

POEMS OF PROBLEMS

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Poems of problems by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

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PROBLEMS**

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BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



W. B. CONKEY COMPANY

CHICAGO

1914

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ARROW AND BOW



It is easy to stand in the pulpit or in
the closet to kneel
And say—"God do this; God do
that—
"Make the world better; relieve the
sorrows of man; for the sake of
thy son
"Oh forgive all sin." Then having planned out
God's work, to feel
Our duty is done.
It is easy to be religious this way.
Easy to pray.

It is harder to stand on the highway, or walk in
the crowded mart;
And say "I am He; I am He;
"Mine the world burden; mine the sorrows of
men; mine is the Christ work
"To forgive my brother's sin; and then to live
the Christ part
And never to shirk.
It is hard for you and me
To be religious this way.
Day after day.

But God is no longer in heaven; we drove him
out with our prayers;
Drove him out with our sermons and creeds,
and our endless complaints and despairs.
He came down over the borders, and Christ too
came along;
They are looking the whole world over to see just
what is wrong.
God has grown weary of hearing his praises
sung on earth;
And Jesus is weary of hearing the story about
his birth;
And the way to win their favor, that is surer
than any other,
Is to join in a song of Brotherhood and praises
of one another.

No, God is no longer in heaven; He has come
down on earth to see
That nothing is wrong with the world He made;
THE WRONG IS IN YOU AND ME.
He meant the earth for a garden spot, where
mill and factory stand;
Childhood he meant for growing time; but look
at the toiling hand!
Woman was meant for mother and mate; now
look at the slaves of lust.
And the good folks shake their heads and say
"We must pray to God and trust."

God has a billion books of our prayers unopened
upon his shelves,
For the things we are begging of him to do,
He wants us to do ourselves.

Jehovah, Jesus, and each soul in space
Are one, and undividable: Until
We see God shining in each neighbor's face
And find Him in ourselves and hail Him there,
Let us be still.

What use is prayer,
How can we love the whole, and not each part?
How worship God, and harbor in the heart
Hate of God's members (for all men are that).
Too long our souls have sat,
Like poor blind beggars at the door of God.
He never made a beggar—We are kings!
Let us rise up, for it is time we trod
The mountain-tops; time that we did the things
We have so long asked God to do.

He waits for you
To look deep in your brother's eyes and see
The God within;
To hear you say "Lo, thou art He; Lo, thou
art He."

This is the only way to end all sin.
The difficult, one way.

*A prayer without a deed is an arrow without a
bow-string;*

*A deed without a prayer is a bow-string without
an arrow.*

*The heart of a man should be like a quiver full
of arrows,*

*And the hand of a man should be like a strong
bow strung for action.*

*The heart of a man should keep his arrows ever
ascending,*

*And the hand and the mind of a man should
keep at a work unending.*

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

HUSKS

SHE looked at her neighbour's house in
the light of the waning day—
A shower of rice on the steps, and
the shreds of a bride's bouquet.
And then she drew the shade, to shut
out the growing gloom,
But she shut it into her heart instead. (Was that
a voice in the room?)

'My neighbour is sad,' she sighed, 'like the
mother bird who sees
The last of her brood fly out of the nest to make
its home in the trees'—
And then in a passion of tears—'But, oh, to be
sad like her:
Sad for a joy that has come and gone!' (Did
some one speak, or stir?)
She looked at her faded hands, all burdened with
costly rings;

She looked on her widowed home, all burdened
with priceless things.

She thought of the dead years gone, of the empty
years ahead—

(Yes, something stirred and something spake, and
this was what it said:)

*'The voice of the Might Have Been speaks here
through the lonely dusk;*

*Life offered the fruits of love; you gathered only
the husk.*

*There are jewels ablaze on your breast where
never a child has slept.'*

She covered her face with her ringed old hands,
and wept and wept and wept.