and best of all is what we find at home.

MARION CRAN

There is no over-estimating the possession in one's memory of a happy early home. It is an anchor that holds all through life.

It is a sacred ikon that nothing can destroy. It brings wandering sheep who have strayed far from it, and lost their way in the slippery places of the earth back eventually into safety, not probably into the old fold, for that may have passed away by then, but into another of perhaps their own making, built on the lines of the old one, and with its influence working secretly all the time, though oceans may roll between, and those who made the early home what it was may be long laid under the sod.

MAUDE SPEED

The ties that bind the wealthy and the proud to home may be forged on earth, but those which link the poor man to his humble hearth are of the truer metal and bear the stamp of heaven.

CHARLES DICKENS

Love for home, love for parents, love for wife or husband, love for children, love for friends—these are the bonds that bind us to the best we know. These are the energies that keep us going.

REV. W. H. ELLIOTT

Four walls to keep the smell of bacon and eggs in,
that's home.

A Glasgow docker

Home's the spot where there ain't no sand.

From an airgraph written by
one of General Montgomery's
'Desert Rats'

My idea of home is flowers, slippers, a pipe-rack,
and somebody who'll listen to you when you feel
like talking.

A SCHOOLMASTER

I sometimes think that the old Nannies of English
homes are among the most beautiful of God's creatures.

H. R. L. SHEPPARD

D'you ever stop to think how full this world is o'
things to love, if your heart's just big enough to let
'em in? We love to live for the beauty o' the things
surroundin' us, an' the joy we take in bein' among 'em.

GENE STRATTON-PORTER

Such a stir and bustle!

A kind of spring-clean in autumn, with a polishing
of pan-lids, and the cutting of the grass and a cleaning
of windows. Margaret, aged four, was very excited,
her mother scarcely less so. The front door of the
little house stood wide open, and there were flowers
on the table.

The best tea-service had been requisitioned, and a
hot tea was being prepared in the sunny scullery.
Royalty was expected, surely?

But no. The king was not calling that day. Nor
the queen. Nor a general, for that matter.

But Daddy was expected home on leave—a private,
and all this stir and excitement for him!

From a newspaper article
published in 1942

Mrs. Huxley, in spite of all her faith in her genius of a husband, could not bring herself to believe that matter and motion left to themselves could possibly result in such fine salads as she was wont to prepare for him.

PROFESSOR A. WOLF

There can never be a really happy home if there is trouble in the kitchen.

R. W. FOOT

In one of Murillo's pictures in the Louvre he shows us the interior of a convent kitchen; but doing the work there are beautiful white-winged angels instead of mortals in old garments. One shining spirit serenely puts the kettle on the fire, and one is lifting a pail of water with heavenly grace. One is reaching plates from the kitchen dresser; and there is also a little cherub running about and getting in the way while trying to help. It all serves to remind us that heaven is about us in our kitchen, and that God may help us with the most menial and humdrum tasks.

Adapted from *Blessed Be Drudgery*
by WILLIAM C. GRANNETT

A woman can't throw a stone at a hen except to miss it, but she can pack more things in a portmanteau than a man can in a hay-wagon.

JOHN OLIVER HOBBS

So ends the chapter.

They were born. They lived together. They died.

I do not know that they ever did anything outstanding. They were man and wife for nearly forty years, and they died within a fortnight of each other. They brought five children into the world, and all are making their way now. They lived in a small house. They paid their way. They left behind a very small sum of money. They went to church and sang praises and said their prayers. They had a small circle of friends. They loved gardening. They were kindly, smiling, brave, loving. They were hospitable.

So far as I know he was never even a councillor. She used to speak at women's meetings sometimes, but not often. She was an excellent cook—and what some of us call 'a good contriver'.

The world sees them no more. No more they walk slowly in the sunshine, she leaning on his arm; and no more they hurry to meet one of their married sons or the married daughter at the door.

Well, as I say, they have passed on—and yet, how beautifully they lived! The world is richer for their happy, quiet lives.

From the Yorkshire Evening News

She told me so herself—so it must be true.

She is the daughter of a well-to-do citizen in this part of the world. Up to her marriage at the age of twenty-three she was, in a manner of speaking, the idlest of idle girls.

There was no need for her to work. She had a car of her own. She played golf. She danced divinely. But she had nothing to do—nothing to spoil or soil her finely manicured nails, nothing to tire her. She cut a few flowers in the garden, of course. For the

rest, she lounged about, read, knocked around with young men, and had an easy time.

She is married now. There is a baby. With the help of a woman who goes in twice a week, this girl runs the small house, washes, bakes, cooks, cleans, and cares for wee Michael.

'I'm rushed off my feet,' she told me the other day. 'I never have a minute to spare. *But I've never been so happy in my life!*'

This isn't a fairy-tale—it is fact.

H. L. GEE

Home is the place where Mummy is.

A boy of five

We were the best of friends, and if she had to punish me we were exactly the same ten minutes afterwards because she was always just, and never lectured me. She never said I was a sinner—but then she never said I was a saint; she treated me just as an ordinary boy, and told me that we couldn't all be perfect, but if we fought honestly and did our best that was all God could expect from us. I've always remembered that; it's been my sort of creed, and it's kept me from feeling too much of a worm sometimes. And the result of her self-sacrifice (for that's what it was, but it was done so smoothly I thought nothing of it at the time), the result is she's kept me straight, she and her memory; and do you know, Ruth (don't laugh at me), I still say my prayers every night because she asked me to.

DESMOND COKE

I paused to look at a picture:

Along the road came a woman, smiling.

Ahead was a tiny child of two, fair-haired, blue-eyed, innocent, sweet.

The little one had seen her mother, and with uncertain steps she came running along the pavement to meet her, calling, 'Mummie. Mummie!'

Then the bit of sunshine was gathered up in loving arms and carried indoors.

That is all.

A newspaper correspondent

If I can advise you, as an old man, my advice is, in all your learning and science, to stick very close to the things you learned from your mothers.

FIELD-MARSHAL SMUTS

Doubtless many an excellent magistrate hath been sent into the commonwealth, and many an excellent pastor into the church, and many a precious saint to heaven, through the happy preparations of a holy education, perhaps by a woman who thought herself useless and unserviceable to the church.

A document of 1643

Mr. Walter Todd of Lazenby Hall, near Northallerton, has been given an easy chair in commemoration of his sixty years as a Methodist local preacher.

At eighty-four Mr. Todd may boast that he has preached 4,000 sermons, and that he has never wearied of well-doing out of one century into another. He loves to remember a kindness shown to him many years ago.

He had been preaching in a Yorkshire village when the weather made it impossible to go home, and he was persuaded to stay the night with two Methodists, a man and his wife, but it was not till the next

morning that he discovered *that the good folk had sat up all night so that he might have the bed.*

A newspaper cutting

Hospitality consists in a little fire, a little food, and an immense quiet.

R. W. EMERSON

Here is an inscription for the house of a hospitable friend of Henry van Dyke, the famous American poet who himself penned these lines:

The lintel low enough to keep out pomp and pride;
The threshold high enough to turn deceit aside;
The doorband strong enough from robbers to defend,
This door will open at a touch to welcome every friend.

Wherever smoke-wreaths heavenward curl—

Cave of hermit, hovel of churl,

Mansion of merchant, princely dome—

Out of the dreariness,

Into its cheeriness,

Come we in weariness

Home.

STEPHEN CHALMERS

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, a homeless man

A little house well filled, a little land well tilled,
and a little wife well willed are great riches.

JOHN RAY

They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree.

Micah iv. 4

Edward Braniff gives us this charming picture of a home in which a mother of rare insight exercised a beautiful ministry.

I once knew a woman, the wife of a poor man, who hung up in her kitchen a small leather bag with nickels and dimes in it, to be used by her school-age sons and daughters, who were always needing extra money for car fares, books, pencils, shoe-strings, and other unpredictable items.

If a child felt he had to have something, he was free to dip into the bag for what was needed; but when he did so he knew there would be less for others whose needs might be greater than his own. The purse was unguarded, and nobody tattled. A child might say why he needed money or he might not—that was his affair. But each Saturday night the bag was taken down at a family gathering, and if there was something left over that was a cause for deep personal satisfaction for everybody.

It may be impossible for us to influence the international situation, but at least we can keep the peace at home.

Trouble with me, you know, is that I think more of each of my bairns than I do of the other four.

A mother while talking with a neighbour

East and west, home is best.

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

Joe Spencer is one of the least of all the hundreds of cogs in the vast machine known as a city store. He pushes a sort of trolley between the stalls, and he is at everybody's beck and call. He has to be careful never to run into a customer, for customers are sacred objects, venerated as gods. He may be told to hurry

by any pert miss in charge of Gloves or Ladies' Underwear. If the fellow who sells Tinned Meats tells Joe to get a move on, it means that Joe has to get a move on. And above all these lesser masters and mistresses of his, seen dimly in the upper air, as one might say, hover shop-walkers and buyers and managers of departments, and even the *board* itself, which meets in a holy of holies on the top floor, a spot where angels and Joe fear to tread.

So, as you may guess, Joe is nobody very much at the big store.

But round about six in the evening the fairies come winnowing down the shadows. They steal into Joe's heart. They work a spell upon his tired body. They drop stardust in his blue eyes. They tickle Joe until he smiles; and some of them hammer little wings to his weary feet so that Joe straightens his back, steps out into the twilight, and goes marching home like a sergeant-major.

And then, at a turn in the street—a long, dull street—he suddenly feels that life is good, and that he, Joe, is somebody, somebody very important, somebody whose word is law, somebody greatly loved, for Wendy, who is four, runs to meet him, longing to be picked up in his arms and kissed, and Annie (who has been peeping through the 'front room' window) hurries into the scullery to turn up the gas under the kettle so that she can put tea on the table the moment her lord and master arrives with Wendy on his shoulder, and a thousand million bluebirds singing in his heart.

H. L. GEE

Without God's hand
No house can stand
In this or any other land.

THE DAILY ROUND

AND now, a minute or two with routine—the routine which may so easily crush us. Even here there is somehow good:

. . . So I'll be home the day after to-morrow, Arthur. It's grand out here in this fine house where some of us are having the time of our lives—gardens, long walks, trees, and your meals served in a room like the mission hall we go to. But you know, Arthur, I do miss you and the little ones; and I do miss doing things. I'm itching to be washing and baking again; and I'm just longing to make the beds, and to be busy caring for you and the others, and doing a bit of mending. . . .

From a letter written to her
husband by a poor woman who
had been sent to a holiday home
for a week

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

JOHN KEBLE

I have never known a dull day.

COUNCILLOR SALT of Wormsley

Life is full of little duties. Worrying about them, grumbling about them, dwelling upon them makes the duties shackles which bind us, but just doing the duties makes them wings.

Anonymous

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, *and they shall walk and not faint.*

Isaiah xl. 31

I travel by the same bus to the same office, where I sit at the same desk and see the same office boy every day, but thank God I never know what fresh excuse the office boy will have for being late!

An editor

"Yes, I've my hubby off work again—he's always ailing, you know, and it's all right the children having a holiday from school, but when it rains every day and they can't play out of doors, and you only has one room and one pair of hands, and there's no end of things to do, what with cooking and washing and mending and keeping the baby away from them steps down to the street, well, you ain't much time to sit and listen-in!"

"I can believe it. I expect the daily round really does get you down sometimes?"

"Well, it would if I'd time to think about it—but luckily I haven't."

Reported by a slum visitor

Each man has to seek out his own special aptitude for a higher life in the midst of the humble and inevitable reality of daily existence.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Four times every day, sir, I drive along this route week in and week out, year in and year out. I reckon I know every inch of the road, and I guess there

are folk that get sick of seeing me. But there's one thing at least that's good for me—the road's never twice the same.

A bus-driver in conversation
with the compiler

The story is told of a country postman who a little while ago enjoyed his first holiday with pay.

When he went back to work he was asked what he had done during his holiday, and he replied: 'Why, the first day I pulls my onions, and the next day I digs my taters, and all the other days I thought the new postman seemed a bit lonely, so I went with him on his rounds to keep him company.'

From a newspaper

We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it, if it were not the earth where the same flowers come up again every spring that we used to gather with our tiny fingers as we sat lipping to ourselves on the grass; the same hips and haws on the autumn hedgerows; the same red-breasts that we used to call God's birds because they did no harm to the precious crops.

What novelty is worth that sweet monotony where everything is known, and loved because it *is* known?

GEORGE ELIOT

We read the other day this very wise thing—that the man who has failed to do the work that lies nearest his hand is not likely to succeed at anything else.

I cannot tell you how much life surprises me. I never get used to it. I never tire of pondering and

watching and wondering. The way in which eternal truths lurk along one's path, lie among the potatoes in cellars, peep out at one from every apparently dull corner, sit among the stones, hang upon the bushes, come into one's room in the morning with the hot water, come out at night in heaven with the stars, never leave us, touch us, press upon us, if we choose to open our eyes and look, and our ears and listen—how extraordinary it is. Can anyone be bored in a world so wonderful?

The author of *Elizabeth and
her German Garden*

Ah've bin comin' to this here mill, mostly every day, for nigh on forty year. At fust Ah were fed up wi' it; but efter a bit it weren't half bad; and now, dang it all, Ah'd be reet upset if Ah'd to leave t'owd spot!

A Yorkshire mill-hand

While you are looking forward to to-morrow, and dreaming of the happiness you are to inherit, do not forget to gather riches to-day.

Take from us, O God, all tediousness of spirit, all impatience and unquietness. Let us possess ourselves in patience . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord.

JEREMY TAYLOR

Lord, make my life a parable,
This common life of mine;
And through this earthly story
May heavenly meaning shine!

Anonymous

When noontide brings its work to all
I find my task so hard to be
That I should sink, didst Thou not call:
My strength is perfected in thee.

GEORGE MATHESON

Once upon a time there was a rich young lady who lived in an expensive service flat, and had hot and cold water in her bedroom, electric fires, and no work to do.

When she was hungry she had only to ring a bell and food was brought.

Aladdin had the trouble of rubbing his lamp before the genie appeared, but this fortunate young lady had only to push the bell when she wanted anything.

One day she went with a friend to stay in a little country cottage. The minute she saw the black-leaded grate she was in raptures. When she found that you had to run downstairs and go back again with a can of water every time you wanted to wash, she thought it marvellous; and before she had been there long she begged that, as a special favour, she might be allowed to try her hand at baking, and the still more thrilling pastime of washing-up afterwards.

From a magazine published in 1938

I will follow the uphill road to-day,
I will keep my face to the light.
I will think high thoughts as I go my way,
I will do what I know to be right.
I will look for the flowers beside the road,
I will laugh and love and be strong;
I will open my eyes to the beauty of life
This day as I fare along.

You know, I've a suspicion that it's the humdrum of life we enjoy most—or at any rate, that we could if we would.

A servant girl

O Lord God, when Thou givest to Thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished which yieldeth the true glory.

A prayer by SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

NEIGHBOURS

SOME years ago a friend of mine took his wife and family to live in another town. I had a letter from him a few weeks later, and the words in it which stood out above the rest were these: 'We are settling down very well. We don't know many people yet, of course, but that doesn't matter because already we've discovered that the folk next door, on the right, are the friendliest of neighbours.'

Among the good things of life are good neighbours; and I think we may profitably spend a few minutes with them in mind. After all, is it not true that even if all doors are closed against us but one, most of us would find it possible to keep on gallantly because of that one . . . a door we knew we could open any time without knocking, a door leading from an unfriendly world to a refuge where we might be sure of a welcome?

The great drawback to living in a country mansion situated in a spacious park is that you have such a long way to go to sit on a neighbour's doorstep when you want a chat.

Romany of the B.B.C.
(REV. G. BRAMWELL EVENS)

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Jesus (*St. Mark* xii. 30-31)

Where'er he met a stranger there he left a friend.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL on Agassiz

Keep your tents separate and bring your hearts together.

Arab proverb

Go often to the house of thy friend, for weeds soon choke up the unused path.

An old Scandinavian proverb

One day early in the Second World War Mr. Edwin Smart joined up. He felt he *had* to go, but he was sorry to leave his workshop, a little shed where he delighted to potter about with bits of wood, his tools, and a glue-pot. So he locked the door and turned away.

Month by month the shed remained unopened. The years went by, and it became sadly neglected, for Mr. Smart was with the 8th Army and never had a leave. The paint on his shed began to peel off. The hinges of the door were rusting away. The whole place was fast becoming derelict.

Then the neighbours put their heads together. A supply of paint was found, and on sunny evenings folk cleaned and repaired and painted Mr. Smart's shed so that it might be fit to use again when he came home.

He that hath a good neighbour hath a good morrow.

Anonymous

Happy is the woman who can borrow twice from the woman next door.

Yorkshire saying

Among the chief delights of life is scarcely one better than being on good terms with all who happen to live close by. It means that you not only enjoy your own happiness, but have the added joy of sharing it; and it means that you are never alone in sorrow, for always there is some understanding friend to help you to carry your load.

WILLIAM YORK

I think the friendliest time I have ever known (perhaps the friendliest time since time began) was a period covering the first thirty months of the Second World War. In the autumn of 1939 we built an air raid shelter large enough for ten people, and when the bombing began in earnest we used to have a score (and sometimes more) folk sheltering with us. There were young and old, rich and poor, brave and frightened. There was a retired colonel in a dressing-gown and slippers; a bank clerk, a spinster of uncertain age who always came without her false teeth, a councillor's wife who talked everlastingly to drown the thud of bombs, a very old lady who sat rigidly with her hands folded in her lap, and a little maid of five who used to sleep in a corner, her head resting on two or three gas-masks. She slept peacefully through all the horror of those nights; and folk in the shelter would 'hush' each other if voices rose too high, that the sleeper might not be wakened. They never seemed to think that the noise of falling bombs or the drone of enemy planes might disturb the little one's rest. We were a strange assortment of humanity. All of us had our peculiarities, our sharp edges and corners, our irritating ways, and our shortcomings; and at least three of the families represented had not been on speaking terms in peace-time. But under the shadow of war these things counted for little.

Somehow we all managed to jog along pretty satisfactorily, and there grew up in that shelter a spirit of neighbourliness, an understanding of each other, a forbearance which had a beauty all its own.

An anonymous letter to the Press in 1943

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

St. Paul writing to the Galatians (vi. 2)

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes,
And a heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathize.

ANNA LAETITIA WARING

I know a fellow named Smith, a very ordinary fellow, a fellow who goes to work every day, earns a modest wage, and is never drunk. He was in print once when he won a game of snooker and carried off a prize of some sort.

Otherwise he is just Mr. Smith.

But he will go out of his way to post a letter for any one. He will look in to cheer a neighbour kept indoors by rheumatism. He will nurse the baby for his wife. He will eat cold meat without grumbling. He will help to run a little club—doing the routine work without getting up on the platform.

In point of fact, he is a good all-round fellow. He will never set the Thames on fire. But I know quite a few folk who would miss Smith if he packed up and went to live elsewhere—or suddenly became important and hadn't time to be quite so neighbourly.

H. L. GEE

Let us endeavour so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry.

MARK TWAIN

Feelin' sorry for yourself
Ain't no good for decent folk;
When you're sad as sad can be . . .
Go an' cheer another bloke!

It is perhaps rather surprising to find in the official Admiralty Account of the Naval War in the Mediterranean (*East of Malta, West of Suez*) this reference to the spirit of the people of George Cross Island—the most frequently bombed spot during the Second World War:

When the raids began and death and destruction rained down from Italian bombers upon Vittoriosa, Senglea, and Cospicua (the parish priest of Senglea paced the main street at the height of the raids reading his office, to calm and fortify his flock), eighty thousand of the inhabitants rose up and evacuated themselves to friends and relations of their own choosing. They did it in twenty-four hours without panic or confusion; and it is said that wherever they went, crowding into the tiny stone cottages already full almost to capacity in the scorching heat of Malta's summer, *they were received in the name of Christ the Compassionate by their friends.*

When the hour of your trouble comes to the mind or to the body, and when the hour of death comes that comes to high and low, then it isn't what we ha'e dune for ourselfs, but what we ha'e dune for others that we think on maist pleasantly.

Jeanie Deans in *The Heart of Midlothian*,
by SIR WALTER SCOTT

I called in the afternoon. She was baking.

There in her kitchen, her baking-board out, her tins about her, she was trying to make cakes and scones, and also (as she said) to keep an eye on two children, one about eighteen months, the other about three years.

'Hello?' said I. '*Two?* I thought you had only one?'

She laughed. 'Of course I've only one,' said she. 'This is David from next door.'

'You're looking after him?'

'Trying to . . . they're a couple of pickles. But, you know, two bairns take no more watching than one, and David's mother wanted to do some shopping.'

'I see,' said I, nodding. 'It's good of you, though, to do this.'

She laughed. 'Oh,' she said, 'I send John round to *her* house when I want him out of the way for an hour!'

H. L. GEE

LITTLE THINGS

WHEN G. K. Chesterton wrote of 'tremendous trifles' he was reminding us of the importance of what often seems of small account. Much of our happiness is built, not upon the major events of a lifetime but upon the minor incidents of the common day. Coming into a fortune, climbing the Alps, and winning success in any walk of life are by no means to be despised, and all may be very good in themselves; but if these, and similar experiences on the grand scale, were our only source of wealth, how poor some of us would be!

There is good in little things—in little kindnesses done to us and by us, in the sound of pattering feet running to meet us, in a little surprise, a little posy of springtime loveliness, a little chat by the fire. In sorrow a little word of comfort may cause a heavy burden to roll away; to the lover a very little letter may mean everything; to the tired woman at home a mere 'Thank you' from her husband may set her heart singing triumphantly again; to the invalid a little hint of hope given by the doctor may prove the turning point in his battle for health.

Gathered here is a little assortment of ideas about little things, all reminding us how big they really are:

Kindness means doing a lot of little things kindly and always; not just a big thing now and then.

NEVILLE HOBSON

Small things are best:
Grief and unrest
To rank and wealth are given;

But little things
On little wings
Bear little souls to heaven.

F. W. FABER writing in a
little lady's little album

Even a journey of a thousand miles begins with
one step.

A Chinese philosopher of the
6th century B.C.

For who hath despised the day of small things?
Zechariah iv. 10

As I went off to work this morning Judith (my wife) said, at the door: 'And come home early, that's a good boy. I'll give you a special treat if you do!'

So I hurried home, as you may easily guess, and when I arrived I asked breathlessly what the special treat was, and Judith said archly that little boys must learn to wait, and that I must have tea first.

So we had tea—and a good tea it was.

So I said: 'What about the special treat?' And Judith said: 'Don't rush.'

So I didn't rush, but presently I asked again, and she said: 'Well, the special treat is that you may help to wash up!'

So I did. She washed the crockery, and I dried; and we talked and laughed and were very happy; and, really, I don't know that anything could have given me greater joy than sharing the work with her.

Some of you think a special treat is something big—a world tour or going to the theatre. Well, Judith and I long ago learned that the biggest thrills of life come from little things enjoyed in a big spirit.

H. L. GEE

Love . . . prefers action to speech, and likes best to do small things that no one else has seen need doing.

H. R. L. SHEPPARD

Here is a glorious sunshiny day. All the morning I read about Nero in *Tacitus*, lying at full length on a bench in the garden, a nightingale singing, and some red anemones eyeing the sun manfully not far off. A funny mixture, all this, Nero and the delicacy of spring; all very human, however. Then, at half-past one, lunch on Cambridge cream cheese; then a ride over hill and dale; then spudding up some weeds from the grass; and then, coming in, I sit down to write to you, my sister winding worsted from the back of a chair, and the most delightful little girl in the world chattering incessantly. You think I live in ease; but this happens to be a jolly day. One isn't always well; the weather is not always clear, nor nightingales singing, nor *Tacitus* full of pleasant atrocity. But such as life is, I believe I have got hold of a good end of it.

EDWARD FITZGERALD

Set me some great task, ye gods, and I will show my spirit.

'Not so,' says the good heaven. 'Plod and plough.'

R. W. EMERSON

O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Thy secret tell; help me to bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

WASHINGTON GLADDEN

It takes so little to make us glad—
Just a cheering clasp of a friendly hand,
Just a word from one who can understand,
And we finish the task we long had planned.
And we lose the doubt and the fear we had;
So little it takes to make us glad!

Almighty Father, King of Kings,
The Lover of the Meek,
Make me a friend of helpless things,
Defender of the weak.

EDWARD J. BRAILSFORD

O Lord, convert the world, and begin with me.
A Chinese prayer

It was her rule, brave little woman that she was, never to hurry into a bit of happiness. Her John was an insurance agent who used to run around on a bicycle all day, collecting little sums here and there, and whenever he did a bit of extra business on his own and got commission for it he would say: 'Honey, what about us two going to the pictures to-night?'

And she? First, she kissed him, and said he had done marvellously, and that he was a good boy and should have a hot supper. And then she would put her hand to her cheek and stand there thinking a minute, after which she'd say: 'Darling, let's go to-morrow evening, shall we?'

He knew why, of course, but he always asked for an explanation, and she always replied: 'Well, if we go now it will all be over by this time to-morrow, but if we go to-morrow I've got twenty-four hours in which I can look forward to it.'

That was her way—and though she didn't look a philosopher she most certainly was one.

From the *Whitby Gazette*

However rushed we may be, let us always find time to appreciate the little things of the day, the flowers on the table, the bird singing on the chimney-pot, the small kindness someone shows us. This is the straightest road to happiness.

From a newspaper

Our Earth is a speck in the vast system of the Milky Way, in which swing millions of millions of giant stars. The void between the stars is not empty, and in his book Worlds Without End, Sir H. Spencer Jones tells us this amazing thing about interstellar space:

The density proves to be so low that there are only about half-a-dozen atoms in every cubic inch. To appreciate how small such a density is, we must realize that in the most perfect vacuum that the physicist can produce in the laboratory, with the aid of the most elaborate modern high-vacuum pumps, there still remain about 100,000 million atoms in every cubic inch.

The controlling mass of the system proves to be about 160,000 million times the mass of the Sun. In this total mass is included the masses of all the stars. We might think that the total mass of the interstellar gas, whose density is some thousands of millions times smaller than the most perfect vacuum we can make, would not amount to much. But when we make the computation we find that the total mass of this extremely rarefied gas is approximately equal to the total mass of all the stars. The mass of the Sun is about 2,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons; to write down the total mass of the interstellar gas in tons we start with the figure 1 or 2 and follow it with 38 zeros. The comparison between the total mass of this rarefied gas and the total mass of the stars is a striking commentary on the one hand of

the great distances apart of the stars, and on the other of the vast dimensions of our galactic system.

Thank God for tea! What would the world do without tea? I am glad I was not born before tea!

SYDNEY SMITH

Tall oaks from little acorns grow.

DAVID EVERETT

It's just the little homely things,
The unobtrusive friendly things,
The 'won't-you-let-me-help-you' things,
That make our pathway light.

GRACE HAINES

Oh, the little more, and how much it is,
And the little less, and what worlds away!

ROBERT BROWNING

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury, and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

And He called unto Him his disciples, and saith unto them: *Verily, I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.*

St. Mark xii. 41-44

Let no one feel that only the great are guided.
Our habit of reaching for a classic illustration may

give that false impression. The privilege is open to all and consciously enjoyed by many who will never be widely distinguished. God guides more of His servants in the paths of obscurity than He guides in the flood-lit way. It would be a grave error to suppose *a priori* that His word will lead to the overseas mission field or to any prominent and specialized service at home. To most of His children the guidance leads to ordinary duties by ordinary paths, but it ceases to be 'just ordinary' at the thought that He desired it. That thought makes all the difference. It keeps before us a high view of life: lifts the roof of our poor dwelling, and takes the terror from the stars. Does He not guide me, and guide me as a Father guides a child? Nature cannot cower me. Will He not lead you, and lead you as a Parent leads His bairn? The future need not fright you. And shall we not give the more earnest heed to all those things that make us responsive to His guidance, striving above all else for a high sensitivity to His will and so, seeking and finding, follow Him *to the end, in the end and beyond the end where*

*The Invisible appears in sight
And God is seen by mortal eye?*

REV. DR. W. E. SANGSTER
in *God Does Guide Us*

He is a poor man who has to pay a lot for his pleasures. He is a rich man who can enjoy an early morning walk, make a banquet of cold mutton and rice pudding, become excited at the prospect of shopping with his wife, look forward eagerly to building a castle for his small son, lose himself in a book, and go to bed thanking God for the thrill of pottering about in his tool-shed all Saturday afternoon

H. L. GEE

‘Really, my dear,’ murmured Mrs. Algernon Hines-Babbage languidly, ‘these embassy balls are frightfully boring . . . the same old faces every time.’

‘Daddy, Daddy,’ shouted Bobbie, running down the garden path, ‘do hurry. *There’s jelly for tea!*’

Anonymous

A cruise round the world—what a thrill!

A night at the theatre’s a treat;

But an evening with nothing to do—

How dizzily precious and sweet!

Source unknown

HANDS

WHILE it is true that much wrong-doing is the work of hands, it is worth while bearing in mind that much good has been done, and is being done, by kindly, friendly, clever hands:

The hands of Christ seem very frail,
For they were broken by a nail,
But only they reach heaven at last
Whom these frail, broken hands hold fast.

JOHN RICHARD MORELAND

God takes a han' wherever He can find it, an' jist diz what He likes wi' it. Sometimes He takes a bishop's an' lays it on a child's head in benediction; then He takes the han' of a dochter t' relieve pain; th' han' of a mother t' guide her chile; an' sometimes He takes th' han' of an aul craither like me t' give a bit comfort to a neighbour. But they're all han's touch't be His Spirit, an' His Spirit is everywhere lukin' fur han's to use.

ALEXANDER IRVINE

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

Psalm cxxxix. 9-10

Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.

The last words of
Columbus

I remember as a very small boy walking with my father in a country lane when we came upon a drove of cattle. The beasts looked very big to me, and at first I was frightened. My father said nothing. All he did was to hold out his hand, and the minute I put mine in his, and felt it close over my own, warm and strong, I lost all sense of fear, walking past the cattle with perfect composure and confidence.

Never for one moment did it occur to me that I could be in the slightest danger if my hand was in my Daddy's.

Slightly adapted from a
newspaper account, unsigned

God looks with favour at pure, not full, hands.

Old proverb

The hand of God is upon all them for good that seek him.

Ezra viii. 22

O, she would lay her little hand, her tender hand, her
toil-worn hand,
Within my own so softly at the closing of the day,
And resting so, and holding so, together we would
homeward go
Through misty moonlight meadows all sweet with
dewy hay.

GLADYS LAURENCE GROOM
in *My Lovely Dear*

Many hands make light work.

Old proverb

Then one could make a ring
Around the world,
If all the people of the world
Would hold each other's hand.

PAUL FORT

And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him.

St. Matthew viii. 3

Said Martin Luther once:

I have held many things in my hands, but I have lost them all. Nevertheless, whatever I have placed in God's hands I still possess.

I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

*St. Paul in his first
letter to Timothy, ii. 8*

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white-winged angels now, but yet men are led away from threatening destruction: a hand is put into theirs which leads them gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.

GEORGE ELIOT

From the East comes a story of a man who, walking by a river, had the misfortune to fall therein. Presently there came by a traveller who, seeing the man clinging to the bank of the river, yet unable to pull himself up, looked over, and said: 'You should take more care,' and then went on his way.

Later, there passed that way a rich man, riding in a carriage, and he, too, went to the river side, looked down, and remarked: 'Such as you deserve to drown.' *ε;*

Yet another man passed that way, and having regarded the almost exhausted man in the river, he observed: 'I am sorry for you, but can do nothing.'

Lastly, there came by a little, old man who hurried to the edge of the river, knelt down, and without a word held out his hand. Then, with a great tug, he drew the unfortunate man out of the water; and, lo, he whom he had thus saved changed upon the instant into a mighty god in shining raiment, who said: 'Old man, I will put a song in your heart and take thirty years from your age.'

And it was so.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

A. M. TOPLADY

WORK

THE quintessence of Sir J. M. Barrie's wit and wisdom is found, it seems to me, in that delightful observation of his:

Doubtless God could have provided us with better fun than hard work, but I don't know what it is. To be born poor is probably the next best thing.

It is a refreshing thought. So often toil means trouble, work means weariness of body, mind, and spirit; yet in our quiet moments we know that work is among the best things of life. To get up in the morning knowing you have a worthy task to perform, and to do it with all your heart and soul, this is perhaps the greatest happiness out of heaven that a man or woman can ever know.

It does not matter whether we work with our hands or our heads, for if we do our task faithfully it becomes something nobler than work. It becomes service, even though it may benefit us as well as others. To do our duty, especially at some cost to ourselves, ~~may often be hard, but it always brings a deep and abiding sense of satisfaction, and it is perhaps our best excuse for remaining on this planet.~~

The hardest worker I ever knew had no regular wages, belonged to no union, and amassed no fortune. She was a lodging-house keeper, and she died while washing-up in her scullery. Thus, after forty years of continuous and harassing toil she had no opportunity to enjoy a restful eventide of life. Her days meant work. She worked half the night. She always

went to bed tired out, and she always began her day as if she would not get through it. But in spite of all this she was a very happy soul—for she enjoyed her work, she had a pride in her puddings, and she was ambitious that her lodgers should be well satisfied and her beds spotless. Perhaps it was not the loftiest ambition, but it was not to be despised; and all through her arduous toil in bedroom and kitchen, on 'hot-dinner' days and wash-days, through spring-cleaning and in her hours of weakness, she found everywhere the sweet fruits of honest toil . . . the thanks of those she served, the thrill of overcoming little difficulties, and a well-deserved self-respect.

Work or service, toil or labour, duty or business, all these may bring enrichment to our spirits; and on all these topics folk have thought and written much, as we may see here for ourselves:

God give me work
Till my life shall end,
And life
Till my work is done.

From the tombstone of Winifred
Holtby, at Rudston, Yorkshire

Almighty God, who hast created us for Thy glory and service, give us grace, we pray Thee, to hallow every gift, and improve each talent which Thou hast committed to us, that with a cheerful and diligent spirit we may ever serve Thee; and whatsoever we do, may we do all in the name and to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Working clothes represent a most honoured livery; and he who wears them, whatever he may be, has an immediate claim to our respect.

REV. W. H. ELLIOTT

Every child ought to be taught that useful work is worship and that intelligent labour is prayer.

R. G. INGERSOLL

Yes, sir, I'm doing very nicely, sir, thank you. Another three weeks, the doctor says, and I ought to be out of here. They've been very good to me, all of them, and the nurses is just tip-top; but you don't know how I'm longing to get back to the gas-works, sir. I feel sort of out of things here—and it'll be grand to work at my retorts again.

A patient in hospital

If you have anything to do which you would rather not do, the sooner it is done the better.

The essential question is, not whether you want to do it, but whether or not it is your duty. If it is, do it.

Anonymous

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done, whether you like it or not.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Our daily duties are a part of our religious life just as much as our devotions.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Thank God I have done my duty.

The last words of Nelson

There is no question what the roll of honour of America is. The roll of honour consists of the names

of men who have squared their conduct by ideals of duty.

WOODROW WILSON in a speech
at Washington, 1916

No man needs sympathy because he has to work. Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

Jesus (*St. Matthew*, xxiii. 11)

If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well.
An old saying
Service above self.

Rotary motto

Spiritually it makes little difference what our work is; it is the manner of our doing it. A scavenger may be a truer public servant than a cabinet minister.

HUGH BLACK

Whatever you are, be a good one.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I've gone to work six days a week, not counting holidays, for over thirty years, and I've never had a day off for illness. It's nothing to boast of, of course, but it's something to thank God for.

A solicitor's clerk

The wise man makes hay with the grass that grows under the other man's feet.

NEVILLE HOBSON

Let no man think that sudden, in a minute,
All is accomplished and the work is done—
Though with thine earliest dawn thou shouldst
begin it,
Scarce were it ended in thy setting sun.

F. W. MYERS

Do you belong to the lower classes which live only
to be waited on, or are you one of that glorious
aristocracy which lives to serve?

From the Children's Newspaper

If man aspires to reach the throne of God,
O'er the dull plains of earth must lie the road.
He who best does his lowly duty here,
Shall mount the highest in a nobler sphere:
At God's own feet our spirits seek their rest,
And he is nearest Him who serves Him best.

SAMUEL GREG

It is fine to do something no one else can do. It
is also fine to do something anyone can do, *but to
do it a little finer than any one else.*

JOHN WEYMAN

We have come upon a new definition of service:
Doing your best and not caring if some one else gets
the praise.

From a newspaper

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not
breaths,
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs; he most
lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

‘Work,’ exclaimed Tolstoy once, ‘I have work enough to keep me busy for three hundred years!’

A French writer

‘But you—surely you stand alone?’

They were well on towards Watters by now, and the rhythmic dance of the light had broken over one of the gaps, catching a sudden reflection from clean steel. They stopped to look.

It was only a plough, flung on its side in the hedge, waiting the morrow and renewal of toil. The bright share told that it had been in use that day, and Lanty knew that, near it in the dark, the long, clean furrows curved up over the hill. It seemed a small, inadequate tool for its great work; simple, too, as are all enduring things; yet it had the whole of history behind it.

‘Yes, I suppose I do,’ he said at last. ‘We all stand alone if it comes to that. We drive our furrow single-handed, out of the dark into the dark, though we’ve got to reckon with the soil that others have left, just as others must reckon with our leavings after us. But it’s our job, while the light lasts, to make the best of it we can. It’s always one man’s hand on the lonely plough.’

CONSTANCE HOLME in *The Lonely Plough*

The only panacea for anything is work.

HENRY FORD

There is only one way of learning how to do a thing, and that is by doing it.

MAURICE L. JACKS

We ask Thee not to lift us out of life, but to prove Thy power within it; not for tasks more suited to

our strength, but for strength more suited to our tasks. Give us the vision that moves, the strength that endures, the grace of Jesus Christ who wore humanity as a monarch's robe, and walked our earthly life like a conqueror in triumph.

The night has come. Lord, I have left
So many things undone;
I pray Thee, pardon me for all
I have not yet begun.

So little done—I kneel with shame,
I kneel in sorrow, too.
But, Lord, I cannot tell Thee half
The things I meant to do!

H. L. GEE

Hard wark nivver killed neabody, but t' thowts of
hevin' ti dea it hez brokken monny a heart.
A Whitby fisherman

Cyril is thrilled with his new job. It will mean more work, and it will mean harder work, and the hours are longer, too; but you know what a terror for work he has always been . . . and if he enjoys doing it, well, it will seem like play.

A letter from Cyril's
wife to the compiler

O Father, Who hast not only made the world so beautiful that we are constantly inspired by the wonder of mountains and lakes, meadows and rivers, and the birds and beasts that live in them, but hast also made artists to paint fine pictures, and make lovely designs for carpets and curtains and clothes, so

that we can always be close to beauty, we thank Thee for every artistic talent.

Teach us to use our own talents so well that we may know the happiness that comes from good craftsmanship, increasing the beauty that our friends can enjoy, and as makers of beautiful things help to establish Thy Kingdom.

You must be contented if you are to be happy, and to be contented you must find your place in the world and do your duty in it.

Anonymous

Once upon a time there was a little maid, and she served a great lady—oh, such a great lady, with four rings on her fingers, a pearl necklace, and no end of rustling silk gowns, not to mention a diamond tiara. Her husband, who was the Duke of Something or Other, cut quite a figure; and bless you, the lady was marvellously beautiful, and knew it. Her nose advertised her breeding; but the little maid was nothing at all, except good and kind and honest and gentle and brave and merry and forgiving, which couldn't be said of the fine lady. Well, the fine lady died, and squeezed into heaven, and the little maid died and ran into heaven, laughing all over her face and calling out: 'Hello, everybody!' As she skipped through the gate, St. Peter called out: 'Hi, you! You can't go into the Holy of Holies with shoes like that!'

So he whistled for the fine lady, and upon my word, she polished them up in no time!

H. L. GEE

There is only one duty, only one safe course, and

that is to try to be right and not to fear to do or say what you believe to be right.

WINSTON CHURCHILL

No man has ever yet done what he knew to be right and regretted it.

Old saying

Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labour to pursue.

CHARLES WESLEY

Work shall be prayer, if all be wrought
As Thou wouldst have it done;
And prayer, by Thee inspired and taught,
Itself with work be one.

JOHN ELLERTON

A day's work is a day's work, neither more or less, and the man who does it needs a day's sustenance, a night's repose, and due leisure, whether he be painter or ploughman.

BERNARD SHAW in
An Unsocial Socialist

There is no substitute for hard work.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON in
The Golden Book, 1931

I can't abide to see men throw away their tools i' that way the minute the clock begins to strike, as if they took no pleasure i' their work, and was afraid o' doing a stroke too much. I hate to see a man's arms drop down as if he was shot before the clock's fairly struck, just as if he'd never a bit o' pride and

delight in 's work. The very grindstone 'ull go on turning a bit after you loose it,

GEORGE ELIOT in *Adam Bede*

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Jesus (*St. Matthew*, xi. 28-30)

CHILDREN

come with me into the sunshine, turn aside from your duties, forget your worries and grievances, put your dignity far from you for five minutes, and think, with others, about God's merry saints and angels—children:

Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.

Jesus (*St. Luke* xviii. 16)

Eh, well, just now and then they get on top of me, as you might say. They're *that* tiresome. When I don't know which way to turn, and when I'm trying to get on with my work, they harass me to death, or almost, and I've that much trouble keeping an eye on 'em and seeing they don't get into mischief, I just wish with all my heart that I could have the house to myself for a couple of hours—just to give me chance to find myself, as you might say.

But there, once I've bathed 'em, and fed 'em, and got 'em all safely tucked into bed, and once they're asleep—which isn't in five minutes, I can tell you—eh, well, I think how good God is to have given me three bits of life; and, bless you, I wouldn't be without 'em for anything.

A Mother

Lamb of God, I look to Thee;
Thou shalt my example be:
Thou art gentle, meek, and mild;
Thou wast once a little child.

CHARLES WESLEY

Is it not Shakespeare who says that a good deed shines in this naughty world like a candle in the dark? So indeed it does.

It was the lunch hour. Boys and girls were drifting back to school. Many were in the street as I passed, and not far from the school gate was a little fellow much concerned about his bruised knee, which was bleeding.

The wounded soldier's tears were not far off, but he tried manfully to keep them back.

Up came a pal of his. 'Hello, Benny!' he began.

Benny nodded.

'Gotta knife?' asked the newcomer glancing at the injured leg.

Benny winced. 'Yes, Billy,' he murmured. 'What for?'

'Hand it over!'

So Benny, greatly wondering, handed over his knife, the other boy calmly taking an apple out of his pocket, cutting it in two, and handing half to his friend.

Benny seemed to walk less lamely after that, I thought.

Written by a school teacher

The God to whom little boys say their prayers has a face very like their mother's!

SIR J. M. BARRIE

From the neighbourhood of Toronto comes the story of a little maid with a loving heart.

She was one of a number of children taken into the country by kindly folk, and one evening she was missed from the group to which she belonged. The lady in charge began looking for her, but not for long, for soon she found the child kneeling in a meadow.

‘Whatever are you doing?’ she asked.

‘I am only kissing the flowers good night,’ said the little maid.

They took her gently away from the bed.

Along the interminable hospital ward and the interminable corridor she walked as in a nightmare, something inside her saying: *It cannot be true. I shall see him again.* But she knew she never would. She knew she had looked on the dear face of her husband for the last time.

Then, when she had left the hospital, she went and stood among the ruins of the house which had once been their home. Geoffrey was dead. She was left. The raid had robbed her of everything she held most precious.

What should she do?

The easy thing was to put an end to herself. It was not hard to do that—not even if it hurt. She would have *enjoyed* the pain. Besides, it would have been the quickest way of rejoining Geoffrey.

It was the easy way out. Too easy!

That was the thought which stiffened her resolve. It was easy—and this is a hard world. Men and women have to endure and be brave and do the hard thing. Geoffrey had always said so. Would he be pleased to see her so soon—if she shirked duty and went out of life so easily?

And there among the ruins she answered that question once and for all, and began to live again, bravely, quietly, nobly. . . . *Geoffrey’s little son needed a mother’s care.*

Adapted from an article by ‘Optimist’
in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*

*Here is part of a letter to me from my friend John,
a happily married man:*

Never be a father, old chap. Shoot yourself first. It's misery beyond words. Now that we've a son and heir just two years' old I daren't even leave my pipe on the sideboard. If I do, Peter points to it accusingly, and says, 'Pocket, pocket, pocket,' until I put the thing away in sheer desperation. I used to have all my books—you remember—in apple-pie order so that I could put my hand on the one I wanted in the dark. Last night I went upstairs to bring down a dictionary from the study, and, bless me, if I didn't come down with a book of nursery rhymes! And the very going up the stairs, my dear fellow, was a penance—I went almost on my hands and knees for fear of waking the little rascal—which would have meant more 'dinks', and more 'tories'—not the political party, of course, but the tale of a little pig who built a house of straw.

And walking! My hat, I've been something of a hiker in my time, as no one knows better than you—Lakeland, Somerset, North Wales, I've taken them all in my stride. But now the two of us, Peter and I, take a long time to go a long way . . . we stop at every gate, we examine the numbers on the gates, we make friends with every wretched cur, we gaze in rapt adoration at every van, we gather daisies for Mummy, and having got nine-tenths of the way to the pillar-box we are in danger of turning right about and trotting away in a direction we never intended going.

Speaking of pillar-boxes reminds me of an important point which concerns *you*, my dear fellow. If you write to me and receive no answer, don't think my regard for you has grown cold. Don't think me remiss for not replying. One explanation of my silence may be that my pen or pencil is under the piano, put there by grubby little hands; but the most likely explanation is that as soon as the postman

popped your kind letter through our letter-box, my son and heir promptly popped it back again—leaving it to be blown down the garden path by every wind of chance.

In brief, then: Never be a father . . . unless you think all these trials and tribulations are worth the joy of having a little chap about the house, which they most certainly are; unless you want the thrill of falling over a wooden horse the minute you open the front door and then feeling warm arms about your neck; unless you are prepared to suffer manifold discomforts cheerfully for the sake of a little smiling face close to yours when your angel, fresh from his bath and smelling of soap, ‘tisses’ you good night before going to bed with a good conscience and in the glorious assurance that you’ve forgiven him for all his innocent misdeeds.

It is rather surprising to find Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, saying: *You can do anything with children if you only play with them.*

One of the best things about a very little child is that he never thanks you for doing things for him—he’s so sure you want to.

MAURICE HORSPPOOL

There were nine of us in the family—and each of us had the feeling that he or she was an only one.

A Methodist minister

I walked with my wee laddie
A sunny mile or so;
I talked with my wee laddie—
He set my heart aglow.

His talk was all of fairies
And sweet and happy things;

His words were full of wonder,
His thoughts had magic wings.

So, ugliness forgotten,
Our feet with fancy shod,
My bairn and I walked gladly
In sunshine and with God!

FRANCIS GAY

She has gone to heaven.

I remember her as the little old lady.

She never had any children of her own, but she always loved bairns; and in her later years she lived in a little house near a council school.

Her front door was always open. Wet or fine, hot or cold, her door was open, and the children going to school or leaving school would look in, if they cared, and ask how she was, and beg her to tell them a story.

What stories she told them—stories about fairies and princes and palaces and buried treasure, and I know not what beside. She made them up in the dark, and she told them in the daytime—or so she said.

All the children loved her—boys as well as girls. She was never very long alone. There was always some child looking in to see her; and the local school-master used to say that a threat to tell old Mother Goodly that some girl or boy had been doing wrong was sure to work a wonder.

Well, as I say, old Mother Goodly is dead and buried now, her little tin box with her—the one she kept sweets in, though she never ate sweets herself. She has gone; and I rather fancy she will be telling lovely stories in heaven in some quiet corner of the nursery just behind the eternal throne of Grace.

STEPHEN DUNN

The real difficulty with children is not so much educating their brains as developing their hearts.

LADY OXFORD

When the first baby laughed for the first time his laugh broke into a million pieces, and they all went skipping about. That was the beginning of fairies.

SIR J. M. BARRIE in
The Little White Bird

There is an old couple in our village who are past work. The married daughter has made shift to take her mother and the parish half-crown, but there is neither room nor food for the father, and he must go. If husband and wife went together, they would be separated at the workhouse door. The parting had to come; it came yesterday. I saw them stumbling lamely down the road on their last journey together, walking side by side without touch or speech, seeing and heeding nothing but a blank future. As they passed me the old man said gruffly, 'Tis far eno'; better be gettin' back'; but the woman shook her head, and they breasted the hill together. At the top they paused, shook hands, and separated; one went on, the other turned back; and as the old woman limped blindly by I turned away, for there are sights a man dare not look upon. She passed; and I heard a child's shrill voice say, 'I come to look for you, gran'; and I thanked God that there need be no utter loneliness in the world while it holds a little child.

From *The Roadmender*,
by Michael Fairless

YOUTH

THIS, it seems, is the day for youth. Never in all the long history of mankind has youth had so fortunate a place in the sun. Everywhere youth is to the front. Hitler made gods of German lads in the days before he set Europe ablaze, and now, all over the British Commonwealth, more is being done for youth than ever before.

It is easy to see the faults of young folk. It is not always easy to see their virtues; and perhaps the following pages will be worth reading if they remind us of the essential and unchanging qualities and possibilities of those among us who are in the glorious springtime of life:

There is a feeling of eternity in youth which makes us amends for everything. To be young is to be one of the immortals.

WILLIAM HAZLITT in *Table Talk*

Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind.

SAMUEL ULLMAN

Lord, in the fullness of my might
I would for Thee be strong:
While runneth o'er each dear delight,
To Thee should soar my song.

I would not give the world my heart,
And then profess Thy love;
I would not feel my strength depart,
And then Thy service prove.

O choose me in my golden time,
In my dear joys have part!
For Thee the glory of my prime,
The fullness of my heart!

THOMAS HORNBLOWER GILL

I've taken a good deal on my plate, but I'll get through somehow. It means working from eight in a morning till six at night, and then studying till midnight for my B.A. But I like it—and, as my father used to say, work never killed anybody.

A student determined to get on

. . . after swimming a quarter of a mile, or so, he was able to reach the girl. He had to swim back against the tide, but he managed it somehow, carried her up the shore, stood by to see if she would come round, and as soon as she opened her eyes he slipped away. When the distracted father turned to thank him he had gone. No one knows his name. He is thought to have been a visitor. He looked about nineteen or twenty.

From a provincial newspaper

There were four of us in the hotel vestibule. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say there were four and a half, for by the lift was a little chap in green.

What we were talking about was none of his business. We were men, consulting about serious matters. The little chap who attended the lift had been at school till a month or two before, so we ignored him.

The problem was where Mr. Dawson's antique shop was to be found. The hall porter knew the name, but could not be sure where the shop was. The reception clerk believed it was in Great Windsor Street—

but it might be in Wellington Road, off King Street. One of the hotel guests who had known the city years before remembered the shop, but for the life of him he could not tell us how to find it.

Then the little chap joined the group, looking up at us out of a pair of twinkling eyes. 'Hold on a minute, sir,' he said. 'I'll find out. Hold on. Dawson, dealer in antiques, eh? Hold on.'

He darted out of the hotel, returning five minutes later with a piece of paper bearing an address which proved to be the one we wanted.

'Our Directory's a bit out of date, sir,' he said, breathlessly, 'so I just nipped across to the Public Library round the corner.'

The four grown-up folk said he was a fine little chap. It was their way of hiding their confusion.

'The Pilgrim'

Do not be afraid to travel, and travel third-class.

PROFESSOR W. G. S. ADAMS
to Dulwich boys.

I overtook him—a sturdy little lad of twelve, or thereabouts. 'Well, sonny,' I said, for I knew him slightly, 'on holiday?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And how are you spending the time?'

'Errands part of the time, sir.'

'And the rest of the day?'

He flushed. 'Studying, sir.'

'Studying? In holiday time?'

'Yes, sir. You see, sir, I'm going to a nautical school very shortly—and I want to get a move on.'

'I see. What's the idea?'

'Well, sir, you'll laugh, I guess. Of course, I've to be a middy, and all that, and then an officer. But I

always dream I'll be captain one day, and stand on the bridge. I don't want to lose time, sir.'

He was smiling. As we parted at the crossroads I sang out, 'Well, good-bye, Captain!'

H. L. GEE

Here is a letter written during the First World War by the Rev. G. Studdert Kennedy. It was addressed to his wife, and it is about their boy.

Make our boy a sportsman. Encourage him to play games, and always to play the game.

Teach him to despise cowardice, and never to be afraid of anything or any one, save God.

Teach him, as soon as you can, what his body is for, about the necessity of cleanliness in body and mind.

Teach him to tell you everything about himself, and especially everything of that sort.

Teach him that being a gentleman means using your life to serve and help your fellow men as much as ever you can, and that it is dishonourable to desire only to make money and be comfortable. If he has brains teach him that he must use them to lead men on to better things, and to teach them a gentleman should choose one of the poorly paid but honourable professions.

Teach him to love and reverence women. Encourage him when young to have plenty of girl friends, and to treat them as comrades, and never to play with them and deceive them. Teach him that the man who deceives a woman is a scoundrel.

Teach him to love Jesus Christ. Teach him that, and leave him free. Don't force his religion in any way, and do not be pained or shocked so long as he keeps his love of Jesus Christ. Teach him constantly that a gentleman must give not get, must serve and not be served.

Guard him from vulgarity and snobbishness, and never let him speak contemptuously of any one or anything except a coward.

I think that is all.

Once upon a time there was a bad boy. He was always in trouble at school—and he was not alone, for other boys were members of his gang, and the schoolmaster could make nothing of any of them.

Then, one day, there came a new schoolmaster who found the class agog with excitement. Scraps of paper were being surreptitiously passed from hand to hand, and when he confiscated some of these he discovered that they were drawings of himself—rude drawings.

Said the schoolmaster: 'James, you drew these?'

'Yes, sir,' said James while the class chuckled.

'See me after school,' was the imperious command, and everybody thrilled because there was going to be a scene.

So they thought. As it happened, there was no scene, for the schoolmaster did not punish James. Instead, he gave him a book. He said: 'You have the makings of an artist, my lad. Read this book—and draw as many sketches of the characters in it as you like—draw them on the fly-leaves and round the margins.'

So James went meekly home . . . and instead of becoming a useless nincompoop he grew up to be a great poet and artist.

His name was James Whitcomb Riley.

Adapted from an American newspaper

Of course what we have a right to expect from the boy is that he shall turn out to be a good man.

Now, the chances are strong that he won't be much

of a man unless he is a good deal of a boy. He must not be a coward or a weakling, a bully, a shirk, or a prig. He must work hard and play hard. He must be clean-minded and clean-lived, and able to hold his own under all circumstances and against all comers.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

The bringing together of all the peoples of the Earth so that the daily news circles the globe will bring about unprecedented co-operation.

This is already evident in the present movement for world peace.

Education must aim high. The ultimate idéal of true education is to develop character, to lure young people on to the highest and strongest spiritual grounds, to keep ever before them the loftiest, most challenging conceptions of human worth, and, above all, to elevate their own estimate of their individual worth and possibilities.

Education that has failed to do this has lost its own soul. As we would have life, so must our education be.

National Education Association,
Washington

The Battle of Britain was won by a few—the few of whom Winston Churchill was thinking when, in August, 1940, he declared: *Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.*

Those few—those immortal few who by their devotion saw to it that freedom should not perish from the earth—*were all young men.*

H. L. GEE

I saw a boy go whistling by,
And there the future goes, thought I.

And as he went with careless feet
He kicked a ball along the street.

God make him good as well as gay!
The world might be his ball some day.

Author unknown

I strongly advise young people to be teetotal and
to play with a straight bat.

LEONARD HUTTON, the cricketer

For God's sake give me the young man who has
brains enough to make a fool of himself.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an
example in word, in conversation, in charity, in
spirit, in faith, in purity.

ST. PAUL, (I *Timothy* iv. 12)

I felt so young, so strong, so sure of God.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy
heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth.

Ecclesiastes xi. 9

And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.

LONGFELLOW

I would recommend every young man to take to
heart the following lines. There are *two points in*
the adventure of the diver. One, when a beggar he

prepared to plunge. One, when a prince he rises with his pearl.

SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON

I was two and a half years in Malta—just across the time when it was the most-bombed spot on earth. *The bathing was fine.*

A young airman when talking
to the compiler

At the corner of High Street I happened to notice that Mr. Watson of Beck House was chatting with George Jenkinson. George looked very smart in his officer's uniform; and the odd thought occurred to me (and I am sure Mr. Watson will forgive me saying this) that George was home after fighting at Dunkirk, after being torpedoed in the Mediterranean, having been evacuated from Greece, having sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, travelled over a thousand miles in the desert of North Africa, and having flown to this country by plane from Gibraltar, whereas Mr. Watson, as he has so often told us, has never been more than fifty miles from this little market town.

And Mr. Watson is eighty, and George, I believe, is twenty-five next birthday.

A gossip writer in a
provincial newspaper

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

Ecclesiastes xii. 1

OLD FOLK

THOSE who grow old graciously are blessings to all about them. We honour them for their length of days and for all they have done or tried to do, and we value their treasured experience. There is good in youth and there is good in age—a gathered radiance, a fragrance distilled from maturity and faith, a serenity which possesses infinite charm. A venerable man, a gracious old lady, these we can scarcely refrain from loving. They have about them the rich glow of autumn with all its peacefulness; and as they travel along the last remaining miles of their journey, what a joy and privilege to lend them a friendly, helpful arm, and to see the evening sun shine, like a benediction light, upon their faces.

Time marches on . . . but we will go a step or two with the old folk, if you please:

I am still at work with my hand to the plough and my face to the future. The shadows of evening lengthen about me, but morning is in my heart.

I have had varied fields of labour and full contact with men and things, and have warmed both hands at the fire of life. The testimony I bear is this: that the castle of enchantment is not yet behind me, it is before me still, and daily I catch glimpses of battlements and towers. The rich spoils of memory are mine. Mine, too, are the precious things of to-day—books, flowers, pictures, Nature, and sport. The first of May is still an enchanted day to me. The best thing of all is friendship. The best of life is always

farther on. Its real lure is hidden from our eyes, somewhere beyond the Hills of Time.

JUDGE MULLOCK of Ontario
on his eighty-sixth birthday

We raise our hat to Mr. George Shipley of Louth, not only because he has succeeded in living a hundred years, not simply because he takes a walk every day, but because he is still an incorrigible optimist, having ordered a new suit from his tailor.

From a newspaper published in 1939

I am still learning.

Michaelangelo's life-long
motto

In his seventy-second year his face is a thanksgiving for his former life, and a love-letter to all mankind.

JEAN PAUL RICHTER on an old friend

A Chinese writer, Lin Yutang, contrasts the view of age taken in the East with that taken in the West.

In Europe we congratulate each other on the possession of youth; in China age is glorified. He says:

In China, the first question one asks another on an official call is, *What is your glorious age?* If he replies apologetically that he is twenty-three or twenty-eight, the other generally comforts him by saying that he still has a glorious future, and that one day he may be old. Enthusiasm grows in proportion as the gentleman is able to report a higher and higher age, and if he is anywhere over fifty the inquirer drops his voice in humility and respect.

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be.

ROBERT BROWNING in
Rabbi Ben Ezra

The last ten years of life are the best because you
are more free from care and illusion, and fuller of
experience.

DR. JOWETT

The farther he goes the younger he grows.

LORD LLOYD on Sir
Aurel Stein, the explorer

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be
As more of heaven in each we see.

JOHN KEBLE

As a white candle
In a holy place,
So is the beauty
Of an aged face.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

No spring, no summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face.

JOHN DONNE

The dear old ladies whose cheeks are pink
In spite of the years of winter's chill,
Are like the autumn leaves, I think,
A little crumpled, but lovely still.

JANIE SCREVEN HEYWARD

With years a richer life begins,
The spirit mellows:
Ripe age gives tone to violins,
Wine, and good fellows.

JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

Then, in 1845, the North-West Passage again attracted the Admiralty. The obvious leader was Sir John Franklin, but there was the question of age. He was sixty, remarked the First Lord of the Admiralty.

'No, no, my lord, *only fifty-nine*,' answered the old lion; and after that there was nothing to be said.

ARTHUR MEE

And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour.

Said of David (1 *Chronicles* xxix. 28)

To be seventy years young is sometimes far more cheerful and hopeful than to be forty years old.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES in a letter to Julia Ward Howe

If I were running in the stadium, ought I to slacken my pace when approaching the goal? Ought I not rather to put on speed?

DIOGENES, when told to rest because he was growing old

One of the best stories we have heard for a long time is of two old folk who lived in a cottage which had become very dear to them. To it they had gone when newly married; and in it they had passed all their days, growing old together there.

Not long ago they heard the sad news that the cottage had been condemned and must be pulled down. They shuffled off to the local authorities and pleaded for the old house. They had lived in it over half a century and they wanted to die in it, they said. Could it not be left as it was till their day

was done? The authorities were sorry, but firm, and the old folk were told to move.

Back they went, the old woman to begin spring-cleaning, the old man helping her. They scrubbed the floors. They washed the paint. They polished the windows. The old man trimmed the privet hedge he had planted in his younger days. The old woman black-leaded the kitchen grate. Then they gathered up their belongings, closed the door behind them for the last time, and went to temporary lodgings which had been found for them.

'Aye,' said he, 'we're leaving the old house.'

'That we be, John,' whispered his wife, '*but we be leaving it as clean as it was the day we went in.*'

From a newspaper

We like this story of the old lady with the lovely complexion and the small boy who asked: 'Please, are you old or young?'

'My dear,' said the old lady, 'I have been young a very long time.'

One of the most interesting writers in the Sunday papers has been questioning the belief that those whom the gods love die young. There is no statistical basis for it, he says.

But surely the true meaning of the old saying is that those whom the gods love are always young, carrying their years in their hearts?

The Children's Newspaper

Let me grow lovely, growing old,
So many old things do.

SUFFERING

'WHENEVER I am in danger of losing the faith I preach every Sunday,' said a rector to me once, 'I visit a hospital ward. I always come away a new convert to the matchless power of the Christian belief.'

And, truly, we may include among the good things of life weakness and suffering, for although in themselves they may be far from good, they are the challenge which brings to birth faith and courage and patience in those who suffer and in those who, as often as not, minister so lovingly to them.

My dear, yesterday was one of my good days. About twenty to eleven in the morning the pain suddenly eased and did not return till nearly two. I was so thankful, especially as it gave me an opportunity to write several letters.

A sick woman in a
letter to a friend

One of the compensations of lying in bed day after day is that you have time to think, time to recall happy memories, time to remember other people, and time to thank the folk around you—nurses, doctors, and your own, sweet husband—for all they do for you. But the greatest compensation of all, or so I imagine, is that you have time to listen to what folk tell you; and it's an odd thing that half the people who come to cheer me, end by pouring out their troubles. More than one has left me saying: 'You don't know what it's meant to me to be able to tell you all this—I feel better for it.' All of which,

as I know you will agree, is just another proof that God can use even an invalid like me, and fashion a blessing out of my idleness.

A letter from a woman who has been bedridden for twenty years

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee:
I trace the rainbow through the rain
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.

GEORGE MATHESON writing
while on a bed of pain

*O for the touch of a vanished hand
And the sound of a voice that is still!*

The hand is still for ever. A gentle, kindly hand, it ministered to many and accomplished much, though few would ever guess that it was the hand of a woman who spent the last years of her life in bed.

Her room was always filled with flowers, and there was hardly ever a day when no one called. They loved to come to see her and talk with her, for she was so wise and thoughtful, so cheerful and brave, that all who spent a little time with her went away glad to have been in her sunny room.

Those who had never seen her remembered her in their prayers, for all the news of the town found its way into her room, and every day she wrote letters to people who needed them. She had suffered so much that she could write as one who knew. She had known poverty and sickness and bereavement. When she wrote to some one in trouble her letter was not a sermon: it was the story of her own adventure from darkness to light. When she wrote to some one who was ill her letter was not a string of platitudes: it

was a message of hope and comfort from one who knew the weariness of a bed of pain. She was so understanding, so sympathetic, so heroic, that she lighted lamps in a twilight world.

Now her own lamp has gone out, the hand which scattered so much happiness is still. But we shall remember her, for she stayed at home doing good.

H. L. GEE

It's not pleasant at first, but that can't be helped. What you've got to do is to call it a beastly nuisance, and then carry on and forget about it. That's all there is to it.

The blind founder of St. Dunstan's
when speaking to a friend

A natural activity has saved me from many of the dangers of inactivity, but on certain occasions when I have been forced, or have given myself up to doing nothing, I have been able to estimate to the full the injurious and disintegrating effects of idleness. I really believe that it alone can cause illness, and that every invalid ought to work except when he is really unable to owing to extreme ill-health. I do not mean making a mere show of being occupied, or making efforts to fill up the empty hours with fruitless 'pastimes', but real work, such as acquiring, or methodically bringing to perfection, some branch of knowledge or a language, or even embarking on some career compatible with confinement in bed. But, you say, we all need distraction and relaxation. Granted, so let a certain amount of time be allotted to it. But the life of an invalid should not, any more than any other life, be spent in finding out ways of amusing oneself or drowning one's woes, but rather in discovering possibilities of setting one's forces to

real work. For the 'pastime', without other aim than that of 'killing time', often calls for an expenditure of energy and application which amounts to no more than would be required for an occupation which might be useful to somebody else, or in some way or other.

Killing time! But time is life. It must not be killed but utilized and made fruitful. Even were one paralysed in all four limbs, as long as the mind can work clearly there exists not only the possibility but the duty of action.

Many people look upon work as slavery. Sickness should teach them that it is freedom.

FRANCE PASTORELLI in *The
Glorious Bondage of Illness*

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

O heavenly Love, how precious still,
In days of weariness and ill,
In nights of pain and helplessness,
To heal, to comfort, and to bless.

HORATIUS BONAR

In Lewes Hospital lies John Richardson. He is twenty-three and paralysed, but he has an indomitable spirit, and we heard the other day that he is writing beautiful letters to his friends by holding a pencil between his teeth.

From a newspaper, 1940

I think the most heroic man I ever met was a poor

Church of England parson with four pounds a week, who nursed a sick wife, did the housework, taught his two boys, provided free milk for destitute families, raised funds to convert a tin church into a brick one, and kept hidden for two years the cancer that killed him.

A well-known novelist

In 1872 John Smith of New York State was told that he was too weak and sickly for the army. The man who told him so died long ago, but it was not till the other day that John passed on at one hundred and five.

From a newspaper in 1937

My father, when he was twenty-eight years old, had been given up by four doctors, who were so certain of their fateful prognostication that they thought fit to tell my mother, although she was quite young, in mourning for a child four years old, and having to bring up another daughter of one and a half years, and a son aged two months. Nevertheless, my father went on living, and the four doctors who had condemned him, fully convinced of his frailty and the short time he had to live, over-confident perhaps in their own strength and prospects of longevity, all died many years before him.

FRANCE PASTORELLI in *The Glorious Bondage of Illness*

I dressed his wounds, God healed him.

AMBROISE PARÉ, a famous sixteenth century French surgeon .

POVERTY CORNER

DURING the Second World War I got to know a poor, lame charwoman who told me how sorry she was that she could not buy War Savings Certificates. 'But I done my bit, even if it's *only* a bit,' she said with a touch of pride. 'There's some soldiers billeted near us; they belong the tanks, and all along I've let 'em come and write letters in my front room.'

It may not sound impressive, but it meant much; and it is but one example of the way in which poor folk are willing to help others.

Since some of the world's wisest and best men and women have been poor, we need not be ashamed of spending a few minutes in Poverty Corner:

I have a very little but I like that little much.

Old saying

As a rule rich people carry their burdens alone, but poor people have nearly always lots of folk round about who help them with their load.

A poor woman

And Jesus said unto him: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

St. Matthew viii. 20

The greatest man in history was the poorest.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

He is not poor that hath little, but he that desireth much.

GEORGE HERBERT

I must tell you what happened a fortnight ago. My wife suggested that we should take Mrs. Carpenter for a run in the car—you'll remember her? She used to come and help us at spring-cleaning time, but now she is so crippled with rheumatism that she rarely gets out of doors. Well, we picked her up soon after lunch, and drove up Wharfedale, and had tea at Bolton Abbey, returning a little after sunset. It made a pleasant jaunt for us, but if we'd taken her for a cruise round the world I don't think she could have enjoyed it much more. She never stopped talking, and she saw everything. It was all new and wonderful to her, and she thought the river marvellous, and she said she had never seen such trees, and the ruins, she declared, were something to remember always—*and what a tea!* As a matter of fact, I may as well own that I felt a wee bit ashamed somehow—and Mary felt the same way, it seems, for when we got back she said, 'Darling, Mrs. Carpenter has taught me a lesson.' She didn't say precisely what the lesson was, but I guessed what she meant, and I am sure you will have done so already.

A retired bank manager in a
letter to the compiler

There is in Austria a monastery which in former times was very rich, and continued rich so long as it gave freely to the poor; but when it gave over that it became poor itself, and so remains to this day.

MARTIN LUTHER

I wish the good old times would come again (she said) when we were not quite so rich. A purchase is but a purchase now you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph.

Do you remember the brown suit, which you made

to hang upon you till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so threadbare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (collating, you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till day-break—was there no pleasure in being a poor man?

CHARLES LAMB

As I sez to Mrs. Winterbottom only the other day, I sez, 'Well, it's all right them high and mighty folks sitting down to ever such a spread at the Himperial 'otel, I sez, and half a dozen knives and forks each, and them waiters breathing down the backs of their necks hall the time, but I'd sooner have a boiled honion for supper, and read the hevening paper . . . at any rate, I sez, I do know as 'ow I washed my hands afore I peeled it, and that's more n' any of them fine folks is likely to know.'

A casual help in a large hotel

This is a true story of a patchwork quilt which helped to spread the Gospel.

It was made by a poor old woman. She belonged

to a church in England which some years before had been proud to see one of its Sunday-school scholars go out to Africa as a missionary.

Full of enthusiasm, the young man dreamed of the time when he could build a little chapel; and one day it seemed as if his dream were coming true, for the native chief of that district was willing to sell a piece of land if he could pay the high price demanded.

The missionary wrote home to the church of his boyhood, told the people of his chance, and begged them to help. They did. Organizing a sale of work, the ladies sewed week after week. All their work was beautiful except one gift, a patchwork quilt, its patches sewn together with coarse thread, its colours crude and ill-matched.

Most of the articles were sold, but no one bought the patchwork quilt, and the ladies were not surprised. It had been kind of the old woman to make it, but it was good for nothing.

What should be done with it? They could not give it away; it was too ugly. They dare not burn it lest the old woman should hear of it and be grieved. Then some one suggested that the oddments left over from the sale, including the patchwork quilt, should be sent out to Africa.

The money which had been raised was sent to the missionary with a letter saying a parcel was on its way; but when the letter reached the missionary he found the money was not enough. He went to the chief and tried to bargain with him; but the fellow refused to lower his price.

It was a sad young missionary who unpacked the parcel of goods from his home church when at last it arrived. The dainty garments he knew would sell for a few handfuls of meal or bunches of fruit,

no more; and as for the patchwork quilt, he wondered what the ladies at home had been thinking about to send it to a country where the greatest difficulty of all was to keep cool.

One day he announced his sale, and the people of the village flocked to see what they could buy. The chief was among them. He had no eyes for the garments which had been made by well-to-do ladies with clever fingers. He was not interested in lace and silk. The one thing upon which he set his heart was the bright quilt, with its dazzling patches of green and blue and yellow and crimson. It fascinated him. He fingered it. He threw it over his broad black shoulders. He strutted about in it. And at last he begged the missionary to sell it.

The missionary, hiding a smile, said that it had been made far across the sea; there was no other like it.

‘If you will give me this marvellous garment,’ said the chief, ‘I will give you the piece of land you want.’

The bargain was struck. The chief was delighted, the missionary thankful; and when, weeks after, his story of what the patchwork quilt had done reached his home town there was a poor old woman whose heart was filled with joy because the work of her fingers had been so richly blessed.

The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.

Jesus (*St. Matthew* xxi. 42)

Nothing is easier than imagining the world is full of bad people and that life is a poor thing. But the truth is that the world is full of good people and that life is a fine thing, and of this we are reminded in the Rev. W. E. Clapham's book on The Good Fight At Bow:

Human nature is sound. There is much folly and no little sin; many are wayward, selfish, careless, but the heart of the people in East London is sound as a bell.

Our homes, so far as the simple, human joys are concerned, are as happy as any in the land; comparatively few marriages come to grief; Darby and Joan live in every street! The poor proverbially help the poor, and kindness expressing itself in practical ministries is common among us. Courage and fortitude are virtues we see every day, and if the Victoria Cross were given for gallantry displayed on the battle-fields of adversity that coveted distinction would be on many a breast in Bow.

If you are becoming cynical and losing faith in men and women come to East London.

Though a man without money is poor, a man with nothing but money is poorer.

Old saying

Please accept my first old age pension as a debt of gratitude.

A letter to Bolton Infirmary

She was an old woman, and she ended her days in the workhouse. So far as she could remember she had never in all her life received a letter, but a few days before she died, a nurse in the hospital ward went off for a week's holiday, and while at Llandudno she wrote a few lines to the woman whose life was fast running out. What that letter meant to the poor creature no one will ever know. She smiled when it arrived. She asked every one who went near her bed to read it to her. She kept tight hold of it; and at the last she died with it in her hands. She

was still holding that precious bit of paper, still clasping that love-letter, when they laid her in her coffin. It is doubtful if any rich lady has ever gone more happily to heaven.

H. L. GEE

I was sixteen when I was converted, and now I am forty-nine. It has been a difficult journey, but God always gives iron shoes for rough roads, and God always enfolds me in his everlasting arms. *I know!* I have proved it, not once, but often, indeed all along the hard and bitter way. My friends nickname me 'The Everlasting Arms,' for I so often talk about them. You see, I am frequently alone, and it is so wonderfully comforting to feel the Everlasting Arms about me in the stillness and the gloom—strong arms to help and support me in feebleness, protective arms to shield me from life's fiercest buffetings, tender arms which mean love and sympathy when I am discouraged and broken, willing arms to bear my burden just when it seems too heavy, God's arms ever ready, ever present, never failing!

From a letter written by a
woman in a Manchester slum

STREETS

HAPPY feet and tired feet tread our city streets. Kindly feet are there, too, feet ready and willing to go where help or cheer is needed. There is no denying that city streets are flinty, and that misery flows along them, but there is always some goodness there, and we do well to look for it:

And the streets of the city shall be full of boys
and girls playing.

Zechariah viii. 5

If you are observant you will have noticed that the lamp-posts in Kingsway, London, are adorned with medallions showing good St. Martin cutting his cloak in two and giving half to a beggar.

One sunny day in springtime a gentleman sauntered along this famous thoroughfare, saw a poor fellow selling matches at the pavement edge, and without any fuss, calmly took off his coat, which was thick and beautifully lined, and handed it to the vendor of matches. 'Spring,' said the gentleman blandly, 'is in the air! Good morning!'

This is fact, not fable—and it just goes to prove that *anything* can happen in a street!

Newspaper cutting

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear Thy voice, O Son of Man.

FRANK M. NORTH

We cannot always choose our road in life, but we can choose whether we will walk along the shady side or the sunny side of it.

G. A. STEEL

... I met our mutual friend Arthur at the street corner one day this week. He seemed in a great hurry. 'Must get home quickly,' he said breathlessly. 'Why?' I asked.

He hesitated—but there was that lovable roguish twinkle in his eye. 'Good news for the wife,' he declared. 'She'll be so surprised.'

'Indeed?' I ventured, for I felt that he was up to one of his tricks.

'And in truth,' he flashed. 'I'm hurrying home to say that I'm still head over heels in love with her. Good-bye.'

He was gone—and the common street seemed brighter for his nonsense, his charm, and his happy smile.

From a letter to the compiler

The darkening streets about me lie,
The shame, the fret, the squalid jars:
But swallows' wings go flashing by,
And in the puddles there are stars.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE

I see the tired people
A-tramping in the street,
And day and night I listen
To weary, weary feet.
O God bless every pilgrim
Who plods in cold or heat;
And grant to him a pillow
Of rest and comfort sweet.

Anonymous

Life is in the streets, for there are good folk and bad folk there, young and old; those in haste, those with time to linger, kindly folk and thoughtless, careless and carefree . . . and there is so much to see in fair weather and in bad weather that if I could only stand on the pavement and watch and listen as folk went by, I would be content to stay there for ever.

A traveller home from the desert

I don't know their faces, but there are hundreds I recognize by their feet.

A Manchester shoeblack

The bus-conductor, a very ordinary little man with a drooping moustache, talked incessantly to the pale-faced woman staring vacantly out of the window.

'Eh, ma'm,' he was saying when I got in, 'you never saw such glands as she had, my Aunt Martha. All swollen on the right side, looked as if she'd been and gone and swallowed a prize marrer whole, and it had stuck half-way, you know. And my uncle, he were a grand little chap, but nervous, you know. He said she'd never come out of hospital again, that's what he said. "Henry," he says, speaking to me—move up there. Tickets, please! "Nay, lad," he says, "your Aunt Martha's gone in to hospital to die, she has, and she'll never put my trousers in the press no more." He wept like a child; but, bless you, he was talking through his hat, a black bowler. She comed out in three weeks to the day, and she was spring cleaning a fortnight after, and making my uncle give a hand with the carpets! So don't you go worriting, ma'am. It'll all be all right . . . Here we are. Down you get, and it'll all be all right. . . .'

I asked him what it was all about. He leaned over confidentially and whispered that his passenger had

that morning taken her child into the infirmary for an operation on the neck. 'I hope the Lord'll forgive a few lies this bright morning,' he said, 'I never had no Aunt Martha, but I had to do *something* to help the poor soul to take her mind off her trouble.'

From the *South Wales Argus*

Dear Lord, bless all the people
With aching, tired feet,
And give them all a bed, Lord,
And may their rest be sweet.

All bus conductors, weary
With climbing endless stairs;
All waitresses too tired
To kneel and say their prayers.

And all old men and women
Whose feet have corns and things,
May Thy good angels guard them
With very gentle wings!

And, most of all, Dear Father,
The feet of tired chars
That have no shoes to fit them,
And never ride in cars!

FRANCIS GAY

Bury me by the roadside and put a flat stone on me, that some weary wayfarer may sit and rest, for I too was a pilgrim on earth and weary.

An old writer in Italy

The daylight came tardily. It seemed as if the light would never break through the heavy clouds, that cold winter morning. The streets were wet, the

pavements black under a sombre sky. Umbrellas were everywhere, and there was a bitter wind at the corners.

'Well, how goes it, mate?' asked one man plodding along to work and overtaking a bent figure, hands buried in the pockets of a rather thin overcoat.

'Oh, not so bad,' was the reply in a husky voice. 'Can't get rid of this cold on my chest, you know. Never feel like getting up in a morning . . . and bed-time seems a long way off. But I'll stick it somehow.'

There was a pause, and then he added: 'And Mary has promised to have a good fire and a bit of something hot for tea . . . so I'll keep on . . .'

A Manchester journalist

If to-day is cold and cheerless,
If the streets have all been wet,
If life's dull and drab and wretched—
There's to-morrow, don't forget!

Printed on a card in a
hair-dresser's saloon

The latest Home Guard recruits were returning from their first route march. Most of them were going along with a swing, but one, hobbling rather badly, seemed unhappy. 'You all right, Tom?' whispered his friend.

'Yes, thanks,' murmured Tom. 'But I do miss my walking stick!'

Told by a Home Guard, 1944

What is the use of running when you are on the wrong road?

• JOHN RAY

CHEERY SOULS

IT is no earthly use telling people to be happy or to keep cheery. The utmost you can do is to set before them the good side by side with the ill, to show them the sunshine and also the shadow, to direct their attention to the kindness and gallantry in life as well as what is mean and deplorable; and if after that they cannot of themselves see how much more gold there is than dross, why, they must go on being miserable, and may heaven help them to enjoy it!

For seventeen days ten of us were drifting about the Atlantic on a raft. Dick was the life and soul of the lot. The wind was as cold for him as for any of us, but he declared he'd never been one for muffling up. His ration was no bigger than any one else had, but he used to say solemnly that doctors would go bankrupt if people didn't eat too much. When a ship passed us without seeing us the disappointment was as bitter for him as for the rest, but Dick had an idea (or so he told us) that she was a German pocket-battleship. 'And who wants to be taken to a Nazi prison-camp?' he demanded. 'Tell you what,' said Dick one day when we were all just about at the end of our tether, 'I'll take badly to earning my living after leading the life of a gentleman all this time . . . nothing to do and no one to tell you to do it!'

And when at last we were picked up, Dick was in better health than any of us.

From a letter written by the mate
of a ship torpedoed early in 1943

There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty

of being happy. By being happy we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or, when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor.

A happy man or woman is a radiating focus of goodwill; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.

SIR J. M. BARRIE

Gladness of heart is the life of man, and the joyfulness of a man prolongeth his days.

The Apocrypha

Good night, Madam, and thank you very much for being so pleasant; it is a great help.

Heard in a Brighton shop

Never give way to melancholy. Every substantial grief has twenty shadows.

SYDNEY SMITH

Don Quixote hanging by his wrist from the stable window imagined himself over a terrible abyss, but when Maritornes cut him down he found that he had been only a few inches from the ground.

It is sometimes easy to see the worst and hard to find the best.

But let us remember that the best is still with us. The worst is the injustice, the insincerity, the cruelty, the folly and selfishness out of which so much of the news in our papers springs, and only the fool would deny the existence of all this, or pretend that it was

not to be deplored. But only the fool would say that this is all.

There is the good, and this is the time to proclaim it from the housetops, the time to look for it more diligently than hitherto. If we are to keep our sanity we must at all costs find proof every day that there is something to thank God for, and that in a world where much is wrong something is right.

Pictures and music, books and poems, flowers, old songs and new pleasures, friends who call to see us, talks by the fire, walks in the country, bright hopes for to-morrow, laughter of children—surely the world is still a good place in which to dwell, and life is still adventurous and precious?

There are still beautiful homes where understanding and kindness and courtesy are the order of the day. There are still friendly people, men of business with hearts not shut in by greed, girls who are kind and natural and anxious to live happy and useful lives, young men who see visions and dream dreams.

Let us remember, too, that there is never a moment when some good deed is not done somewhere. Kindly folk abound. Illnesses are cured and injuries healed by skill and service beyond price. Prayers are answered, broken hearts are bound up, lonely folk are comforted, sad folk are cheered.

As surely as the leaves on the trees fade, so surely Spring returns in all her loveliness and with all her promises. Let us remember it. When we have read our newspaper headlines and switched off the wireless, let us take heart and be of good courage, for there are saints and heroes still, kindly men and women, poets, visionaries, and friendly folk. Above all, there are boys and girls, to-day's shining hope for to-morrow.

A cheerful correspondent in
the *Children's Newspaper*

Laughter is wholesome. God is not so dull as some of the parsons make out. Did he not make the kitten to chase its tail?

HEINRICH HEINE

It undoubtedly pays to be cheerful.

That is not to say that Mr. Millar was cheerful with an idea of making money out of it. Nothing was farther from his mind. As conductor of a bus, he was cheerful and kindly to every one because he was made that way; and it was quite natural that when Mr. and Mrs. Winks travelled on his bus from Edinburgh to Currie, Mr. Millar should get into conversation with them. He always had some pleasant information, and a friendship was struck up between the two passengers and the conductor.

When Mr. Winks died Mr. Millar and his wife were kind to his widow; and when Mrs. Winks died it was a surprise to Mr. Millar and his wife to learn that she had left them a house valued at £1,000.

From a Scottish newspaper

I remain, in spite of everything that has happened, an optimist.

DR. EDUARD BENES

As a rule the happiest people are those who are so busy doing their duty that they have no time to look for happiness.

Anonymous

I heard shrieks of laughter, a veritable riot of hilarity, and they came from a children's ward in one of our hospitals.

A newspaper reporter

If happiness hae not her seat
An' centre in the breast,
We may be wise or rich or great,
But never can be blest.

ROBERT BURNS

I always buy my morning newspaper from Tom.
I don't care a brass button what's in the headlines,
but it does me good to see his cheery face, and to
hear his merry 'Morning, sir!' whether the day be
fine or not.

A London editor

She had four little children, and any amount of
housework, and her aged mother who needed a lot of
attention, and wasn't always as easy to get on with
as one might wish, but there were few days when
she wasn't singing in her kitchen. I don't know how
she did it—unless she began every morning on her
knees, the strength she found then keeping her going
till bedtime.

H. L. GEE

He's the most gallant little chap I know. He's
always singing—even in the rain.

An invalid, speaking
of a blackbird

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteous-
ness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus (*St. Matthew* v. 10)

My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights.

In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
My dawning is begun;
Thou art my soul's bright morning star
And Thou my rising sun!

ISAAC WATTS

These things have I spoken unto you that my joy
might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

Jesus, the Man of Sorrows
(*St. John* xv. 11)

Be of good cheer.

ST. PAUL when shipwrecked
(*Acts* xxiii. 11)

ROMANCE

THE world will be young as long as there are young folk to fall in love, and as long as the world is young there will be good in it, for all who are in love find much for which to thank God. Even a stuffy office may be heaven to a girl in love; and I once sat behind a romantic couple in a tram who, I am sure, would not have noticed any change in their immediate surroundings if the roof had been removed and the rain poured in upon them! Here we will play 'gooseberry' to one or two couples—rather ungallant, perhaps, but delightful for all that:

It took me all my time to catch up to her.

How she tripped along that sunny morning!

She was going along the familiar road to the old job in the same office. This neat, trim, pretty typist was on her way to work, but she seemed to be walking on air, and when at last I came level with her (I told my wife all about it later, so you needn't begin to think things!) I saw a flush on her face and a light dancing in her eyes.

'You take some catching,' I gasped.

She laughed—such a merry laugh.

'Going to business?' I asked.

'Yes,' said she.

'You seem keen on the job,' said I.

'Yes,' said she. 'I want to get to the office in good time!'

'Queer,' said I.

Off came her glove. She showed me an engagement ring. 'It happened last night,' she murmured

happily, 'and everything seems different this morning! I feel like working all day—and I'll bet the work goes easily!'

And I thought what a good thing it is that love makes old things new, drab things gay.

The manager of a city store

A man and a maid in a lane—
Heaven is with us again.

Anonymous

Sweet is snow when it comes in summer, for the thirsty may drink; and sweet is the springtime with its flowers; but most sweet when one cloak shelters two lovers, and the tale of love is told by both.

An ancient Greek philosopher

Thank God that however the politicians bungle things, and however bad times may be, and however old some of us are growing, there is always romance. Always it is springtime in somebody's life—and in somebody else's; and when *he* meets *her* and she pretends not to see him there is something wonderful and thrilling astir in the world, something with music and laughter and adventure and infinite promise, a kind of flowering of the best in life, so bright and fragrant and sweet that the wisest of us just don't bother about all the withered leaves and blighted hopes which lie strewn in our path.

Source unknown

What do you know of Sir Christopher Wren?

Surely your answer is that he built St. Paul's. But the famous architect who raised the glorious dome above the roar of London was also a man. Once he was a man in love. He married Faith Coghill. One day Faith, having dropped her watch

in the sea, sent it to her lover, asking him to have it repaired. Christopher took it to a watchmaker, and later sent it on to Faith, with a charming little love-letter which somehow endears us by its whimsical humour and its glowing passion as the grandeur of St. Paul's can never do. Here it is:

MADAM,

The artificer having never mett with a drowned watch, like an ignorant physician has been so long about the cure that he hath made me very unquiet that your commands should be soe long deferred. However, I have sent the watch at last, and envie the felicity of it, that it should be soe neer your side, and soe often enjoy your eye, and be consulted by you how your time shall pass, while you employ your hand in your excellent workes.

But have a care of it, for I put such a spell into it that every beating of the balance will tell you that 'tis the pulse of my heart which labours as much to serve you, and more trewly than the watch, for the watch, I believe, will sometimes lie, and sometimes be idle, and unwilling to goe, having received so much injury by being drenched in that brine bath that I dispair that it should ever be a trew servant to you more.

But, as for me (unless you drown me, too, in my teares), you may be confident that I shall never cease to be

Your most affectionate humble servant,

CHR. WREN

Here is a love-letter written in 1712:

Lovely (and oh, that I could write loving) Mistress Margaret, I pray you let affection excuse presumption. Having been so happy as to enjoy the sight of your

sweet countenance, I am so enamoured with you that I can no more keep close my flaming desire to become your servant.

And I am the more bold to write to your sweet self because I am now my own man, and may match where I please, for my father is taken away, and now I am come to my living, which is Ten Yard Land ~~and a house, and there is never a yard of land in our~~ field but is worth ten pounds a year; and all my ~~brothers and sisters are provided for.~~

Besides, I have good household stuff, though I say it, both of brass and pewter, linens and woollens; and, though my house be thatched, yet, if you and I match, it shall go hard but I will have one half of it slates.

If you think well of this motion I will wait upon you as soon as my new clothes are made and the hay harvest is in.

Brother to the Ox is a book written by a farm labourer, Fred Kitchen. It is the story of an honest, humble, and hard-working man with a rare, sweet spirit. Here we read much of country-life; and here is the beginning of pure and simple love-making:

I used to go to church or chapel occasionally, being persuaded to the latter by the missus, while attendance at church on Good Friday was compulsory for all hired servants on most farms in those days. I must admit, though, my religious exercises were in polishing horse-brasses, and my gods—horses. However, I became pally with a young chap who worked on 'the buildings', and on Easter Sunday persuaded him to go with me to church, our lad having informed me they were singing *The Heavens are Telling*, and I ought not to miss it. I was glad I went, for Easter Sunday became a special day with me ever after. The church was packed, and as we hadn't any prayer-

book, and the verger evidently thought it wasn't worth his while to bring us one, we could only join in those parts we knew by heart. I found myself sitting close up to a girl with brown curls showing underneath a little furry hat, and she, seeing I had no book, invited me to look over with her. I didn't take much notice of her at first, for I was always shy and awkward with girls, and all I saw was a very small pinky-white thumb holding one corner of a very small prayer-book, and on the other corner was a big brown thumb, and I began to wish that big thumb wasn't so big and brown. Next thing I noticed was the smell of violets—or it may have been lavender—and it came from her. We joined in an Easter hymn, and I stopped singing to listen, for, I thought, surely no mere mortal girl has a voice as sweet as that, and dared no more open my lips to sing all evening.

I gathered up courage to glance sideways when I should have been praying for the Royal Family, and saw some brown curls peeping under a brown furry hat with a sort of pearl buckle at the side. I looked again instead of praying for our bishops, priests, and deacons and saw the back of a navy-blue costume with a white collar, and felt somehow I was not the same lad who had entered the church and never again would be. The pew was packed, and while the choir sang the anthem *The Heavens are Telling*, we sat wedged close together so that I felt her breathing, while her blue costume touched my coat, sending a fire through my being, so that, what with the choir singing and the scent of violets—or maybe, lavender—I was transported into the seventh heaven; I, whose only love was a well-matched team and a nine-inch furrow.

After that I became a regular worshipper at church, and severed my friendship with the young bricky because he referred to one particular damsel as a tart.

I got smitten pretty badly, and went to church four Sundays hard-running, but the place was never packed like on Easter Sunday and I could see no excuse for planking myself in the same pew as the girl with the brown curls. She smiled and nodded to me once in the church porch, but as she never spoke I came to the conclusion I was making an ass of myself; that a bonny girl like her wouldn't be likely to talk to a farm servant, and so the next Sunday I stayed away from church.

On Monday morning I was carting manure into Sadler's acre—a little three-cornered piece we were putting in with mangolds—when who should I see coming down the road but her, a-wheeling the doctor's children out in the pram. I felt thoroughly ashamed of having to pass her in a muck-cart, and, to make matters worse, I had old Farmer in the shafts. Had I had a decent horse it wouldn't have looked quite so bad, but to meet her, with an old grey horse and a muck-cart, I felt, would put an end to my fancy dreams, and never again would she smile at me in the church porch. However, I jerked my scarf straight, pushed my cap a bit farther back, and stared over the hedge on the opposite side of the road with a desperate hope that she might pass without recognizing who I was. But I was doomed to be caught, and just when I began to think I was saved a pleasant voice called: 'Good morning!'

'Mornin'!' I replied, trying to look surprised.

'I didn't see you at church last night,' she said, stopping the pram and smiling up at me.

There was nothing I could do after that but stop the horse, and stammer: 'No—noa! I—I didn't go!'

'I wondered if you was poorly,' she said, wheeling the pram to and fro with her back to the handle.

I could only stare and colour-up at any one wondering if I were poorly.

So she continued: 'I shan't be there next Sunday.'

'Oh!' I answered.

'No, it's my afternoon out!'

'Oh—aye!'

'I always go home when it's my afternoon off!'

'Oh—aye!'

And so we stared innocent-like at each other for a moment; she with her pleasant grey eyes taking in my cart, the old horse, and me stood up in the cart-body; while I could see nothing but her winsome smile shooting straight at me. And so, having stared our fill, she bent her head and said: 'I cycle home.'

'Ev yer got a bicycle?' I asked, thinking it time I said something.

'Yes!' she answered, with a laugh. 'Have you?'

'Yis—but I don't often ride it.'

'It's a long ride from Larbrook, isn't it?'

'Aye! it is an' all. Dy yer come fra' Larbrook?'

'Yes. I generally leave our house about eight o'clock, then it gives me nice time to get in by nine.'

'Aye! That's giving you good time, it's only half an 'our's ride.'

'Oh! you men ride so fast!' Then, straightening the pram covers, she continued: 'Well, I must be going, but I'm glad I've seen you!' And, looking up with a bewitching smile, 'Well, good-bye! I don't suppose I shall see you next Sunday?' and went her way.

I said 'Gee-up' to the old horse and drove on, feeling fine at having had a word with the pretty nursemaid, and thought about it all day until the idea entered my thick head that I ought to 'do a bit o' cycling come Sunday.'

There was once a little shop-assistant whose people were very poor, though they were a kindly, understanding, happy couple, and loved all their five

children. The little shop-assistant worked long hours, and served a lot of folk in the day, and often she was very tired at night, but she never complained, and she kept herself neat and trim and cheery, and she was very gracious and patient—wonderfully patient, even when the customers were wrong side out, which they usually were.

One fine day—it was a sunny day in spring when the daffodils were nodding in the woods, though, of course, the little shop-assistant never had time to go and see them, except on Sundays—one fine day, as I say, the little shop-assistant had a most trying customer, a lady in a fur coat who wanted a pair of gloves. At least, she said *she* did not want them, but that her son, who was tall, dark, and handsome, had insisted on buying her a pair for her birthday, and she wasn't going to tell anybody how old she was, and she had been in two shops already, and nobody had the sort of gloves her son wanted her to have, so it wasn't her fault, to be sure, if she were a bother.

'What about these, Gerald?' asked the lady in the fur coat.

Gerald, who had been standing behind her, his hat in his hand and his eyes on the ceiling (for being a manly man he hated going into shops like that), stepped forward and examined them with one eye, and was a long time about it.

'I'd like to see another pair first,' he said eventually.

'What a boy!' exclaimed the lady in the fur coat. 'Have you anything else, my dear?'

So the little shop-assistant reached down another box of gloves, and then another, and then another, and the young man (who was outrageously fastidious) begged his mother to try on pair after pair until at last the lady in the fur coat said: 'Gerald, Gerald, you

make me most embarrassed. This young lady will never forgive us.'

But the little shop-assistant, who had a mother of her own, as I said, only smiled with kindly eyes which had stars in their shadows, and murmured politely: 'Oh, it's no trouble, madam.' Indeed, she even went to the window and brought out yet another pair, begging the customer to try them on, which the lady in the fur coat did; and as she liked them, and as the young man (tall, dark and handsome) said, somewhat reluctantly, that he, too, liked them, that pair was duly purchased, the young man paying cash, and taking his mother (who limped a bit) by the arm as they walked out.

And that, bless you, *ought* to have been the end of the story, but happily it was only the beginning for (would you believe it?) that evening the little shop-assistant had just walked out of the shop, and was about to hurry home—she wanted to be back early in order to do a little mending—when a large, blue, silver-plated car drew up silently by the pavement, and the tall, dark, handsome young man stepped out, raised his hat, and said in a queer voice that sounded as if it had been born a long way off: 'Excuse me, miss, but could you believe that I mean no harm if I ask for the privilege of driving you home?'

Well, the little shop-assistant, who was a very good girl and who all her life had had no more than one or two very mild flirtations with a grocer's apprentice and a bank clerk, hesitated. 'There's something I want to say,' urged the young man in the same dry, husky, far-away voice.

So the little shop-assistant found a timid smile which she put away quickly, fearful lest she appeared too forward. Then she stepped into the car after the young man had opened the door; and a minute later

they were gliding smoothly along the street—all golden in the evening sunshine. The young man said nothing for a long time; and when he found his voice in much the same way as she had found her smile, he said he just wanted to apologize for giving her so much trouble that morning, and to explain that he hadn't been able to hurry out of the shop because he had never met anybody quite like her, and that she had been so patient and kindly and sweet that he hadn't been able to think about anything else all day. . . .

The rest is too personal for you to read or for me to tell, so you must just imagine it; but after the wedding the lady in the fur coat (she was wearing a nigger-brown two-piece on that occasion) whispered to the bride—who, of course, had given a week's notice to her employer—that she'd always hoped Gerald would marry for love, and that, to let her into a secret, she'd known a minute after going into the shop that sunny spring morning that Gerald, who was such a dear boy in spite of all the money he'd inherited, *was far more interested in the little shop-assistant than in any gloves that had ever been made!*

Adapted from a Scottish newspaper

. . . So the gallant young man fought a whole day with the dragon, and slew it; and there was great rejoicing throughout the land, and the King gave the victor the hand of his daughter in marriage, and the happy pair lived without a care ever after.

From an old book of fairy-tales

I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Ascribed to Robert Herrick

IN QUIETNESS

SAYS Isaiah: *In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.* How true this is; and how great our need of quiet times in these hurrying days. For, after all, what does it matter whether the world be crowded with good things or swept bare of them if we have no time to stand and stare, no time to look and listen and contemplate, and become receptive so that we may hear the still, small voice of God? All great folk have known what to do with silence. Wordsworth was deeply stirred by the silence of a summer morning in London. John Keats alone with a book felt like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken. Elijah, who found not God in the great wind and the fire, found Him in the stillness; and Jesus gathered strength for his mission in the quietude of the wilderness.

If you are willing, we will spend a few precious minutes in silent fellowship that we may hear the noiselessness of God:

I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith
to be content.

ST. PAUL (*Philippians* iv. 11)

What sweet delight a quiet life affords.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND

So passed their life, a clear united stream,
By care unruffled.

FRANCIS THOMSON

Said a man to me once:

'Yesterday I was very busy—just didn't know which way to turn. So I took a stroll in the park.'

'Good heavens,' I exclaimed, 'whatever made you do that?'

He smiled oddly. 'Oh,' he said, 'I just felt that things were getting on the top of me . . . and that it was about time I got a calm spirit and a new strength so that I could go back and jolly well get on top of *them*.'

'And did you?' I inquired.

'I did,' he replied.

H. L. GEE

Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Be still and know that I am God.

Psalm xlvii. 10

Be able to be alone; lose not the advantage of solitude and the society of thyself; nor be only content but delight to be alone with Omnipotency. He who is thus prepared, the day is not uneasy, nor the night black unto him.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

The house we live in has a door on to the street, which is ever on the swing. The doorstep is muddied and worn by many feet, and the lower rooms are constantly invaded by the noises of the highway. The traffickers come and go, bringing the rumours

and alarms and urgencies of the hour. And sometimes the house is clamorous with debate, and sometimes with the bidding of bargainers; now it is filled with the bustle of enterprise, and again with the sound of a grievous crying.

But the house has also a turret stair, and at the top a high window on to the wide spaces where burn the quiet stars, and where a wind out of eternity travels soundlessly.

Let us climb that stair, and stand at that window.

From *The Five Minutes'*
Interval, by P. J. Fisher

She was a quiet little body, and that meant two things, first that she could listen patiently to other folk's troubles, and secondly that when at last she did say something it was always worth listening to.

A maiden lady of uncertain age

He was the soul of tranquillity. It was his calm which, even at the height of the bombing here, gave me a strength I should never have had but for him. I see him now at the door of the Post, his hands deep in his pockets, his helmet tilted as he gazed at the night sky aglow with fires, lit up with swinging chandeliers of coloured flares, glittering with ack-ack. His face was statuesque. The thunder of the anti-aircraft barrage never disturbed him; and that Thursday night when a plane, diving to the attack, dropped a stick of bombs so close that the Post rocked, and all of us were thrown to the ground, he was the first to get up. 'Better see if the telephone's working,' he remarked as he dusted his coat.

'John,' I said, and my voice didn't sound like mine at all, 'doesn't anything ever scare you?'

He smiled. 'Don't you remember the promise?' he asked: *My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

We dealt with several incidents that night, but those words sang in my thoughts all the time. I always used to think that religious folk had not quite as much red blood in them as others, but John taught me that inner peace means strength and courage.

A letter to the compiler,
October, 1942

How many of us realize that we find it easier to stand firm against every shock life may bring if every day has its quiet time—a minute or two in which we lay hold on powers not our own?

In the hum of the market there is money, but under the cherry tree there is rest.

Japanese proverb

When all is done and said,
In the end thus shall you find,
He most of all doth bathe in bliss
That hath a quiet mind.

LORD VAUX

Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith,
than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

Proverbs xvii. 1

The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber whose window opened toward the sunrising; the name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang.

JOHN BUNYAN

To be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars, to be satisfied with your possessions but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them, to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness and to fear nothing except cowardice, to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts, to covet nothing that is your neighbour's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners, to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and every day of Christ, and to spend as much time as you can, with body and with spirit, in God's out of doors, these are little guideposts on the footpath to peace.

HENRY VAN DYKE in
The Footpath to Peace

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

W. H. DAVIES

The gift of being able to put aside at will the troubling things of life, laying them apart till a more convenient season, not cowardly shrinking from them, but bravely holding them at arm's length—it is a gift that stamps its owner brave and keeps him young.

F. NESBIT

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

IT is good to take our ease sometimes and to be comfortably contemplative; but life is made of sterner stuff than meditation, and the challenge of each day and hour prompts us to be up and doing. And how good it is to be on the march, especially if our way takes us onward and upward, and has in it something of the thrill of adventure!

Come, fall in, and let us go upon the quest together:

God did not make men perfect. He made them pilgrims after perfection.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Do not stand aloof despising. There are glorious years ahead of you if you choose to make them glorious. God's in his heaven still. So forward, brave hearts. To what adventures, I cannot tell, but I know that God is waiting to see if you are adventurous.

SIR J. M. BARRIE

My idea is this: Ever onward! If God had intended that man should go backward he would have given him an eye in the back of his head.

VICTOR HUGO

We may profitably recall the words of Marshal Foch in August, 1914. In a message to Marshal Joffre he wrote:

My right has been rolled up; my left has been driven

*back; my centre has been smashed. I have ordered an
advance from all directions.*

Thus he won the first battle of the Marne.

O Thou, who art heroic love, keep alive in our hearts that adventurous spirit which makes men scorn the way of safety, so that Thy will be done. So make us, Lord, worthy of those courageous souls who in every age have ventured all in obedience to Thy call, and for whom the trumpets have sounded on the other side.

Run the straight race through God's good grace;
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face,
Life with its path before thee lies;
Christ is the way, and Christ the prize.

JOHN SAMUEL BEWLEY MONSELL

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

ST. PAUL (*Hebrews* xii. 1-2)

Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, 'Do you see yonder wicket gate?'

The man said, 'No.'

Then said the other, 'Do you see yonder shining light?'

He said, 'I think I do.'

Then said Evangelist, 'Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto.'

So I saw in my dream that the man began to run.

JOHN BUNYAN

Then said Christian, You make me afraid, but whither shall I fly to be safe? If I go back to mine own country, that is prepared for fire and brimstone; and I shall certainly perish there. If I can get to the Celestial City, I am sure to be in safety there. I must venture. To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. *I will yet go forward.*

JOHN BUNYAN

Now hallelujahs rise along the road

Our glad feet tread;

Thy love hath shared our sorrow's heavy load;

There's light o'erhead!

Glory to Thee whose love hath led us on,

Glory for all the great things Thou hast done!

LAURA ORMISTON CHANT

It was when a dozen of us was all making a get-away in Greece, sir, about the beginning of April, 1941. The Germans was hard on our tracks, and our lorry was knocked out all of a sudden—radiator blown clean off. So we had to run for it; and then a plane came over, and dropped a stick of bombs, and poor old Arty, a pal o' mine all along, got hit. He went down like a ninepin, and we all stopped.

It sort of shook me, sir, and I lifted his head up, and he opened his eyes, and he says—with his face all screwed up something awful—and in a voice that was not his at all: 'Jimmy,' he says, 'you feather-head, don't stay here. They can't catch *me*, so you and the boys go on!'

A Private in the Second World War

John Charlton died while leading an attack in the First World War. His last words were spoken to a

soldier who stopped to ask if he could do anything, 'Is that you, Joe?' whispered the dying hero. 'For God's sake, sonny, push on!'

The curious thing is that in turn I feel myself of no importance and of all importance; an outcast and an angel, the master of circumstances and the sport of circumstances, the most perishable of things and the most enduring of things—each of these things in turn, on different days of the week and on different hours of the same day.

There are days when, so far from lacking faith, all the terrestrial faiths put together seem to make too little demand on my capacity for believing; and there are days when I seem to be equally without past or future or anchorage to the present.

I have questioned all sorts of religious people, and I gather that their emotions are essentially the same as mine, though they use phrases about them which do not come easily to my lips. And this is good for them and for me. Any religion would be a calamity which quenched this sense of the great human adventure in the unknown. There is no certainty which can be other than dull, hard, and materialistic compared with the infinite hopes and possibilities of this spiritual quest.

J. A. SPENDER

And it came to pass when the time was come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

ST. LUKE writing of his hero,
Jesus (*Luke ix. 51*)

Go to it!

A slogan in the Second World War

They must upward still and onward who would
keep abreast of truth.

J. R. LOWELL

Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable
changes

On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated
—so:

Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look
behind the Ranges—

‘Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and
waiting for you. Go!’

RUDYARD KIPLING in *The Explorer*

It is not a comfortable world for souls who would
be comfortable. It is not designed to be comfortable.
It is planned to keep mankind on the trek. Life is
not a boarding-house; it is a line of march. From the
beginning all things which have life have struggled to
create the perfect environment, and always some
catastrophic force or slow inexorable pressure has
tumbled their plans with a stern ‘Here is no abiding
place—forward, march.’

From *Sunwise*, by SIDNEY F. WICKS

Believe not those who say
The upward path is smooth,
Lest thou shouldst stumble in the way
And faint before the truth.

It is the only road
Unto the realms of joy;
But he who seeks that blest abode
Must all his powers employ.

Arm, arm thee for the fight!
Cast useless loads away;
Watch through the darkest hours of night;
Toil through the hottest day.

ANNE BRONTË

After forty years I remember his step, a characteristic forward tread, firm, simple, resolute, neither fast nor slow, no hurry and no dawdling, *but which evidently meant getting there.*

DR. TAYLOR of David Livingstone

There is no law more distinctly divine than that which says, *Onwards!*

G. F. WATTS

Joys are our wings. Sorrows are our spurs.

JEAN PAUL RICHTER

One of the most important things in life is, not where we stand, but in what direction we are going.

GEORGE HERBERT

O toiling hands of mortals! O unwearied feet travelling ye know not whither. Soon, soon, it seems to you, you must come forth upon some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.

R. L. STEVENSON

Jesus, on whom be peace, has said: *The world is*

merely a bridge. Ye are to pass over it, and not to build your dwellings on it.

Inscription on a mosque at Agra

No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Jesus (*St. Luke ix. 62*)

Mr. Lloyd George once related to me a story told by a celebrated Welsh preacher. It was about a lamp, a rather broken lamp, as it seemed, dented, cracked, weather-beaten. The farmer's wife carried it, and said to the preacher: 'You are to stay with us away on the hillside, and this lamp will show us the way.' Seeing the preacher's doubt about the lamp, she added: 'Fear not, it will guide thee home.'

SYDNEY WALTON in *The Sieve of Blindness*

It is right to be contented with what we have, never with what we are.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH

Keep on looking for the bright, bright skies,
Keep on hoping that the sun will rise,
Keep on singing when the whole world sighs,
And you'll get there in the morning.

Keep on ploughing when you've missed the crops,
Keep on dancing when the fiddle stops,
Keep on faithful till the curtain drops,
And you'll get there in the morning.

A Queensland school song

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but *go!*
ROBERT BROWNING IN *Rabbi Ben Ezra*

'A voice,' Martin Luther cried, 'a voice calls within
me, and calls imperiously, *Come higher, and still higher!*'

Per ardua ad astra (Through difficulties to the stars).
Motto of the Royal Air Force

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.
H. W. LONGFELLOW

We are going strong for the top.
Last words of Mallory and Irvine
as they went to their deaths near
the summit of Mt. Everest

Mighty Spirit, dwell with me:
I myself would mighty be,
Mighty so as to prevail
Where unaided man must fail;
Ever by a mighty hope
Pressing on and bearing up.
T. T. LYNCH

Spirit who makest all things new,
Thou ledest onward; we pursue
The heavenly march sublime.
'Neath Thy renewing fire we glow,
And still from strength to strength we go,
From height to height we climb.
THOMAS HORNBLLOWER GILL

God, give me hills to climb,
And strength for climbing!

ARTHUR GUITERMAN

Hitch your wagon to a star.

Old proverb

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

J. G. HOLLAND

HEROES AND HEROINES

LET us think about courage and have fellowship with men and women who have shown it, not only on the battlefield but in the duties of the common day. Let us also remind ourselves that failure need be no disgrace. Wherever there is bravery in face of danger or difficulty there is something fine, something to confirm our faith in human nature, and especially in its vast possibilities for good.

I am devilishly afraid, that's certain; but I'll sing that I may seem valiant.

JOHN DRYDEN

Fortune favours the brave.

TERENCE

God helps the brave.

SCHILLER

I think even lying on my bed I can still do something.

DOROTHEA LYNDE DIX, a few days before her death

Be strong, and quit yourselves like men.

1 *Samuel* iv. 9

When John died at thirty-three, leaving her with two children, the eldest only eight, she told me that she just couldn't go on. But she went on. She took in lodgers, and slaved from morning till night, gave

both bairns a good education, wore cheap clothes herself though the children always looked well-dressed, and conquered failure and heartbreak a hundred times a day. If that isn't courage, the courage of the battlefield, tell me what courage is.

A friend in a letter to the compiler

That's courage—to take hard knocks like a man when occasion calls.

PLAUTUS, a Roman poet
who lived in 200 B.C.

The greatest test of courage is to bear defeat without losing heart.

R. G. INGERSOLL

Out of every honest purpose earnestly pursued a man must emerge stronger and better for his effort, even though the result fall far short of the accomplishment of his undertaking.

FORBES LINDSAY

I give thanks to-day, and with the utmost sincerity and solemnity, for the intrinsic difficulty of my task.

GEORGE A. GORDON

There's many a good bit of work done with a sad heart.

GEORGE ELIOT

By all means begin your book, even if the doctor does not give you a year; even if he hesitates about a month; make one brave push and see what can be done in a week.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Do not give in yet.

I do not know what your grief or trouble may be. Perhaps one thing after another has come to shatter all your hopes. Perhaps the one you love best has been taken from you. Perhaps you are face to face with a great ordeal. Perhaps your highest joy has suddenly crumbled into utter misery and disillusionment. Whatever it is, here you are, it may be, blankly staring into darkness. You have tried and failed. You dare not, you cannot fail again.

I wish I could come and sit a little while with you, and let you tell me all that is in your heart. As it is, I want, not cheaply or easily, to assure you that *your duty is to keep on.*

Do not give way to despair. Do not think of finishing things. Think, rather, of beginning again.

Keep on—however dark the way. Keep on, and the light will come to you.

From a sermon

Describing a colliery accident H. M. Tomlinson gives us this picture of miners at Normanton, and of an unwashed hero of peace:

The miners who were not selected to go down were angry; they violently abused the favouritism of the officials who would not let them risk their lives.

I have a new regard for my fellows since Great Barr. About you and me there are men like that. There is nothing to distinguish them. They show no signs of greatness. They have common talk. They have coarse ways. They walk with an ugly lurch. Their eyes are not eager. They are not polite. Their clothes are dirty. They live in cheap houses on cheap food. They call you 'sir'. They are the great unwashed, the mutable many, the common people.

The common people! Greatness is as common as that. There are not enough honours and decorations to go round. Talk of the soldier! *Vale* to Welsby of Normanton! He is dead. His fellows were in danger, their wives were white-faced and their children were crying, and he buckled on his harness and went to the assault with no more thought for self than great men have in a great cause; and he is dead. I saw him go to his death. I wish I could tell you more of Welsby of Normanton.

We are pegging out in a comfortless spot. We are showing that Englishmen can still die with a bold spirit, fighting it out to the end.

I may not have proved a great explorer, but we have done the greatest march ever made and come very near to great success.

We are in a desperate state, feet frozen, no fuel, and a long way from food; but it would do your heart good to be in our tent, to hear our songs, and the cheery conversation as to what we will do when we get to Hut Point.

(*Later*): We are very near the end, but will not lose our good cheer.

CAPTAIN SCOTT writing to Sir J. M.
Barrie shortly before the end

Duncan, lying off the Texel with his own flagship, the *Venerable*, and only one other vessel, heard that the whole Dutch fleet was putting to sea. He told Captain Hotham to anchor alongside of him in the narrowest part of the channel, and fight his vessel till she sank.

I have taken the depth of the water, added he, and when the 'Venerable' goes down, my flag will still fly.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

He kept the machinery running while working up to his waist in water after his ship had been hit during a bombing attack.

From an official recommendation for an award to a trawler's engineman, quoted in *His Majesty's Minesweepers*, prepared by the Ministry of Information, 1943

True courage is not incompatible with nervousness, and heroism does not mean the absence of fear, but the conquest of it.

HENRY VAN DYKE

He picked up his suit-case, kissed my mother, and hurried off. At the door he called back: 'Tell Aunt Margaret I hadn't time to look in—and remember, hot buttered toast for tea when I come back.'

That was how my father went off to hospital for a major operation. He never came back—but the memory of his gallant leave-taking will be an inspiration to me all my days.

From a private letter
to the compiler

The man so bravely played the man,
He made the fiend to fly.

JOHN BUNYAN

I went to see my uncle in the dressing-station. He was sipping cocoa from a cup without a handle. There was a nasty bruise over his left eye, and his right arm was bandaged. It had been a ghastly night, with incendiaries as well as high-explosive bombs. 'Well?' I asked.

'I'll be all right in an hour or two,' he said. 'I'm

going to try and get a bit of sleep till daylight.
Anything of the house left?’

I shook my head. ‘Nothing,’ I told him.

‘And the garden?’

‘Littered with brick and rubble.’

‘And the Potters across the road?’

‘Every window blown out, of course,’ I said, ‘and all the ceilings down.’

My uncle nodded. ‘All right,’ he said briskly. ‘Go back and tell your aunt I’m none the worse. Get her to lie down, if you can; and then slip along to the Potters and say I’ll be round after breakfast. I’ll soon tidy things up a bit.’

I hid a smile. ‘With one hand?’ I asked.

He winked. ‘There’s nothing the matter with it, really,’ he said in a low voice. ‘Nothing much—but one of these young nurses was just dying to bandage somebody, so I let her have a go. It gave her something to do. Cut along, and tell Mrs. Green that your aunt and I’ll be staying a day or two, if it isn’t too much trouble.’

From an account of an
East Coast raid in 1942

Every trouble has a way of seeming smaller if we
face it boldly.

I’m just a plain chap, but I’ve lived quite a while,
And I’ve seen a few things in my day;
I’ve weathered the storms, and I’ve suffered and wept,
And I’ve trudged uphill most of the way.

Experience shows that it counts scarce at all
If the road be a rough one or plain;
It’s tough if we fall, but we’re never so hurt
That with pluck we can’t step up again.

What happens outside matters little, I think;
After all, it's the spirit within;
And it's thrilling to battle your way to the end
With a song and a prayer . . . and a grin!

In his book, Paths to Happiness, Lord Mottistone writes of a soldier in the First World War:

One for whom I cared deeply was struck while I was near him. I ran to him, but his face was already grey as he lay on the dusty ground.

'Hold on,' I said, 'we'll get a stretcher.' And then the usual inadequate words: 'How are you?'

His face lit up as he turned to me and said, 'Fine.' Then with a shiver he died, a smile on his face.

Failures interest me more, generally, than success. If I am asked why, my answer is that they seem to reveal human nature more truly and more encouragingly than anything else in the world.

The way a man faces failure is the best proof of him. What he has done before matters little if, as the outcome of all, in the grip of final and irretrievable ruin he retains the stature of a man. That places him far more truly than the verdicts of juries or the judgment of society.

Sometimes he may prove his worth more surely by failure than by success, sometimes may only just manage to hold his ground; but if he is able to do that without complaint, and without speaking bitterly of those who have compassed his downfall, even so something stands to his credit, and there is a balance on the right side.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN in
Echo de Paris

A living failure is better than a dead masterpiece.

BERNARD SHAW

Fear to do base unworthy things is valour.
If they be done to us, to suffer them
Is valour too.

BEN JONSON

Every failure teaches a man something, if he will
learn.

CHARLES DICKENS

Says R. L. Stevenson: *It is not only in finished
undertakings that we ought to honour useful labour.*

Man takes account of our failure, but God of our
striving.

ELIZABETH GIBSON

And when the last Great Scorer comes
To write against your name,
He'll not ask if you won or lost,
But how you played the game.

GRANTLAND RICE

It is perfectly true, as we were reading the other
day, that you are never beaten till you think you
are: it is thinking failure that gets you down.

Always imitate the behaviour of the winners when
you lose.

GEORGE MEREDITH

It isn't the thing that's beaten that fails—it's
the thing that lies down.

NEVILLE HOBSON

I went by the dentist's door three times before
I rang the bell—but I *did* ring it.

A schoolboy after having
a tooth extracted

Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Jesus as he hung upon the cross
(*St. Luke* xxiii. 34)

Courage is the thing. All goes if courage goes.

SIR J. M. BARRIE

'Hurry, madam,' urged the Air Raid Warden as the sirens sounded.

'Hurry, indeed!' retorted the old lady, obviously annoyed. 'Hurry . . . and have Hitler boasting of it afterwards? Not likely!'

From a newspaper, August 1940

THE ROUGH ROAD

IT is an odd thing that happy people are not the ones with flowers in their hands but mud upon their shoes—as if the joy of life came, not while we are picking springtime blossoms, but while we are plodding along a hard track. In the following pages are thoughts and tales to inspire us for the strenuous route-march of life in which difficulties and annoyances and worries have to be overcome by sheer pluck and cheerfulness:

I dunno how it comes about, and I guess the Lord don't make mistakes, so may be He goes out of his way a bit to scatter his fairest flowers alongside the roughest roads.

An old farmer talking with a friend
as they followed a cart-track

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

As You Like It (Act 2)

The road to valour is builded by adversity.

ov1D

There was a little chap in our billet whom we called Smiler. His luck was always out. As sure as he counted on having a few hours off he'd be ordered to do a fatigue. If he did get a chance to go into town it almost always rained, or he missed the bus, or the cinema was so crowded that he couldn't get in. But

it never made any difference to Smiler. He seemed to enjoy misfortune as much as good fortune, and he always went to bed whistling, *To-morrow is a lovely day!*

A Private writing to the compiler
during the Second World War

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear.

The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalms xlv

The greater the difficulty, the greater the glory.

CICERO

It is always possible to hold out a little longer.

Jesus said: *Follow me*. That means travelling along the hardest road in the world. It also means joy at every step.

A man of eighty

Giver of the increasing good, take my thanks for all that has made me what I am; for all my yesterdays, their discipline, their pleasant songs, my unanswered prayers, nay, even for those whelming hours in which I have seen how frail I am without Thee. And when the morrow comes, with a new duty or a new truth, may the door of my mind be open, and I at the door to bid them welcome.

ALISTAIR MACLEAN

... We beat St. Hugh's by six goals to one, a rotten game. There's no fun in a match when it's easy to win.

From a schoolboy's letter
to his father

God is the refuge of his saints
When storms of sharp distress invade,
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold Him present with His aid!

ISAAC WATTS

Every trouble comes to you as a boastful giant.
Flee from it, and it grows as it pursues. Stand firm,
face it, and then advance, and, lo, it is but a puny
dwarf which you may presently overcome. Nor is
this all—for the giant's strength is now your own.

An old writer

Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, smile, smile!

GEORGE ASAF writing during
the First World War

Take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them.

Hamlet (Act 3)

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

WILLIAM COWPER

Eh, deary me, I got into such a fit about Jim when
he didn't come home at half-past five. I did, indeed!
And when there was no sign of him at six o'clock,
well, I was all worked up and nearly beside myself,
and I wondered if he'd fallen dead in the street from
heart failure; people do, you know; and then with it
being a bit foggy out of doors I felt a chill come all
over me, it gave me quite a turn, and I knew he'd been
knocked down and killed, for certain. Jim's so

thoughtless, of course, and never looks up and down the road before he steps off the pavement, though it isn't for want of being told by me. And with it being Friday, and Sunday coming in between, as you might say, I was sure Miss Pritchard would never have mourning ready in time for the funeral on Monday, and what would people think—and you could hardly put it off till Tuesday; and when I thought of Jim's new suit upstairs, and such a wonderful crease in the trousers, and him never to have had it on, but lying there all cold and still . . . well, I just broke down, and sobbed like a child till I remembered all at once (it came to me in a flash) that he'd said he had a meeting, and wouldn't be home till after eight. Eh, deary me, what troubles some of us do make for ourselves, don't we?

H. L. GEE

There are times when we cannot see one step ahead of us, but five years later we are eating and sleeping somewhere.

Written by CHRYSIS, a Greek,
over twenty-two centuries ago

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble.

Psalm xxxi. 9

Almighty God, grant we beseech Thee, that we whose trust is under the shadow of Thy wings, may, through the help of Thy power, overcome all evils that rise up against us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A prayer nine hundred years old

Shadows deep have crossed our pathway,

We have trembled in the storm;

Clouds have gathered round so darkly

That we could not see Thy form:

Yet Thy love has never left us
In our griefs alone to be,
And the help each gave the other
Was the strength that came from Thee.

HESTER HAWKINS

At any rate some opposition is a great help to a man. Planes rise against, not with, the wind. Even a head wind is better than none. No man ever worked his way anywhere in a dead calm.

A rear gunner

Life is hard enough for most folk; don't make it harder.

Wayside pulpit

Difficulty and misfortune are like a load of bricks. Some people are crushed by them, others use them for building a wall against despair.

A building contractor

The man who makes the greatest achievement is he who overcomes the greatest number of difficulties.

OWEN WILLIAMS

The good seaman is known in bad weather.

NEVILLE HOBSON

My troubles have been great adventures.

HELEN KELLER—blind, deaf, and
(for most of her life) dumb

My blindness has never made me unhappy for a second of my life.

A Danish girl at Aalborg

O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the

frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright, grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations.

Collect for the Fourth Sunday
after Epiphany

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses.

Psalm cvii. 28

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in our tribulations.

ST. PAUL in his second letter
to the Corinthians (i. 3-4)

Even the woodpecker owes his success to the fact that he uses his head and keeps pecking away until he finishes the job he starts.

COLEMAN COX

She brushed her grey hair from her face as she sat down in her kitchen. 'Yes,' she admitted, 'I'm a bit tired. John's in hospital, as you know, and now Peggy's in bed with 'flu, and I just don't know which way to turn, what with one thing and another, and running up and down stairs—and such a wash-day!'

I nodded. 'Well,' I said, 'you'll keep on somehow. You've overcome bigger troubles in the past.'

'Yes,' she replied in a tired voice. 'Yes, I have. But you know, sometimes big troubles are easier to bear than little ones.'

'How do you mean?'

'There aren't so many of them. It was a great blow when my hubby was out of work all those weeks;

and it was a bigger blow when little Brenda died. But one finds a reserve of courage somewhere and gets over these things. What gets me down is the difficulty of the moment. All the little troubles of the common day seem to take all the fight out of me, and now and then I turn coward, and give way.'

'And after that?'

She had been staring through the kitchen window as she spoke, her lined face worn with care, her eyes misty. But she looked up quickly, and a brave smile came to her lips. 'Why,' she said, 'I have a good cry when nobody's anywhere about, and then, as like as not, I get down on my knees near the kitchen sink and ask God to help me to begin all over again.'

'And He does?'

'Always.'

H. L. GEE

It's dogged as does it. It ain't thinking about it.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE in
Last Chronicles of Barset

Nay, I will spit on my hands, and take better hold.

JOHN HEYWOOD

'Brave admiral, say but one good word:

What shall we do when hope is gone?'

The words leapt like a leaping sword:

'Sail on, sail on, sail on, and on!'

JOAQUIN MILLER in *Columbus*

Let us, then, be up and doing

With a heart for any fate:.

Still achieving, still pursuing,

Learn to labour and to wait.

LONGFELLOW

PRAYER

WATCH and pray.

Jesus (*St. Matthew* xxvi. 41)

Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock
of the night.

GEORGE HERBERT

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall
find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.

St. Matthew (vii. 7)

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.

LORD TENNYSON in *Mort d'Arthur*

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

JAMES MONTGOMERY

Pray without ceasing.

I Thessalonians v. 17

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous
life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes,
until the busy world is hushed and the fever of life is
over, and our work is done.

A prayer four hundred years old

My watch is a good watch, but it stopped about
ten days ago.

I looked at it about four in the afternoon, and it pointed to three. I happened to be only a few yards from a watch-maker's, so—in a hurry though I was—I looked in, handed him my watch, and asked him to see to it. 'Call again next week,' said he.

So I did.

'Well?' I asked, 'is the watch mended?'

He was smiling. 'Yes,' he said.

'How much?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'Just a nominal two guineas,' he replied.

'Is that all?' I asked. 'What was the matter with it, anyway?'

He stroked his chin. 'The matter?' he asked. 'Well, the trouble was neither dirt nor dust. It was not a broken spring. There was nothing wrong with the balance-wheel. The only thing was that you hadn't wound it up. Most watches go better when they are wound up. . . .'

I cannot escape the notion that most people go better if now and then they are still, if now and then they pause to think, if now and then they wind themselves up by praying on their knees.

From an old magazine

New mercies each returning day
Hover around us while we pray.

JOHN KEBLE

I have seen a lark rising from its bed of grass and soar upwards, singing as he rises, hoping to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the vibration and

frequent weighings of his wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over. Then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below. *So is the prayer of a good man.*

JEREMY TAYLOR

No one knows who wrote this prayer, but although it is old it voices the feelings of many of us to-day:

O God, Who art present to Thy faithful people in every place, mercifully hear our prayers for those we love who are now parted from us. Watch over them, we beseech Thee, and protect them in all anxiety, danger, and temptation; and teach us and them to feel and know that Thou art always near, and that we are one in Thee for ever, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

One of my strongest childhood impressions is of my mother going to pray in a room she kept for the purpose on the third floor. She spent hours in prayer, often beginning before dawn. When we asked her advice about anything, she would say: 'I must ask God first,' and we could not hurry her.

Asking God was not a matter of spending five minutes to ask Him to bless her child and grant the request. It meant waiting upon God until she felt His leading.

And I must say, whenever mother prayed and trusted God for her decision, the undertaking invariably turned out well.

MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK

Two men knelt to pray.

Said one: 'Give me what I want, O Lord. Prosper me in business. Listen to my pleadings, and make my way of life easy.'

This man stood up unblessed, for God heard him not.

Said the other: 'O Lord, Thou understandest my thought afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways. Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. See if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

This man arose, went forth to bless others, and in that blessing found joy and peace.

An eighteenth century writer

O Thou Great Chief, light a candle in my heart that I may see what is therein and sweep the rubbish from Thy dwelling-place.

An African girl's prayer

About a dozen of us, including another lance-corporal and two sergeants, used to go apart most Sunday afternoons, if we were free. We took petrol cans to sit on. We held a little open-air service in the desert; and we found we could pray to God just as well there among the sand as in a church or chapel at home. We were always richly blessed.

A lance-corporal writing to the compiler
from the Middle East, October 1942

There has long been much muddled thinking about prayer. There has been some pretence, too. To pray for what we want is a common habit, and it leads invariably to one of two things, either to disappointment and ultimate disillusionment, or to an earnest attempt to delude ourselves into imagining that our prayer has been answered, a gallant but unhappy bit of spiritual self-deception.

The whole matter seems very simple to me. We live in two worlds at the same time, the natural and the spiritual. Few things are easier than losing touch with the spiritual, for getting and spending lay waste our powers, and the common round and daily task are apt to demand our whole and our undivided attention. This is our danger, and prayer is our safeguard. All it means is awareness of that other realm—the realm with which we are kept in touch, in part, by such inspirations as come to us from beautiful things, from stirring music, from deep emotions, from gladness and sorrow, from art and literature and wonder and mystery and meditation. All these, as it were, help to keep our head above the surging stream of life; and prayer belongs to them, but is apart from them, for it is of all means the most precious and direct way of speaking with God and of listening to God's voice.

That voice (except when interpreted by the imagination) is never vocal. But it is none the less real, none the less powerful. As an artist keeps stepping back from his easel that he may paint his picture aright, so the praying man keeps turning aside from the duties or pleasures of life that he may give God an opportunity to guide him, to strengthen him, to simplify his perplexities, to reassure and embolden him, and to give him that sweet communion and glorious kinship with Himself which is of all things most necessary if we are to lead a purposeful, useful, and nicely-balanced existence. All this means that a man may go to church and pray, or stay at home and pray, or pray between receiving a shilling and giving sixpence change across his counter. It means that a woman can pray without bending the knee or turning aside from her kitchen sink. It means that we can pray with a thought, a wish, a momentary

pause while attending a machine, a little mental aside in the midst of a thrilling hour of enjoyment, a silent covenanting with God when we feel almost overwhelmed by sorrow. It means that the most formal and perfunctory printed prayer in a book can become alive and glow in our hearts like a star in the sky because we breathe upon it as we pray it, and the formality at once springs into life, the very bones of it putting on living raiment. It means that an impromptu prayer can become a channel through which God's blessing may reach us; and it means that we have only to long for God at the busy hour of noon or the silent hour of midnight to have our soul instantly opened wide so that God, like a great and flowing tide, may roll into our being, filling us with spiritual energy sufficient to give us serenity and poise and a sense of direction amid all the multitudinous tasks and frets of the physical and practical life.

Those who thus pray—praying as they breathe, as one might say—live a life altogether richer and sweeter than those who have not in them and round about them the fragrance of that other world. Blessings come to them, as to others, but something inside the heart adds more joy to the blessing. Ills overtake them as they overtake us all, but the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune do not fall with full force upon such men and women, for those who pray wear the whole armour of God. To all outward appearances (except perhaps for the calm joy lighting up their faces) those who pray are much as other folk—not immune from the hardness of the common road we all must travel, given no seven league boots with which to stride over the rough places—but strengthened inwardly so that they walk like giants upon the hilltops, seeing ever the hidden good, companions of God in adversity and in triumph.

And let it be remembered that these who walk with God, these who carry heaven about with them in the street, these ordinary men and women living extraordinarily near to God, have all their prayers answered because through daily and hourly communion with Him they only ever long to ask those favours which God is waiting to bestow.

H. L. GEE

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man; help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content, and undishonoured, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Help us this, and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

JOHN KEBLE

O Lord of Courage grave,
O Master of this night of Spring,
Make firm in me a heart too brave
To ask Thee anything.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

This story of H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* is told by H. V. Morton in *Atlantic Meeting*. Just before the British battleship went into action against the German battleship *Bismarck* the ship's chaplain (Rev. W. G. Parker) was called to the bridge by Captain Leach. H. V. Morton continues:

'Padre, we are going into action,' said the captain, 'and we shall need help. I want you to read a prayer

to the ship's company. Can you remember that prayer which begins: "O God, thou knowest how busy I am . . ."?"

'Yes, sir,' replied the padre. 'It's called Sir Jacob Astley's prayer before Edgehill, and I have the words in my cabin.'

'Go, then, and fetch it quickly,' said the captain. 'There's not much time.'

While the battleship, steaming into action, was taut with expectancy, every nerve stretched to meet the explosion of the fourteen-inch guns, instead of the order to fire there came to every corner of the ship, from engine-room to crow's-nest, the sound of the chaplain's voice, saying:

'O Lord, Thou knowest how busy we must be to-day; if we forget Thee, do not Thou forget us; for Christ's sake. Amen.'

Then the guns fired.

THE BOOK OF BOOKS

WHEN we are stirred by the thought of the wonders of the world it may occur to us sometimes that there is nothing much more wonderful than this—that in these days of millions of books, and of thousands of millions of newspapers, there is no other printed page with power to touch the hearts of men as this book does.

ARTHUR MEE in the preface
to his *Children's Bible*

There is a book who runs may read,
Which heavenly truth imparts,
And all the lore its scholars need—
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

JOHN KEBLE

The word of the Lord endureth for ever.

I *Peter* i. 25

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalms cxix. 105

It is a plain old book, modest as nature itself, and as simple, too; a book of an unpretending workaday appearance, like the sun that warms or the bread that nourishes us. The name of this book is the Bible.

HEINRICH HEINE

Come what may, it is certain that to forgo the opportunity, accessible to all, of frequenting this surpassing literature of the Bible, with its grandeur and

abundance—a word of mind and spirit and passionate drama, far transcending the horizons of the little private world we each of us inhabit—is as if one should resolve of set choice to be poor in the midst of plenty and to dwell in a mean street.

LAURENCE BINYON in his introduction to
The Bible Designed to be Read as Literature

It is the chart and compass
That, o'er life's surging sea,
'Mid mists and rocks and quicksands
Still guides, O Christ, to Thee.

BISHOP HOW

Lord, Thy word abideth,
And our footsteps guideth;
Who its truth believeth
Light and joy receiveth.

HENRY WILLIAMS BAKER

It was a common saying among the Puritans:
Brown bread and the Gospel is good fare.

MATTHEW HENRY

Then Sir John Rainsford besought Queen Elizabeth on behalf of four prisoners. Said he: 'I beseech your Majesty that, among the rest, four prisoners may have their liberty.'

'And who are these?' asked the Queen.

'Madam,' he replied, 'they are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, who have long been imprisoned in the Latin tongue, and I now desire that they may go abroad among the people in English.'

Oliver Cromwell addressing the House of Commons declared: *The glory that should dwell in our land is the glory of a free Gospel.*

The higher qualities of our race, our ideals of chivalry, love of justice and hatred of tyranny, of freedom and adventure, are the ideals which our people have learned from the reading of their own English Bible.

EARL BALDWIN

You cannot begin to understand the Englishman until you try to realize the impression left on him generation after generation by the English Bible.

EARL BALDWIN

Our Gracious King, we present unto you with this Book the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom. This is the Royal Law. These are the lively oracles of God.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY addressing the King during the Coronation ceremony

Across the aisle is a small but beautiful bronze of General Gordon, one hand on his breast and one on the Bible.

From a description of St. Paul's
in a London guide-book

I read my Bible every day, gentlemen, and I recommend you to do the same.

GENERAL MONTGOMERY to some of
his officers in North Africa

Few greater, finer, nobler men breathe in the world to-day than Field-Marshal Smuts. He leads a busy life. He has little time to spare. Every moment is precious to him; but no matter how much business he has on hand, *he always finds time to read his Greek Testament.*

We wonder if perhaps this is partly the secret of his strength of character?

From a newspaper, 1943

I have found in it words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterance for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and feebleness.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Break Thou the bread of life,
O Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea.
Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee,
O living Word!

MARY LATHBURY

Yours is a good book, but it disturbs the spirits of my men.

A Japanese officer to a
seller of Bibles

It was in Harrow years ago that John Stirling and I talked together, night after night, hours on end, long after the sun went down. We talked, we dreamed, we glowed, we kindled about a new edition of the Bible, and here at last the flower of glory is before my eyes. That word 'flower' exactly fits. Stirling was in Palestine during the last war. A common English wayside flower, tucked away in the cleft of the wall by the main entrance to Jerusalem, brought the whole endeared English landscape to his mind. The Holy Land was no longer Judea, but his native Homeland. And when in England's fields the

flower was afterwards seen, it always brought the thought that the Holy City could not be far away. Gradually, and somewhat vaguely at first, there came out of this deepening impression the idea that a key to the Bible was to be found in the things common to human life and experience in the setting of the Divine Revelation, and not necessarily in the things peculiar to Palestine or to the far-off centuries of the Bible's story; that to see the setting clearly, with its common universal features giving it a living human interest, was the first step to seeing the definite news-content of the God-given Revelation. So the Bible was read again, and with this thought in mind its pages became transparent.

SYDNEY WALTON in *From
The White Cottage*

One day a year or two ago a Leeds business-man was surprised to receive a Bible. It was sent not to his private address but to his office, an upper room. After glancing at the gift, the Yorkshireman put it on a shelf.

A few weeks later one of his workmen said: 'By the way, sir, I haven't seen you opening that Bible often.'

'Well, no,' began the business-man.

'Why not, sir?'

The owner of the Bible hesitated. At last he said: 'Look here, Joe, would you like to read a chapter with me?'

'I would that, sir,' replied Joe.

So they read one there and then—and together they have read a chapter every morning since.

Adapted from *The Yorkshire Post*

WITHIN THE VEIL

LET us think of those who have passed on, thanking God for all the saints who from their labours rest. The spirits of the dead perish not, but live in our midst, enriching the past, strengthening us from day to day, and challenging us to new endeavours in the future. Of them Arthur Mee once wrote:

There is nothing on the earth to-day so potent and enduring, so present everywhere, as the silent power of that great multitude of heroic souls who have passed to where, beyond these voices, there is peace. They move us day by day; they urge us on; they hold us to our faith; and so we think of them, not as lost or fallen, or as lives crushed out, but as heroes in a triumph now—in some way and in some place beyond our ken—receiving their reward.

May we not add to this thought the comforting assurance given us by Bishop How:

O blest communion, fellowship divine,
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine!
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.

Psalm xxiii. 4

Beyond the cypress tree there is always the sky
An Eastern proverb

I have a great faith in the kindliness of nature, and

I feel sure that whatever happens to this battered old cage of mine, the little bird inside will be all right.

GEORGE MEREDITH

The door of death is made of gold
That mortal eyes cannot behold:
But when the mortal eyes are closed,
And cold and pale the limbs reposed,
The soul awakes, and wondering sees
In her mild hand the golden keys.

WILLIAM BLAKE

Of this, at least, I still feel certain: that whether or not the spirit of man is destined for some unknown flowering in a life hereafter, the benevolence of the good and the courage of the undefeated remain, like the creative achievements of the richly gifted, a part of the heritage of humanity for ever. As such they attain their own shining immortality, though it is not without individual experience.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil.

VERA BRITAIN in *Testament of Friendship*,
the story of Winifred Holtby.

Life, we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear:
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;

Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not, *Good night*, but in some brighter clime
Bid me, *Good morning*!

ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD

Bleak is the aspect of the house of Grief, but
Courage drapes the room with rosy hue, and Faith,
too, adds soft lines for its relief, and lo, Joy knocks,
attracted by the view!

WILHELMINA STITCH

For those we love within the veil,
Who once were comrades of our way,
We thank Thee, Lord; for they have won
To cloudless day.

Not as we knew them any more,
Toilworn, and sad with burdened care—
Erect, clear-eyed, upon their brows
The name they bear.

WILLIAM CHARTER PIGGOTT

He's gone.
I do not understand:
I only know
That as he turned to go
And waved his hand
In his young eyes a sudden glory shone,
And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,
And he was gone.

WILFRID GIBSON in a
tribute to Rupert Brooke

I cannot say, and I will not say,
That he is dead! He is just away!

With a cheery smile, and a wave of the hand,
He has wandered into an unknown land.

And left us dreaming how very fair
It must be, since he lingers there.

And you (O you, who the wildest yearn
For the old-time step and the glad return)

Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here;

Mild and gentle as he was brave,
When the sweetest love of his life he gave

To simple things; where the violets grew,
Pure as the eyes they were likened to.

The touches of his hands have strayed
As reverently as his lips have prayed.

Think of him still as the same, I say;
He is not dead—he is just away!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

These verses, said to have been written by Robert Louis Stevenson, may bring comfort to all who have lost a friend:

Though he that, ever kind and true,
Kept stoutly step by step with you,
Your whole, long, lusty lifetime through,
Be gone a while before;
Yet, doubt not, soon the season shall restore
Your friend to you.

He is not dead, this friend; not dead,
But on some road, which mortals tread,
Got some few trifling steps ahead,

And nearer to the end:
So that you, too, once past the bend,
Shall meet again, as face to face, this friend
You fancy dead.

Push gaily on, brave heart; the while
You travel forward mile by mile
He loiters, with a backward smile,
Till you can overtake;
And strains his eyes to search his wake
Or, whistling as he sees you through the brake,
Waits on a stile.

Let not your heart be troubled.

Jesus (*St. John* xiv. 1)

Here is a letter to Charles Lamb:

I charge you, my dearest friend, not to dare to encourage gloom or despair. You are a temporary sharer in human miseries that you may be an eternal partaker of the Divine nature.

I remain, your affectionate,

SAMUEL COLERIDGE

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are
the everlasting arms.

Deuteronomy xxxiii. 27

A while ago it chanced that I was free on New Year's Eve and I went gladly to spend the last hour of the year with my mother. She had been frail and lonely since my father died, but she never surrendered her faith to the storm. As I sat in the little room where she lay, our thoughts roamed back over the years. Memory after memory rose before us, till

there came a point where I could go back no farther. She stretched out her hand to reach the watch, which she kept on the table beside her. 'It is a quarter to twelve,' she said, which, being interpreted, meant: 'Let us be quiet a little, now. . . .' It was very still in the room, as still as I think it must be at the gate of Heaven. I suppose the minutes ticked away; I did not notice them—mine only to wait in a great silence. I looked at her face. A miracle had happened. I had never seen her like that before, though I think my father had. She was seventy years old, yet I saw her as though she had been but seventeen. I was in the little room, but she was, as the Scots say, 'far ben' in the secret place with God. Presently her thin hand reached out again, though there was no need for the watch. 'It's twelve o'clock, my boy,' she said. 'A new year has begun. God bless you.' As I stooped towards that shining face I knew the Master had spoken truth when He said, 'Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' She did not end that year on earth. Why should she? She had begun it in Heaven.

From *In the Storm*, by the
Rev. Dr. Leslie F. Church

In a quiet churchyard in Sussex is a simple grave which bears this lovely inscription: *Gone home with a Friend.*

REV. WILLIAM J. MAY

In the remote parts of the countryside old people still say of those who die, *They have gone home.*

EARL BALDWIN

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

St. Matthew v. 4

This is how (in a letter to a friend) Robert Browning describes the passing of his dear and wonderful wife:

God took her. She suffered very little pain, and was spared the misery of knowing she was about to leave us; she was smilingly assuring me she was better to within a few minutes of the last.

Then came what my heart will keep till I see her again, and longer, the most perfect expression of her love to me within my whole knowledge of her—always smilingly, happily, and with a face like a girl's; and in a few minutes she died in my arms, her head on my cheek.

God took her to Himself as you would lift a sleeping child from a dark, weary bed into the light.

Standing, as I do, in the view of God and Eternity, I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards any one.

EDITH CAVELL, about to be shot

Now, while they were thus drawing towards the gate, behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them; to whom it was said by the other two shining ones, *These are the men that have loved our Lord when they were in the world, and that have left all for His Holy Name, and He hath sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far on their desired journey, that they may go in and look their Redeemer in the face with joy.*

There came out also at this time to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who, with melodious noises and loud, made even the heavens to echo with their sound. These trumpeters saluted Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world, and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet.

This done, they compassed them round on every side: some went before, some went behind, and some on the right hand, some on the left (as 'twere to guard them through the upper regions), continually sounding as they went with melodious noise, in notes on high; so that the very sight was, to them that could behold it, as if heaven itself were come down to meet them.

Thus, therefore, they walked on together. And now were these two men as 'twere in heaven, before they came to it, being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing of their melodious notes. Here also they had the city itself in view, and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto, but, above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there, with such company, and that for ever and ever.

Oh, by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed! And thus they came up to the gate.

Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, *Enter ye unto the joy of your Lord.*

JOHN BUNYAN

It is not darkness you are going to, for God is Light. It is not lonely, for Christ is with you. It is not an unknown country, for Christ is there.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

So shall it be at last, in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;
O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought—

I am with Thee!

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

The gardener asked, 'Who plucked this flower?'
The Master said, 'I plucked it for Myself,' and the
gardener held his peace.

Epitaph in Sellack Churchyard

Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here.
Warm southern wind,
Blow softly here.
Green sod above,
Lie light, lie light.
Good night, dear heart,
Good night, good night.

Epitaph written by MARK TWAIN
for his wife

There is no failure in the purposes of God. We
may sleep, and the bodily temples we inhabit may
pass through changes rich and strange; but we move
on with all created things, from step to step, from
realms we know to realms beyond our dreams, until
at last the morning breaks, and the shadows flee away.

ARTHUR MEE

Death is the gate of life.

ST. BERNARD

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea . . .
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

LORD TENNYSON

There the wicked cease from troubling; and there
the weary be at rest.

Job iii. 17

Life's race well run,
Life's work well done,
Life's victory won,
Now cometh rest.

Epitaph on an old nurse

As the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said, 'Adsum,' and fell back. It was the word we used at school when names were called; and, lo, he whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of the Master.

W. M. THACKERAY in
The Newcomes

To die would be an awfully big adventure.

SIR JAMES BARRIE

There is no guide book to heaven, no wealth of detail, no answer to a hundred questions which frame themselves within the mind.

But if we know, on the highest Authority, that there is no sin, no sorrow, and no pain: if we know on the same Authority, that there is service, growth, and bliss, is it not enough? Can we not journey through these dark days in cheerfulness and confidence, giving a word and a hand to others who will travel at our side, and not clutching too tightly at the things of earth?

Nor need any fearful soul wonder if we shall know each other there. To doubt it would make nonsense of almost everything the New Testament says upon

the subject. We are the children of One 'able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think'.

To meet my dear ones who have passed over before me is a constant theme of my thought, and will be all but the first of my requests.

'Above all that you can ask or think . . .'

Above!

REV. DR. W. E. SANGSTER in
These Things Abide

John is enjoying his first real holiday very much,
I am sure.

The widow of a busy man

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying,
Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he
will dwell with them, and they shall be his people.
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;
and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor
crying, neither shall there be any more pain. And
he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make
all things new.

Revelation of St. John xxi. 3-5

Now God be with you, my dear children. I have
breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord
Jesus Christ.

ROBERT BRUCE as he lay dying

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes!
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies!
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows
flee:

In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

Written by the REV. H. F. LYTE
shortly before his death

These are my drowsie days, in vain
I do now sleep to wake again:
O come that hour when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

In one of Mary Kingsley's books is a story of a West African medicine-man who found himself at death's door.

He applied all his herbs and spells, and conducted all his well-known rites before his idols, and with his friends' intercessions, without any effect. At last he wearied of his hocus-pocus, took his idols and charms down to the seashore, and flung them into the surf; and he said, 'Now I will be a man and meet my God alone.'

CHARLES LISTER

We owe it to the dead not to let ourselves be crushed. Saddened we must be, but not broken, not weaker, or less resolute to fight out to the end what is truly the Battle of Life.

LORD MILNER

When I go down to the grave I can say, like many others, I have finished my day's work. But I cannot say I have finished my life. My day's work will begin again next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens on the dawn.

VICTOR HUGO

Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised

incorruptible, and we shall be changed: For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; ye know that your labour is not in vain.

ST. PAUL (1 *Corinthians* xv. 51-58)

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