

A LIFE OF ONE PILGRIM

BY MAY NEEDHAM

He was weary of the struggles and the vanities of life,
He was weary of the working and the ceaseless, grinding strife,
He had met with disappointments and had felt the keenest pain,
Had endured severest trials until life itself seemed vain.

So for days his tired spirit struggled to recover hope—
Hope which seemed as lost forever as the water from the slope.
Then one day a harder trial came than he had borne before,
Then what seemed so dark and dreary fain would he recall once more.

For he saw with vision clear the tenderness, and boundless love
That had been bestowed upon him by his Father, God above.
Even yet he feared the going out into the world again
For he feared its grasp relentless and its struggling—just for gain.

But he went—he passed a streamlet rippling quietly along,
And from shady elm tree near it heard a bird's sublimest song.
Dreaming not in stream or birdsong he should find surcease of care—
Now he found within them something which revealed God's smile was there.

After this his eyes seemed opened and he saw God's loving hand
Manifested in the sunshine, on the water, on the land.
And with smiles of men and women felt he never all alone
For a stream of love seemed flowing from God's soul into his own.

Soft at night he said he'd trust Him in whatever he must meet,
He would go where'er God sent him—go with eager, willing feet.
Said this promise over softly, then as still as came the night,
Sped in first a tiny glimmer, then his room was filled with light.

And he saw at first but dimly, outlines of a loving face,
Filled it was with true compassion, lighted by a heavenly grace.
And a voice so soft and gentle said to him with pitying smile,
"Know ye not that I am with thee, will be with thee all the while?"

Then in tone of tender pity, "Ah, my child, can'st thou not see
Suffering is the tie which binds thee to each other and to me?
If thou wilt only, only trust me—put thy hand within mine own,
I will lead thee never failing up unto my Father's throne.

"Only, child, while thou are striving to those heights to rise so fleet,
Do not scorn to look below thee—help the fallen at thy feet."
'Twas long ago he saw this vision, but even yet he sees the smile,
Hears the tender tones of Jesus: "I am with thee all the while."