÷Gems written at the age of 14

By Whitmore Winslow

The Hidden Life

Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow

written at the age of 14.

His journal, which was previously unknown to his family,

was found among his papers after his unexpected death,

at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of

Octavius Winslow.

How frail the thread!

How short is time, and what a small portion

is allotted to man to prepare for another world!

And yet how careless is he of that time!

How frail the thread upon which life hangs!

A few hours' illness may carry him away into

a world of endless happiness or of endless woe!

What a vain world it is!

What a fallen creature is man!

Day by day calls forth more hidden depravity

of his heart; and yet his whole affections are

set upon the very object which is fostering

and encouraging that depravity.

His great ambition is to win the approbation

of the world; a world that slew the King of kings;

a world full of sin and sorrow, the medium by

which Satan endeavors to blind the eyes of the

children of men.

And yet, after all, what a vain world it is!

It promises much, but realizes nothing.

The more we expect pleasure, the more are we

disappointed in it.

Oh, what would man be, if instead of seeking

the friendship and the love of a dying world, he

would seek that of Jehovah!

And yet how prone are we to lament when we

are frowned upon by the world. If we did not

seek its smiles, we would not mind its frowns.

But the more we are delighted at the world's

praise, the more are we discomforted and made

unhappy by its disapprobation.

But take the world as a whole; what is it?

A speck in the universe; a ball floating in

the air, surrounded by other worlds greater

and more magnificent than itself.

Shall we love the world which hated and scorned,

and ultimately slew our loved Redeemer?

That ever promising, yet ever deceiving world?

How little have appearances to do with realities!

The outward show has often the effect of deceiving.

Deceit is, indeed, one of the prominent features

in man; he deceives others, he deceives himself.

The world is truly a false world. And does it not

show the depravity of man's heart when after tasting

its bitters, feeling its pains, and experiencing its

disappointments and sorrows, he should still cling

to that ever promising, yet ever deceiving world?

Changeable!

What a changeable world is this, and what

changeable creatures are we! But what a

glorious thought that there is a Being who

changes not!

We chase it like a bubble in the air!

What could the Christian do in a poor world

like this if he had not Christ for his Friend?

Truly is he often seeking other friends, but

God will make him know, by sad yet blessed

experience, that there is no friend like Jesus;

and that while other friends are fickle and

changeable, He changes not.

Oh that we followed not this poor world as we do!

We chase it like a bubble in the air, and with

all its apparent beauty, it fades into nothing!

But oh, when we taste the preciousness of Jesus,

what a heavenly morsel it is! It raises our drooping

spirits to contemplate the joy that awaits us in

another world, the happiness that is laid up for

us above, the glory that will crown the final end

of our weary pilgrimage through a dying and

unsatisfying world.

Pride eats at the root of all happiness!

Ah! blessed is he to whom God shows his own weakness

and insufficiency to do anything of himself. Deem it not

a curse, but a blessing, when God humbles your pride,

however severe the discipline may be by which He does it.

When He teaches you to lean upon Him alone for support,

thank Him for it.

Pride eats at the root of all happiness; and a proud

spirit God will abase, but the humble spirit He will exalt.

Toilsome journey through this weary world

I had some sweet sights of Jesus by faith, some

feeble glimmerings of the happiness and glory

which we shall realize above. It is only these

glorious feelings that will solace the Christian in

his toilsome journey through this weary world.

Come what may, pleasure or pain, happiness or

woe, life or death, I am in the hands of the Lord

of Creation, the King of kings, and in His keeping

no evil will befall me.

Surrounded with trouble at almost every step?

Today I have been surrounded with trouble at

almost every step. But with all this, I can fly to

Jesus as my never failing Friend, and He can give

me all I need.

A bountiful Savior and a needy sinner just suit

each other!

This precious jewel, where can it be located?

Happiness! Where is it to be found?

This precious jewel, where can it be located?

Is it to be obtained in the world, its pleasures and

delights? No! the Christian will answer it cannot!

Happiness, if there be such a thing in this world,

can only be obtained from Jesus. In His bosom

alone can we find repose.

I am persuaded that the more the believer has

of sanctified sorrow, tribulation, and affliction in

this dying world, the more he will have of happiness

and glory in the blessed realms above.

I feel now as if death would be a welcome messenger

to my soul, to waft me from this sinful world to

Canaan's joyful shore. Ah! it is a blessed thing to

be able to meet death with a beaming countenance

and a gladsome heart.

There have been times when amid pleasure and

enjoyment I have loathed the very thought of death.

But when God afflicts a man, then he feels the vanity

and deceitfulness of the world; and if he is a believer

in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will long to see his Redeemer,

and be with Him in the abodes of happiness and light

throughout an endless eternity!

I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,

But Jesus Christ is my all in all.

All the troubles and afflictions of His people

How gracious has the Lord been to me today! His

promises, they never fail. They have been indeed

my chief support.

Oh, to have a simple trust in the Savior! He will not

betray your confidence. He is a faithful and just God,

merciful and gracious, and ever ready to lend an ear

to all the troubles and afflictions of His people.

Open all your heart to Jesus, and He will open the

fountain of His mercy to you.

Afflictions come from God!

How soon can God change a man's circumstances!

He is elevated today, and is cast down tomorrow.

So it is, and so it will be in this changeful world,

until we arrive at a better and brighter one, where

there will be no sin, and consequently no sorrow.

But oh, we should remember, that afflictions come

from God! When a Christian neglects prayer, for

instance, God places him, perhaps, in a situation

of great trial, and he is driven to pray.

Or, when a man's affections are set upon the world,

God makes that world his greatest enemy (and I feel

it to be mine), and he is compelled to make Christ

his Friend.

Oh, may every afflicted saint of God profit by the

trials which God shall see fit to lay upon him! But

even in judgment, our heavenly Father will remember

mercy.

If the world satisfies you?

No being knows the trials I have undergone the past

week, but Jesus. And as He only knows, so He only

can help me through.

I have felt such a willingness to die! a feeling that

death would be no dreadful thing to me, having a

wish to leave this more dreadful world. But painful,

yet no less blessed trial has done it all.

And oh, may I be able from my heart to thank God

for having made the world my enemy, and Christ

my Friend!

But mark this: if the world does not suit you, you

will be sure to have a welcome in heaven. But if the

world satisfies you, hell will be the most adapted

to receive you.

While we sojourn in this world

Oh, to realize the happiness in store for us in the

next world! If we more anticipated the blissful future,

we should not so much mind the miserable present.

A few short years will bring the Christian to the end of

his pilgrimage, and to the beginning of his eternal rest!

But, oh, let us never forget that while we sojourn in

this world we have a never failing Friend to whom we

can take all our trials and sorrows!

God is our guide

Oh, that we did but realize that we are the Lord's

and the Lord is ours! No harm can befall us which

is not for our benefit.

And were it not for the corruption within, and

our guilty consciences, no evil from without

could materially affect us.

But may we remember that God is our guide

through life, and will be unto death.

Decay is inscribed on earth's fairest flower!

January, 1851. We have entered upon another year,

which, like the preceding ones, will flit quickly by.

Solemn thought!

We also shall soon pass away, and the place

where we dwelt and lived will know us no more.

The ravages of time, written in letters too

deeply engraved to be erased, are stamped

upon everything mortal.

Decay is inscribed on earth's fairest flower!

Oh, how solemn is the reflection! Our short period

of existence here on earth should be taken up with

preparation for another and a better world.

And yet poor, blind, fallen man seldom gives the

question a moment's consideration, while his whole

thoughts are absorbed in obtaining that which,

even while he seizes it, crumbles in his grasp.

I feel this with regard to myself; and oh, that I

always may have a keen perception of it! The

least prosperity or participation in happiness, as

the world terms it, sets me mad after chasing

the poor baubles, as if I had never known their

deceitfulness and insufficiency. Does not this

show the fallen nature of man in a glaring light?

'I know the right, and yet the wrong pursue.'

Ah, have you cause to mourn over sin?

Do you see that in you which is hateful to yourself,

and which causes you sorrow? Then thank God for it,

as the most decided proof that He has planted within

you the germs of a being that shall one day burst the

bonds of natural corruption, and with all the beauty

and purity of the God who created it, start forth a

glittering gem, forever to shine in the crown of the

Redeemer.

But what is the sequel?

Truly it becomes a Christian to be always happy.

What reason has he to be otherwise, when every

step of his journey, every incident, however minute,

that occurs in his pilgrimage through life, is ordered

and ordained by his heavenly Father, his loving

Savior, his best Friend?

True it is that he has often more care, more affliction,

than the worldling has; while the worldling prospers in

his way, the believer is often bowed down with care

and trouble, scarcely able to struggle through life.

But what is the sequel?

The ungodly enjoy the pleasures and wealth of this

world, only to realize more bitterly their loss in the

world to come; while the Christian sees the worst

side of this world, and tastes more of its bitters,

only to enhance the happiness of a better world,

where he will enjoy the sweetest bliss.

But even in the deepest afflictions the believer in

Christ has cause to be happy, if he can but realize

the truth that the All seeing Jehovah, who framed

and created out of nothing the vast universe, and

who guides its great machinery, has ordered that

event for his essential good.

Love so undeserved, so great, so free!

Oh, what a loving Father He must be! Ah, yes! that

love so undeserved, so great, so free, gave from

His own loving bosom His only beloved Son a sacrifice

for man, when every heart rankled with hatred to God.

Are there no choice beings who reap the fruits of

their Redeemer's love? Yes! God has a chosen church,

and for them the blood of Jesus was shed, to redeem

them from the curse and to bring them to heaven!

I am utterly helpless!

I have been led to feel that in myself I am utterly

helpless. God has made me to see that all my hard

studying, and all my talents, abilities, and boasted

knowledge, will be of no avail to me in this crisis,

if He withholds His blessing.

I have been led to leave the outcome of it all in

God's hands, and to feel that He will do all for the

best, yes, better than the wisest of us could imagine

or desire. One mightier than all is for me!

When we can trace His loving hand

Brief, but sweet, is my diary of today. Oh, how

savory every morsel when the blessing of God is

upon it! When we can trace His loving hand,

what unequaled happiness does it give!

Oh, to trust Him, though He may seem at the

time to blight our fond hopes; to have a thankful

heart for mercies undeserved!

How has He especially appeared to me today

none but Himself can tell. And to repay it is

out of the power of mortal.

O what changeable and fluctuating creatures!

Man, with all his boasted wisdom, understanding,

and sagacity, seldom learns the necessary lesson

of profiting by the past.

That which at one time made an apparent and

indelible impression upon his mind is now entirely

forgotten, or, if not forgotten, viewed in a careless

and indifferent light.

O what changeable and fluctuating creatures

are the human race! We travel with time in all its

changes and fluctuations; and wherever it tends

and winds its onward course, we often pursue the

same given track, and, unsuspecting and unalarmed,

are led to the brink of a fearful precipice, and are

lost to all eternity!

It is good for a man that he should reflect upon

his own condition: what he is? and where bound?

÷Gems written at the age of 15

By Whitmore Winslow

The Hidden Life

Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow

written at the age of 15.

His journal, which was previously unknown to his family,

was found among his papers after his unexpected death,

at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of

Octavius Winslow.

A picture repulsive to every refined feeling.

Truly does the world present a picture repulsive to

every refined feeling. It is devoid of all sources of

true happiness to its earnest seekers, and produces

no end of evils, embittering the life of man, and

ensnaring his heedless steps.

It is a field of conflict between two opposite powers.

The one winning his foes to his side by overwhelming

love, and subduing them into perfect submission by the

power of irresistible goodness.

The other, enlisting his adherents by the offer of

false happiness, alluring them by spurious pleasures,

only to disappoint their hopes, and when life has

spun out its last thread of existence to engulf them

in eternal despair.

How it ensnares, and allures,

and taunts, and disappoints!

What a wretched world it is! How it ensnares,

and allures, and taunts, and disappoints!

I am persuaded that a Christian cannot remain

in worldly company, or be engaged in anything

worldly, without his heavenly mindedness being

damaged, and his holy feelings and resolutions

being vitiated and weakened.

Christ's unchanging love and tenderness

Christ's unchanging love and tenderness scatter

all the gloomy mists and dark clouds of our pilgrimage,

and gladden the drooping spirit.

Cheer up, tried and tempted Christian!

A blissful eternity will make up for all the crosses

and trials, the bitters and woes of the present. Then

shall real happiness dawn upon your spirit, warming

and delighting your soul through eternity.

Strive not for the world's smiles; they are deceitful.

And fear not its scorn while God smiles upon you.

This bewitching world, these alluring pleasures!

What a changeful world is this, and

what changeable creatures are we!

Oh, how have I seen this in myself and in others!

Friends whom I have most trusted have suddenly

grown cold and indifferent, freezing my affections

by their unfaithfulness and wavering.

But, oh, has not this some end? Methinks I see it.

The world's charms have too much allured my gaze

from Jesus and fixed it upon its empty bubbles.

And was not this trial sent to deaden my affections

to the world, and fix them upon something more

substantial? O yes, it was all for my good.

This bewitching world, these alluring pleasures,

how they ensnare! O God, keep me from their power.

May I be weaned from them, and attracted to

Jesus, finding the center of my happiness in

leaning in sweet repose upon His bosom who

never changes nor forsakes those who put

their trust in Him.

We sometimes envy the wicked

How sweet is a calm after the tempest! It would

not do for us were it always smooth. The little

roughness of the way increases the pleasantness

of the calm.

How little do we value a blessing until it is taken

from us; and yet how unconcerned and lifeless we

are until stirred up by adverse circumstances. O

how should we value every chastisement we receive!

We sometimes envy the wicked because they seem

to go on sinning, and yet unpunished. Did we but

realize that it is a Father's hand that is guiding us,

and that it is because He loves and cares for us

that He chastises us.

The ungodly He leaves to themselves until their

eternal punishment. But He watches over His children

with the eye of a father, and all that He does is for

their good now and hereafter.

O what a blessing to be one of His children, to have

such a Protector, such a Friend! He is worth all the

dearest friends the world can produce.

The believer's life

The believer's life, though short and passing as a

vapor, is eventful of circumstances of the greatest

significance. It is a period allotted to him to prepare

for another world. And oh, what a blessed thought

that there is another and a better world!

We shall soon leave our present abode, full of sin

and full of sorrow, changeful as the wind. Friends

change, circumstances change, age changes; soon

the light and joyous childhood of our youth begins

to taste the bitters of life, and his sincere and

happy brow becomes wrinkled with anxiety and

care; old age creeps on, and we apparently are

insensible of it. But soon it will be over, and a

happy eternity follows.

The Christian has his happiness to anticipate;

the sinner his eternal misery to look forward to.

Oh, it is better to be at the disposal of God than

at any moment to have the full control of ourselves!

Infectious, ensnaring, delusive

So infectious is the world, so bright and ensnaring,

yet in reality so delusive, that before you are aware,

it will arrest your glance, steal upon your affections,

and so deaden your spirituality and communion with

God, and thus call for some gentle chastening of your

heavenly Father to bring you back again to His bosom.

Look not for happiness in anything connected with the world.

I, as a youth, have done so, and have been disappointed.

There is no pleasure of any description, I am fully

persuaded, that is not accompanied with some bitter.

God has wisely ordained that Christians in general

should partake but little of this world's enjoyments,

that they may not make the world their home, but

that, all their thoughts taken up with Christ, their

eyes may be blind to its pleasures and enjoyments.

Oh, what will be the ecstasy of that moment!

If there are two things that will more fill us with

wonder and amazement when we arrive at heaven

than another, it will be, first, that we ever got there;

and second, the vast difference of the world we have

left to the one we shall then enjoy! Oh, what will be

the ecstasy of that moment when we find ourselves

in heaven!

And yet we are so mad and so blind as to fear to die,

still clinging to this poor world! Sometimes in solitude

I look forward and enjoy the anticipation of a better

state.

Oh, if this should ever meet the eye of an afflicted

child of God, whatever may be your trials, dry up

those untimely tears, brighten up that saddened

countenance, and look forward with the confident

and blessed assurance of an eternity of bliss.

Your thoughts of affliction are not as God's thoughts.

If your limited comprehension cannot take in the

wisdom of all His plans with regard to you. What

you deem most unfavorable, God regarding as

most beneficial. Yet thank Him, if He is weaning

you from this poor world, although the means

He uses may appear to you most grievous.

True religion

The religion of God has to do with the heart,

whatever may be the sect to which a man belongs.

In the matter of his salvation he has not to do with

churches, or with opinions, or with creeds, but with God.

True religion consists not in notions, forms, or outward

profession. These can avail a man but little when he

is laid upon a dying bed, and is about to appear before

God, when the great question will be, not to what sect

or church he belonged, but how he, a vile and fallen

sinner, can be justified before God?

No sect, or church, or religion, can possibly be

honoring to God which sets aside Christ and His

atonement, and lays its foundations in wretched

SELF.

When is affliction sweet?

When can we thank God for it.

When it brings us near to Jesus.

When it fixes our wandering thoughts and desires

upon One that is mighty; mighty not only to save,

but to make us happy in this dark valley of tears.

Oh, it compensates us for all the humblings and

disappointments which we may experience.

'Sweet affliction,

That brings Jesus to my soul.'

A glimpse of Jesus is a little heaven below.

Who would not part with the world's honors,

reputation, or wealth, to gain it? And yet we

are so prone to fix our affections upon these

poor baubles which must soon pass away.

Happy is he whose lot is cast with the tried,

the poor, the humble of Christ's flock, for there

Jesus abides.

÷Gems written at the age of 16 - 18

By Whitmore Winslow

The Hidden Life

Gleanings from the journal of Whitmore Winslow

written at the age of 16 to 18.

His journal, which was previously unknown to his family,

was found among his papers after his unexpected death,

at the age of 21. He died in 1856, and was the son of

Octavius Winslow.

When He afflicts, it is only out of kindness

Sweet it is not only to believe, but also to experience

that as much affliction as God is pleased to give, so

much of His divine blessing He invariably bestows with it.

He causes us to feel His rod that His blessing may

be experienced the more. He makes us to taste the

bitter only to prepare us for the sweet.

And when He finds that prosperity weans us from

Him and assimilates to the world, He chastens us.

Oh, how sweet to be resigned to His will, feeling

assured that He does all things for our best welfare;

that when He afflicts, it is only out of kindness;

and that when He accomplishes the end, He returns

to us laden with blessing.

O the demon SELF!

Alas! our noblest actions are so mixed with SELF.

Such is the real fact, I need not disguise it. This

it is that chills our warmest feelings, and mars our

happiness in looking to Jesus.

O the demon SELF! it will ever come in to spoil

that which is holy.

Alas, alas! how cold we are! How insensible

to the greatest mercies, perpetually reminded that

we are not only mortal, but sinful.

When I reflect upon the spiritual blessings which

I have received, and feel how insensible I am, oh

it is a cause of mourning. I think nothing is so

ungracious as a thankless spirit, and yet how

often do we manifest it when God has been so

good! We take care not to be ungrateful to an

earthly friend for the slightest benefit, and yet

how careless in thanking God!

How has God led me these many years! How has

He been the Protector and Guide of my youth! And

how has He brought me to what I am! When I

thought of all this I did lift up my heart in gratitude.

What He has done for me is overwhelming.

Oh, my precious Savior

What a blessed thing it is that we are not to live

here always, that our existence is not bounded by

this lower sphere!

Holy Father, may our hearts, while aching, praise

You that Your chastenings but wean us from this

sinful and disappointing world, and fill our minds

with holy joy, and longing hope for the blessed

heaven to come. Oh, may Your love more completely

fill these truant hearts! May Your ceaseless affection,

changeless ever, when we wander, link our souls in

closer union with You.

Oh, my precious Savior, may that look of pity and

love, which beamed so gloriously from Calvary, light

upon Your weak and sinful child! May I find in Your

loving bosom a shelter from the storm. And though

the world, or those I love, cease to sympathize,

precious Savior, You will never look coldly down,

but will open Your heart of love to receive me.

How low and humbled do we feel

As truly as the sinner feels himself unfit for heaven

and for heavenly society on earth, so truly does the

child of God feel sad and unhappy when in the society

of the wicked.

How low and humbled do we feel when accidentally

or necessarily obliged to listen to unholy conversation,

or to witness some open act of sin.

Alas! next to our own sinfulness we ought to deplore

the wickedness of those we are constantly coming in

contact with. All we can do is to observe a marked

silence, and show by our conduct and example how

painful it is to our spirits, though we would desire

openly to rebuke.

Words, however, are sometimes less significant

than conduct, and I have often found how powerful

is the effect of silent example. But we need much

wisdom and much grace both to speak and to act

as we ought and when we ought.

But, blessed thought, that with all our deficiencies,

the righteousness of Christ is our complete covering,

and by its merit we shall soon reach the realms of

purity where sin can never enter.

O Father, preserve me from the deadening

influence of all within and without; and grant

me an eye to see, and a heart to feel, all your

tenderness, forbearance, and love.

It grasps an airy bubble floating by in momentary splendor

Amid all the characters given by poets and philosophers

to Life, perhaps the least regarded is the IMAGINATION.

Life in its loveliest forms consists in a great measure

in the imagination. Thus thought loves to dwell upon

scenes of future or imagined happiness, grouping into

the most felicitous shapes all one's future career.

Thus it grasps an airy bubble floating by in momentary

splendor, and builds upon it a destiny of the highest and

most substantial happiness.

How one's youthful imagination seems to bear us on, blind

to the misery and woe all around us; blind to the stern and

sometimes sickening realities of existence, and alive only

to the beautiful and happy, the gay and glorious.

How imagination, that wonderful power of the soul, can

magnify a transient beam of sunshine into an ever abiding

and increasing stream of effulgent radiancy! How a look

from the eye, a smile of the countenance, a trifling act

of love, can kindle a flame in the soul, which our fond

imagination would persuade us to believe is enduring,

giving power and warmth!

How gladdening are feelings of youth; how keen its

susceptibilities to the beautiful!

But alas, alas! how Life in its onward progress alters

this beautiful picture! How soon do the dark shades

pencilled by the experience of sin and sorrow cast their

chilling influences upon the canvas once so gaily tinted!

How soon the keen blast of adversity sweeps away, as

with a whirlwind, all that before seemed so beautiful and

promising! How soon the slow but fearfully sure disease

cuts down the budding flower!

Yes, how strange a mystery is Life!

Yes, when once the eye has been turned in the right

direction, and the mists and phantoms have disappeared,

we shall see that life is the theater of action, and the

prelude to eternity; an eternity whose untold wonders

are beyond the highest flight of the imagination!

Can a man suppose that he was made for himself?

What a glorious motto for a man, "I Live for God!"

It is religion's truest definition.

It is a motto for a life.

Can a man suppose that he was made for himself?

Miserable thought!

Yet the world acts upon this belief. They devise, and

scheme, and accomplish apparently for others; but

the spring of action and the end of action is, SELF.

This is a course abhorrent to God.

A mere bubble, a toy, an insignificant nothing!

How blessed when one is low and downcast in mind

and body, to feel a little uplifting, and to trace, yet

more blessed, the healing hand of the Great Physician.

To see the Shepherd of the sheep stooping to take and

embrace in His arms of love the weak and feeble lamb.

"When men are cast down, then You shall say, There

is lifting up." Oh, the delightful feeling, this 'lifting up!'

Who can express it but the man who has been down

into the lowest depths, and then brought up so high

that the world appears, as it were, a mere bubble,

a toy, an insignificant nothing! The world no longer

is visible to him; lost in the glorious light shed upon

his soul by the sight of Jesus.

We sometimes reason ourselves into the belief, that

the world, with all its grandeur, beauty, and wonder,

must be something worth our attention.

But, oh! five minutes' communion with God, in spite

of reason and of ourselves, convinces us that nothing

but the object upon which our soul rests is truly great.

The way we read the Bible

What a difference there is in the way we read the

Bible; taking it up sometimes as a matter of form and

duty, perusing some of its most precious truths, and

laying it down again without sensible benefit.

There can be no mistake as to where the fault lies;

a cold or worldly heart, an eye covered with the film

of sensuous objects, are the real causes.

We do not know what Popery really is!

(The following was written by Whitmore Winslow

at the age of 18, after visiting a Roman Catholic

Cathedral in France.)

In England, we do not know what Popery really is!

We imagine it to be something repulsive, and cannot

conceive how people can be deceived by it.

But once to witness it as it really is, with its gorgeous

paraphernalia, you are admitted to the secret of its

power. The whole structure seemed to look down upon

you in conscious magnificence, and is intended to

inspire you with awe and reverence.

No system could possibly have been invented more

captivating to the senses, or better adapted to the

natural heart.

It allows its devotee free scope to sin, while covering

him with a cloak of religion.