

**LITTLE ANNIE; OR,
IS CHURCH TIME A
HAPPY TIME?**

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Little Annie; Or, Is Church Time a Happy Time? by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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Little Amie;

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PREFACE.

THE difficulty of securing attentive and reverent behaviour from little children during the hours of Divine Worship, has often been a subject of anxiety with their parents and teachers. This difficulty cannot be a matter of surprise, when we find, in examining them upon the services, how small a portion has conveyed any idea to their minds. Thus they are unable to enter into the deep and varied interests of Christian Worship, and the most irksome duty of sitting still and doing nothing, becomes the only one which they can associate with the house of God. To teach little children

something of the real and touching meaning of our beautiful Liturgy, and to remind them, that the great God will not hear us if we speak with our lips, while our heart is far from Him, is the object of the following chapters. To those who are familiar with his name, it may not be uninteresting to add, that they passed while in MS. under the revision of the late Rev. EDWARD BICKERSTETH, of Watton. Should they be the means of helping one of these little ones to join in Sabbath prayers and praises, with true sorrow for sin, and warm love to the Saviour who died for them, they will not have been written in vain.

LITTLE ANNIE;
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CHAPTER I.

It is not long since, that a gentleman of my acquaintance, took the little girl of one of his friends with whom he had been staying, back with him to his home, that she might pay a visit to his own little children. He was very kind to her on the journey, and when she was tired of looking out of the window of the railway carriage, he took her on his knee, and gave her some fruit and biscuits; and as he saw that she was still a little frightened at going with a stranger so far away from her home, he began to tell her about his own little girls and boys, what merry games they had on their half holidays, and how happy they were at lessons with their kind governess.

"But Sunday is their happiest day," he said; "even little Arthur, who is not four years old, claps his hands on Saturdays, and says, 'Sunday-a-morrow, papa.' Do you like Sunday best, Annie?" he asked of his little companion.

"Yes, I think I do," she answered, but in a tone as if she was not quite sure.

"And do you like going to God's house, my child?" said the gentleman.

Annie hung down her head, and did not answer at first; but when the question was repeated, she said, "No, Sir."

"How is that, Annie?"

"It is such a long time, Sir, I think it will never be over."

"It is because you do not love what you are doing, that it seems long to you, my little girl. How many hours do you have for play on Saturday afternoon?"

"From three o'clock to half-past five."

"And does not this seem a very long time?"

"Oh! no, I am always so busy with my garden and my doll, it seems to fly away, and I wish it were twice as long."

"Time always flies when we are doing what we like, Annie; and did you ever think that it is because you do not care to hear God's Word and

to pray to Him—because you do not love to think about these things, that it seems to you so dull?"

"I don't know what you mean, Sir."

"Why when you have been naughty and grieved your dear papa or mamma, does it not make you happy to beg them to forgive you and kiss you; and then do you not love to be with them, and see them smile upon you again?"

"Oh! yes, that I do."

"And if you did but think, Annie, how much you have grieved your Father in heaven, it would not seem dull work, but a great comfort to you to say, 'I have done that which I ought not to have done; O Lord forgive me!' The chief thing that you want, my child, is the Spirit of God to teach you that Jesus loved you, even so much as to die for you; then you would grieve over the many things which you do to make him sorry, and you would love to come and beg him to forgive you, and help you not to do so again, and to thank him for all his kindness."

"I do like to beg God to forgive me when I have done wrong, Sir, but I don't remember hearing about that in church. But often I do not know what it means, though I can read it all very well."

"Well, Annie, while you are with me I will