

12th June 2020

Sunshine

**“In Claude’s landscape all is lovely – all is amiable –
all is amenity and repose; calm and sunshine of the heart.”**

John Constable

Lecture, quoted in ‘Memoirs of the Life of John Constable’ by C R Leslie

The front of our home faces south. On the best of days, the sun streams in, filling the lounge with bright sunlight. Our Cocker Spaniel, Amber, (as crazy at nearly six as she was at six months) sussed this out *very* early on! So, after her morning walk and a wolfed-down breakfast, she heads to the front room to languish in the spot where the sunshine is at its strongest. And, as the sun moves, she moves, following the bright spot as it shifts across the room. As the sun travels westwards and the sunny patch diminishes in size and intensity, Amber follows it to the last, till only her tail is left to catch the final rays of the morning sun.

In *Empedocles on Etna*, the poet Matthew Arnold writes:

*It is so small a thing to have enjoyed the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to have done.*

I’m not so sure it’s “so small a thing” – and it certainly isn’t for our Amber. We all have it in us to chase the sun. We’re programmed to enjoy the warmth of love, think good things, do what is right, search for the sunshine of life and know we’re in the best of places. Our wise – and occasionally calm – Cocker Spaniel knows that too.

For some of us, like Amber, that will *literally* mean chasing the sun to the warmest spots, for rest, relaxation and restoration. But, with that not available to us at the moment, let’s keep chasing our own sun, to find a patch of living for ourselves and others where “all is lovely – all is amiable – all is amenity and repose; calm and sunshine of the heart.”

A prayer for today

Loving God, as we value sunshine after the rain, and warmth after coldness, so let us value the light of your grace, and the peace of resting in you. And may your love shine out from our lives, to bring the warmth of your blessing to all around us. Amen.

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