

Poetry, Songs & Various Writings

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The Latent Soul - Greg W

this latent soul sees images of decaying rose pedals falling no where and yet more then free do they fall...

(where are the voices?)

ever growing wearier in deed and wrought with action, they toil, they spin, they move -

as if they promote death, configure they ways of travel.

burnt sign posts; illegible guides -

does this trouble you?

[wondering feet are marching on the edge of fields guarded by burning apathetic scarecrows who smile and doubt. (where are the voices?)]

empty and moist are my efforts alone.

where

are

the

voices

?

storm clouds slowly smile and wink at me... they laugh and reach thier hands to take ignorant sailors. they snare at me... they mock me. they rumble in laughter as they take the sailors.

shadows walk in uninterrupted and steal the sleeping baby.

Jesus, I need your Holy Spirit. I need your help, and your burden.

break me

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The Lonely Olive Mill

by Annie Johnson Flint (1866-1932)

Matthew 26:36 — Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

Gethsemane: means "oil-press"; the name of an olive-yard at the foot of the Mount of Olivess, to which Jesus was in the habit of retiring (Luke 22:39) with his disciples, and which is specially memorable as being the scene of his agony.

There's a peaceful vale in a sunny land
Where the hills keep guard around,
And the soft breeze stirs the olive trees
And the grass that clothes the ground.

And in the hush and solitude
Where even the birds are still,
There stands untended and alone
An ancient olive mill.

Through the long bright day the mill wheel turns
And the fruit is crushed by the stone,
And quietly drips the fragrant oil
In silence and alone.

But somewhere out in the circling hills,
Unseen, unheard, unknown,
The Master of the olive mill
Is mindful of his own.

So many hours the wheel must turn,
And stone on stone must grind,
And then he will come to his olive mill,
His need of oil to find.

He knows how heavy the weight must be,
How long to let it lie,
Ere he can gather the precious oil

And throw the refuse by.

O child of God, are you being crushed
'Neath trial, pain or woe?
No eye to pity, no ear to hear,
No voice to whisper low?

Alone in your Gethsemane,
Christ watches with you there.
He will not suffer one ounce of weight
More than your strength can bear.

He chasteneth but to purify;
He crusheth but to raise;
In love he worketh his blessed will
To his glory's endless praise.

In our affliction, afflicted still
He leaveth us not alone;
He will not forget, he will not forsake,
He is mindful of his own.

Short Biography of Annie Johnson Flint

"a pretty, dark-eyed girl, with a clear olive complexion, and long black curls. She was kindhearted, merry and vivacious-a general favorite with the boys and girls at school."

Annie Johnson Flint was born on Christmas Eve 1866, in the little town of Vineland, New Jersey.

The only remembrance of her mother because of her untimely death in delivering Annie's baby sister was in the face of her sister.

The father took the children to board with the widow of an old army comrade who had been killed in the Civil War. It was not a happy arrangement. The woman had two children of her own and her means were very limited. They were evidently **unwelcome and unwanted**.

"Aunt Susie" (no blood relation) a school teacher talked so much about the two girls to her landlords Mr. and Mrs. Flint that two years after their mother's death, the Flints took the two Johnson girls into their home as their own.

Two things made Mr. Johnson willing to part with the children: first, he was suffering at the time with an incurable disease from which he shortly afterwards died; second, the Flints offered a home after his own desire. They were Baptists, and Mr. Johnson was very anxious that the children should be brought up in the Baptist faith. Later Annie was converted in a Methodist revival meeting at age 8. She strongly opposed the idea that young children cannot apprehend spiritual truths.

When she was fourteen the family went to Camden, New Jersey, and there the two girls continued their schooling. A friend wrote about this time: "Every Saturday afternoon we met, as a select literary society of two to read our favorite poets, and then we attempted verse ourselves."

Whether by nature or through her early Christian experience, Annie was generally disposed to be cheerful and optimistic.

Then she had a generous nature, and was ever ready to share what she had with others, and was ever more willing to grant favors than to accept them.

Annie was very human, and she herself had left a record of the glaring faults as she saw them. While still a child she had a very quick temper which flared up on slight provocation, but as quickly died down.

She never claimed entire freedom from this tendency, but she had learned the secret of grace in overcoming.

Her likes and dislikes were intense. She admits further that if she was accused of something she had not done and for which she was unjustly reproved, she indulged in sulky spells which lasted far longer than the storm of temper.

But she records her greatest fault as lack of patience, with herself as well as others.

She started teaching the primary class in the same school that she had attended as a girl. According to her contract with the normal school she taught for three years, though early in the second year **arthritis** began to show itself. She tried several doctors in turn, but it steadily grew worse until it became difficult for her to walk at all, and she had a hard time finishing out the third year. After that she was obliged to **give up her work**, and there followed three years of increasing helplessness.

The death of both her adopted parents within a few months of each other left the two girls alone again. There was little money in the bank and the twice-orphaned children had come to a real "Red Sea Place" in their lives. It was just then that the faithful Aunt Susie again came to the rescue. She had been in the Sanitarium at Clifton Springs, New York and was convinced that Annie could find help and healing there. Accordingly arrangements were made for Annie to go and she was to have the rent of the house she was leaving for her income.

Picture if you can the hopelessness of Annie's position when she finally received the verdict of the doctors of the Clifton Springs Sanitarium, that henceforth she would be a helpless invalid. Her own parents had been taken from her in childhood, and her foster parents both passed away. Her one sister was very frail and struggling to meet her own situation bravely. Annie was in a condition where she was compelled to be dependent upon the care of others who could not afford to minister to her except as compensated by her. In after years she always stated that her poems were born of the need of others and not from her own need

- **With a pen pushed through bent fingers** and held by **swollen joints** she wrote first without any thought that it might be an avenue of ministry, or that it would bring her returns that might help in her support. Her verses provided a solace for her in the long hours of suffering. Then she began making hand-lettered cards and gift books, and decorated some of her own verses.
- Her "Christmas Carols" became popular. Two card publishers printed these greetings and this helped to get her foot on the first rung of the ladder of support.
- One of the lessons which she learned in connection with the **life of faith** was that she could not dictate to the Lord as to how He was to supply the need.
- (Opposed to receiving charity) She said, "You know Jesus Christ said 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' but how can there be any givers to whom the blessing can come unless there are those who are willing to receive?"
- But there came times of real trial and testing.
- Sales sometimes fell off, and extra needs pressed in.
- Sometimes for considerable periods she had to have a trained nurse.
- There were doctor's bills running up, and then too she was under pressure of many other trials;
- One of her sweetest sonnets which she says was born of experience of another would never have found expression if it had not been for her own trials. The special incident that drew it forth was the visit of a little, tired, discouraged deaconess to Clifton Springs. She used to call and tell her troubles to Annie, and when she left and went back to the west, she wrote saying how blue she felt, and how down hearted, and she didn't see why God allowed such hard things to come into her life. Annie put her answer in a poem. Nothing sweeter ever came from her pen. She titled it : "**WHAT GOD HATH PROMISED**".

But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

- Some friends criticized and challenged her faith. As her story became known far and wide it was natural that she should receive many visitors. Many of these were sincerely interested in her welfare. Among them were some who strongly believed that healing of the body was for every child of God in this life. ...
- The last years of her life brought her no ease from her affliction, no lessening of pain and suffering. Yet, we think that those closing years she really exemplified more than ever some of the sweetness of her earlier verses.

In Annie's own notes, her affliction receives little notice. She would have it so. Although crippled, she did not consider herself helpless and that she could do nothing but bemoan her lot.

No one but God and she knew what suffering she endured as the disease became worse with the passing of the years, and new complications developed.

- Her last words were: "I have nothing to say. It's all right."