

One by One

One by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall:
Some are coming, some are going;
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee;
Let thy whole strength go to each;
Let no future dreams elate thee;
Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one,—bright gifts of heaven,—
Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given;
Ready be to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee;
Do not fear an armed band;
One will fade as others greet thee,—
Shadows passing through the land.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do our bear:
Luminous the crown and holy,
When each gem is set with care.

Hours are golden links, God's token
Reaching heaven; but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere the pilgrimage be done.

Adelaide Anne Proctor (1825-1864)