

**SABBATH HALTINGS IN LIFE'S
WILDERNESS; OR, SACRED
POEMS FOR EVERY SUNDAY
IN THE YEAR, PP. 1-179**

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by H. Outis

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BY H. OUTIS.



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1860.

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DEDICATION.

TO the only friend who has been cognizant of his labours the Author would affectionately dedicate this volume, which, whatever its merits, has been much improved by his suggestions.

Should the approval of the public ratify the commendatory criticisms of that friend, the Author will no longer deny himself the high gratification and pride of associating with his own a name which for twenty years has prompted every feeling of esteem and love.



INTRODUCTION.

A LITTLE volume like the present would require no Introduction were it not to anticipate and remove an objection with which, it is only too obvious, it will have to contend.

There are few persons to whom it will not occur that I am venturing upon ground not only preoccupied, but most successfully maintained, by the Author of the "Christian Year;" and that I must therefore expect to be challenged at the threshold with the inquiry, whether I am an imitator, or a rival, or possibly an intruder. Now I hope that a few words in explanation of my views will show that I have not been guilty of sufficient temerity to be obnoxious to the charge of being either.

A glance at almost any of the following lyrics will be sufficient to show that I am not an imitator, either in design or execution. It is true that I have written a sacred poem for every Sunday in the year; and that the subject has

been suggested by the services in the Book of Common Prayer for that particular Sunday; as is generally the case in the admirable volume referred to: nay, it is even true (*væ mihi!*) that I have been irresistibly led, in some few instances, to attempt to illustrate the same subject as the author of that volume; yet would I affirm—however disparaging to myself the avowal may be—that nothing can exemplify the distinct originality of the present work more forcibly than a perusal (I deprecate a comparison) of any two poems on the same text: so great, so marvellous, is the diversity of human minds!

If I have occasionally fallen into the same train of thought, which, of course, I have prudently avoided as much as possible, it may be accounted for, not only by a certain similarity of the general plan, but by the circumstances that for many years the poem for the day in the “*Christian Year*” has formed a portion of my appointed reading. Such coincidences, however, are extremely rare; for it is one of the characteristics of the great source from which we have both drawn, that its precious truths present new and ever-varying beauties, according to the aspect in which they are viewed.

The two works manifest an essential difference in the design of their respective writers; for while the author of the “*Christian Year*” has

devoted himself to one particular object, that of presenting "a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion," and has toned down his colours into a monochrome harmony, if I may be allowed the expression, to promote that object, and to exhibit "the *soothing* tendency of the Prayer Book;" it has been my chief aim to arouse and excite the mind to a more comprehensive and practical view of its own duties and destinies, as unfolded Sunday after Sunday, with equal variety and beauty, in the services of the Church of England. I have taken my starting-point from those services, as having, amongst other irresistible recommendations, that of being always specially adapted to the seasons both of the sacred and civil year; but I have attempted a range as ample and discursive as Christianity itself; which, I have endeavoured to show, embraces, in its manifold relations to our moral and intellectual faculties, all

"The bright things of earth and air,"

and all the mysteries and glories of the spiritual world. Taking my key-note from the Church of England, I have addressed my song to the whole Church of Christ, without any restriction, national or otherwise.

Our Heavenly Father has mercifully appointed Sabbath haltings for us all in our journeyings