OUR LITTLE ONES

in

PARADISE



Compiled by

REV. SAMUEL CUTLER

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REV. SAMUEL CUTLER

Author of "The Name Above Every Name," "The Work of the Spirit," etc.

"They only can be said to possess a child for ever,
who have lost one in infancy."

Our Little Ones in Paradise
compiled by Rev. Samuel Cutler

First published in 1877 by the American Tract Society, New York.

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NOT LOST!

Gone, but not lost,
A treasure but removed,
A bright bird parted for a clearer day;
Mine still in heaven.

Mrs. Hemans.

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Preface



God is daily and hourly calling some of our little ones home to glory; and if, in the sad loneliness of such bereavement the soul can be brought nearer to Him by Scriptural views of the Saviour's manifestations of love for children, and of their safety from all sin and danger in His heavenly kingdom, the pain of separation may prove most beneficent in its results.

In examining the books which have been published on this subject, there seemed to the compiler of this little volume room for one less doctrinal, more practically hopeful, comforting, and varied, than those which formerly found a circulation more or less extended. Hence it has been his purpose to avoid the discussion or inculcation of any doctrine in which Christians of different names are not generally in unity.

As a handbook for the bereaved, it is sent forth with earnest prayer to "the God of all comfort" that his blessing may attend its circulation, so that many a mourning parent may be led rejoicingly to say, "I bless God for a child in glory!" "I shall go to him!"

The selections from Whittier are by permission of his publishers, Messrs. Osgood & Co., Boston.

S. C.

BOSTON, MASS.

God's Hidden Purposes

❦

Why has God thus dealt with me? is often the sad inquiry of the parental heart when a darling child is removed by death.

At such an hour there is sometimes, even in the mind of the Christian, a feeling of distrust whether all things are wisely ordered, and a disposition to murmur at what he calls the dark and mysterious providence which has brought desolation to his fireside. There is a struggle between distrust and faith. In the day of calamity the spirit is overwhelmed, the soul refuses to be comforted, and in deep depression, with the Psalmist, the mourner asks, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" So Satan tempts us in seasons of affliction, in our hour of bereavement. Sharp is the conflict when God removes our idols. Painful is the struggle if our will is not brought into sweet conformity to God's will. Such was the experience of the Psalmist, such has been the experience of multitudes, who, when the angel of death has severed the dearest ties or trouble in any of its varied forms has brought desolation to the family, have turned away from God as the only source of consolation, and in their sorrow forgotten his tender mercies and loving-kindnesses in all the way by which he has led them.

Why hast thou thus dealt with me? is a question which, in view of the fact the ways or plans of God are hidden from us, is one which cannot be fully answered now. And yet, though clouds and darkness hide his throne — though his path is in the mighty waters, and his footsteps are unknown, by the eye of faith we may learn enough from revelation and from history, from his dealings

with Israel as his covenant people, and with the nations and people who cast him off, to know that he doth not willingly nor unnecessarily afflict or grieve the children of men; and that all his plans are designed, and will ultimately be seen to promote his own glory as a righteous and loving God, and the highest good of his people. We shall see, as we cannot now, why he chastens those he loves, and how death is made the minister of life.

Death has ever been the terror as it is the conqueror of the natural man. Come when and where it may, though in its least revolting aspect, to take back to God the spirit of unconscious infancy, or of opening childhood, parental and filial sympathies shrink from fellowship with the dreaded messenger. Even in the hope which nature dictates, and the assurance which revelation brings to us that God removes the bud or the blossom, to unfold, and to bring forth fruit in a better clime — that the infant mind will go on progressively in its redeemed likeness to its Saviour — still, in the hour of trial, faith is weak, sense prevails, and the plaintive, sometimes the agonizing cry goes forth, "O my Father, why hast thou thus dealt with me?"

If this little book shall be so blessed of God as to lead some among the tens of thousands of weeping fathers and mothers, of brothers and sisters, to look beyond the grave and to realize that the babe or the little child still lives, that the loving Saviour has taken it in his arms, carries it in his bosom, provides for all its wants as no earthly friend could do, that it is for ever safe from all danger, and from "the second death;" and that in its removal God is calling them to be ready to meet their children in glory; with thankfulness will the compiler give praise to Him for the conception and execution of the design.

S. C.

WHOLLY RESIGNED

CHRIST leads us through no darker rooms
That he went through before:
He that into God's kingdom comes
Must enter by this door.

Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet
Thy blessed face to see;
For if thy word on earth be sweet,
What will thy glory be!

Then shall I end my sad complaints
And weary, sinful days,
And join with the triumphant saints
That sing Jehovah's praise.
My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim,
But 't is enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with him.

— ♦ —

THE QUIET, HOPING HEART

WHATE'ER my God ordains is right,
His will is ever just;
Howe'er he order now my cause,
I will be still and trust.
He is my God;
Though dark my road,
He holds me that I shall not fall,
Wherefore to him I leave it all.

Whate'er my God ordains is right,
  Though I the cup must drink,
That bitter seems to my faint heart,
  I will not fear nor shrink;
    Fears pass away
    With dawn of day,
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart,
And pain and sorrow shall depart.

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
  My Light, my Life is he,
Who cannot will me aught but good;
  I trust him utterly;
    For well I know,
    In joy or woe,
We soon shall see as sunlight clear
How faithful was our Guardian here.

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
  Here will I take my stand;
Though sorrow, need, or death make earth
  For me a desert land,
    My Father's care
    Is round me there;
He holds me that I shall not fall,
And so to him I leave it all.

Samuel Rodigast, 1675.

PATIENT TRUST

Let us be patient, God has taken from us
The earthly treasures upon which we leaned,
That from the fleeting things which lie around us
Our clinging hearts should be for ever weaned.

Let us be thankful, if in this affliction
No grave is opened for the loving heart;
And while we bend beneath our Father's chidings,
We yet can mourn "each family apart."

These earthly walls must shortly be dismantled,
These earthly tents be struck by angel hands;
But to be built up on a sure foundation,
There, where our Father's mansion ever stands.

There shall we meet, parent and child, and dearer
That earthly love which makes half heaven of home;
There shall we find our treasures all awaiting,
Where change and death and parting never come.

— ♦ —

THY WILL BE DONE

To do, or not to do — to have
Or not to have — I leave to Thee;
To be, or not to be, I leave —
Thy only will be done to me.
All my requests are lost in one:
Father, thy only will be done!

Suffice that for the season past
  Myself in things divine I sought,
For comforts cried with eager haste,
  And murmured when I found them not:
I leave it now to Thee alone;
Father, thy only will be done!

The Mortality of Infants

❦

We have spoken of God's hidden purposes in the death of children. To reason, unenlightened, and unsanctified, the Divine goodness may sometimes be questioned in the removal by death, in infancy and childhood, of so large a proportion of all who are born into our world.

It appears, from the vital statistics of civilized nations, that of the whole number born in Christendom, nearly one-quarter die under the age of one year, about two-fifths under five years, and nearly one-half of all the deaths are under ten years. In cities, the average of deaths is larger than in the rural districts. Among the vicious poor, tenement-house corruption hastens physical, as well as moral death. Among semi-civilized and heathen nations, and barbarous tribes, where little children are sacrificed to appease the wrath of imaginary cruel gods, or perish through neglect, the death-rate is no doubt greater. The deaths in Boston, in 1874, of infants under one year, were over twenty-eight per cent. of all who died. In the same city, for the ten years ending with the year 1874, the average percentage of those dying under one year was twenty-five and one-half per cent.; and of all dying under five years, during the same period, forty-two and one-eighth per cent. That is, more than one-quarter of all the deaths in Boston, for a period of ten consecutive years, were of infants under one year, and more than two-fifths were under five years. In 1875 the whole number of deaths in Boston was eight thousand nine hundred fifty-eight; of these twenty-two hundred sixty-three were under one year, seventeen hundred and nine between one and five

years, and four hundred and sixty-eight between five and ten years: or a total of four thousand four hundred and forty; showing almost fifty per cent. of all who died, not to have reached the first decade of years.

We give these statistics, carefully gathered, for a practical purpose. Boston is not an unhealthy city. Its death-rate is indeed a small percentage larger than the average of our American cities; but from our figures we have a basis on which to rest our argument for the love of God to the race, in leading so many, through tribulation, to his heavenly home. Leading, first, the great multitude of little ones, which no man can number — half our race — to educate them for a better existence than is possible where sin abounds; and then, by his grace, leading many parents bereaved, with longing desires for a reunion with their children, to follow after.

For in the faith that God has provided in the atonement made by Jesus Christ for the sins of the whole world, for the salvation of infants, we discern wonderful evidence of his wisdom and his love in the early removal from a state of trial in a world of darkness, to a sinless existence in paths of light, so many, who, were they left to encounter the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, might fall so far from God as never to rise again. But God has lovingly taken them from these dangers. He has placed them, as we believe, under holy influences. More literally, and in a higher and more spiritual sense than the human mind has apprehended, it may be true that the good Shepherd has taken the lambs in his arms, and that they are saved for ever. But suppose these myriads of ransomed ones had been left to all the sorrows, and to be tried by all the temptations experienced by those who live to fight in manhood life's battles, how many of them would be found among the saved? Every one of them would have needed to be reclaimed from a course of transgression, as well as renewed

unto holiness. But in the light of experience, would they have consecrated themselves to God and to his service, or would the world in some of its multiform temptations have had dominion over them? Oh, how many parents have suffered severer pangs in the misconduct and vices of children, than they could have suffered in their early death! Time and again in the sad experience even of Christian parents, has the mournful wail of David been in substance reiterated, "Would God I had died for thee; oh, my son, my son!" And so, even in the records of time, the wisdom and love of God to our fallen race is seen in the early removal from temptation of so many who have not been left to endure its dangers. Let this comforting thought call forth from the depths of a sorrowing heart the joyful accompaniment, "It is well with the child!" And in view of the *many* who daily mourn the death of little children, let it, in the hour of desolation, be remembered by the mother who refuses to be comforted, that she is but one among the thousands who are called to weep for one as lovely, and as dear to each of them, as was her babe to her.

"The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted."

But the broken ties shall be reunited! The promise is sure to the believing parent, "Thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy!"

But the death of children is also designed for the salvation of parents. God would have us seek supremely his kingdom, and lay up our treasure there. Now, what is there so valuable to parents as their offspring? What so dear to the mother as her helpless infant, or her lisping child? What so precious to the father as the children God has given him? But if these children have their home on

earth, the parental desires may not rise higher than earth. Where the treasure is the heart is. But if the treasure is removed to heaven, there must be strong resistance if the affections are not drawn thither.

And how often has experience shown that the death of children has been the means of awakening thought in the minds of parents about a better world. The desire of reunion with a darling child has sometimes, by God's blessing, awakened the impenitent from the sleep of spiritual death, and roused the believer to renewed effort in the divine life. The parent believes that the child is removed from a state of suffering and of sin; and in thought, if not in vocal utterance, the desire goes forth, "Oh that, when God shall call, I may be prepared to go where my child has gone!" Thus God has purposes of mercy in all his ways. Although his plans are hidden, and when the waves and billows of affliction toss and roar we cannot trace his footsteps, yet in the light of revelation and of experience we may be sure that if in the day of trouble we seek the Lord, calling upon him trustingly and with all the heart, he will turn our mourning into joy.

But let none forget that the reunion of parent and child in glory depends upon the likeness of both the parent and the child to Christ. Though the infant had not personally transgressed, it needed redemption. We who are parents know that we are sinners; and that only through faith in Him who saved them, and who says to us, "Except ye be converted and become as little children ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," we may be changed and fitted for the purity of the Divine presence.

S. C.

TRANSPLANTED

In some rude spot where vulgar herbage grows,
If chance a violet rear its purple head,
The careful gardener moves it ere it blows,
To thrive and flourish in a nobler bed;

Such was thy fate, dear child, thy opening such!
Preëminence in early bloom was shown;
For earth too good, perhaps, and loved too much,
Heaven saw, and early marked thee for its own.

R. B. Sheridan.

— ♦ —

"BEHOLD, HE SLEEPETH"

I entered in a darkened room,
The chamber of the dead;
Behold a child most sweetly fair,
In a little shroud of white lay there,
Holy and calm his features were,
Though light and life had fled:
And tearful eyes did vigil keep.
No more he'll wake, no more he'll weep —
Sweetly asleep — sweetly asleep.

I entered in the graveyard lone,
With sad and solemn tread;
They laid that lovely child to rest,
Calmly within the earth's cold breast;
And mourners hushed their waiting, lest

They wake the silent dead;
Down in the grave, silent and deep,
No more to sorrow or to weep —
Sweetly asleep — sweetly asleep.

Methought I entered in the fold
Of heavenly peace and joy;
And lo! beside "still waters," I
A lovely spirit did descry,
Slumbering most calmly, quietly.
That spirit was your boy!
And seraphs' eyes bright vigil keep.
No more he'll sorrow, no more weep —
Sweetly asleep — sweetly asleep.

By faith I entered in the fold
Which the great Shepherd tendeth;
Lo! in His arms a lamb most fair
Safely the Shepherd guardeth there;
A "little one" with watchful care
He loveth and defendeth.
Then for your lost one do not weep,
Your little lamb the Lord will keep,
Sweetly asleep — sweetly asleep.

Caroline E. Roberts.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

THERE is a reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" said he,
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes;
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord hath need of these flowerets gay,"
The reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care.
And saints upon their garments white
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave in tears and pain
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away!

LONGFELLOW.

— ♦ —

WEEP NOT FOR THE DEAD

Oh, weep not for the dead!
Rather, oh, rather, give the tear
To those that darkly linger here,
When all besides are fled.

Weep for the spirit withering
In its cold cheerless sorrowing,
Weep for the young and lovely one
That ruin darkly revels on;
But never be a teardrop shed
For them, the pure enfranchised dead.

Oh, weep not for the dead!
No more for them the blighting chill,
The thousand shades of earthly ill,
The thousand thorns we tread;
Weep for the life-charm early flown,
The spirit broken, bleeding, lone;
Weep for the death-pangs of the heart
Ere being from the bosom part;

But never be a tear-drop given
To those that rest in yon blue heaven.

MARY E. BROOKS.

— ♦ —

EARLY CALLED

ERE sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care,
The opening bud to heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there.

COLERIDGE.

"Of Such Is the Kingdom of Heaven"

LITTLE children were brought to Jesus, during his earthly ministry, by some who had faith in the efficacy of his blessing, and who desired that these little ones should be partakers of it. But his disciples reproved those who brought them. For some reason, they did not think it proper for these parents or friends to trouble the Master to perform the ceremony common among the Jews, of laying hands upon the child, or the person for whom a blessing was sought. Mark (10:14) says, that in view of the conduct of his disciples, "Jesus was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Luke, (18:15, 17,) in relating the transaction, adds, with Mark, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no-wise enter therein. And then, Matthew says, "He laid his hands on them." Mark says, "He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

But in what sense may this coming of infants to Jesus be interpreted? In what respect is "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of God," fitted for them, or they for it? These terms have the same meaning. "Kingdom of heaven" is used by Matthew, not by Mark and Luke. And Matthew himself uses the two phrases indiscriminately when he says, "Verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Matt. 19:23, 24. There are three principal applications given to

the words in the New Testament: first, to the church visible; second, to the church invisible, or spiritual; third, to the church in glory.

The visible Christian church in its beginnings may be dated from the day of Pentecost. Jesus, entering upon his ministry, began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4:17. And when he sent the twelve "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," his commission to them was, "Preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 10:7.

This visible Christian church is composed of those who professing to believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord, have by water, as the sign of the new life, been baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28:19.

But the church is compared by our Saviour to a field of wheat and tares. Matt. 13:24-30. And to a fisherman's net, gathering of every kind, bad and good. Matt. 13:47. It is not a winnowed society. Many enter it who do not give good evidence, by holy lives, of true conversion from the guilt and power of sin. When therefore our Saviour in blessing the children, said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," he meant something higher than the visible church.

If we look at the second meaning of "kingdom of heaven," as referring to grace in the heart, or to those who are members of Christ's mystical body, which is his true church — and which by our Saviour is compared to hidden treasure, and to a pearl of great price, earnestly sought, and when found, filling the soul with joy, (Matt. 13:44-46,) we do not perceive the applicability of the term to infants. They are not capable of seeking, or of prizing the blessings of salvation. Nor is this capability necessary on their part, if God has otherwise provided, as we doubt not he has, that dying in infancy they will be saved. "When God determines the

salvation of a soul, he also determines the means of its preparation for heaven; and we know nothing of his particular purposes but by their results in personal character. The dying infant has the character to which heaven is promised."[1]

We come then, thus briefly, to the conviction that the phrase "kingdom of heaven," as applied to infants, means, that in the future life they will constitute a large proportion of the saved; implying that "not one of these little ones will perish," Matt. 18:14; that there is a sense in which, literally, the little child may be greatest in Christ's glorious and eternal kingdom; teaching not only that adults must cultivate the character of little children, in humility and love and unselfish obedience, in order to enter Christ's kingdom of glory, (1 Cor. 6:9,) but also that if little children are a type of what Christians ought to be, then surely they will not fail of salvation.

Jesus has gone to receive this kingdom. Luke 19:12. "There are many mansions in our Heavenly Father's house, and ample and delightful accommodations are provided for the countless hosts of little children who will be gathered there."[2]

The Rev. John Newton says, "I think it at least highly probable, that where our Lord says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' He does not only intimate the necessity of our becoming like little children in simplicity, as a qualification without which, as he expressly declares in other places, we cannot enter into his kingdom, but informs us of a fact, that the number of infants who are effectually redeemed unto God by his blood so greatly exceeds the aggregate of adult believers, that, comparatively speaking, his kingdom may be said to consist of little children."

Dr. Scott, in unison with Dr. Newton, says in his commentary, that "the expression may intimate that the kingdom of *heavenly glory* is greatly constituted of such as die in their infancy."

---

[1] Dr. G. W. Bethune.
[2] Dr. A. Alexander.

"The expression," says Dr. Russell, who has treated this subject with great ability, "means that of such it is in a great measure made up, because they will form a very great proportion of the redeemed family of heaven." It is the comment of Calvin, "When Christ says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' nothing can be plainer than that he intends those who are in a state of real infancy. And to prevent this from being thought unreasonable he adds, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"[3]

In this aspect how comforting to the bereaved Christian parent is the assuring hope of a reunion where there is no more death. Oh, blessed promise of our risen and ascended Lord, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John 14:19. Oh! wonderful prayer, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." John 17:24. And can we believe that the life of Jesus and the prayer of Jesus will be less efficacious for the unsinning infant than for the sinning parent? Can we doubt that Paradise is as well fitted for the spiritual education of the little child, as of the believing thief? Is it not the doorway or vestibule to the greater glories of a perfected redemption, of both small and great, in "the resurrection of the just," Luke 14:14, "the resurrection of life," John 5:29, at our Lord's second coming?

Dry then your tears, ye parents, from whom God has taken your infant children. It is not the will of your Father that one of them should perish. Matt. 18:14. They are not lost for ever! They die to live! Are you so living as to meet them in the better land?

S. C.

[3] See "Infants in Heaven," Dr. J. M. McDonald.

LITTLE ONES GOING HOME

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

They are going — only going —
Jesus called them long ago;
All the wintry time they're passing
Softly as the falling snow.
When the violets in the spring-time
Catch the azure of the sky,
They are carried out to slumber
Sweetly where the violets lie.

They are going — only going —
When with summer earth is dressed,
In their cold hands holding roses
Folded to each silent breast;
When the autumn hangs red banners
Out above the harvest sheaves,
They are going — ever going —
Thick and fast, like falling leaves.

All along the mighty ages,
All adown the solemn time,
They have taken up their homeward
March to that serener clime,
Where the watching, waiting angels
Lead them from the shadow dim,
To the brightness of His presence
Who has called them unto Him.

They are going — only going —
Out of pain and into bliss,
Out of sad and sinful weakness
Into perfect holiness.
Snowy brows! no care shall shade them;
Bright eyes! tears shall never dim;
Rosy lips! no time shall fade them;
Jesus called them unto him.

Hearts to be for ever stainless —
Hands to be as pure as they,
Little feet by angels guided
Never in forbidden way;
They are going — ever going!
Leaving many a lonely spot;
But 'tis Jesus who has called them:
Suffer, and forbid them not.

— ♦ —

THE KEY

A mother knelt o'er her loved one's tomb,
And her eyes were red with weeping,
For her cherished flower, in its morning bloom,
Was now in the cold earth sleeping.
The coffin's key was in her hand,
In her heart the deepest sadness;
And her spirit yearned for the better land,
Where grief would be turned to gladness.

"I will keep the key," she calmly said,
"Of the dwelling dark and lonely,
So that none thy rest shall ever invade,
But the mother who loved thee only."
She turned her eyes to heaven's bright dome,
Where the silent stars were beaming,
And her spirit caught in childlike tone
These words of holiest meaning:

"Throw away the key, O mother dear,
For the coffin holds not thy child;
He has risen from earth, and dwelleth here,
For the Saviour upon him smiled."

JEAN PAUL.

— ♦ —

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM"

I dearly love a little child,
And Jesus loved young children too;
He ever sweetly on them smiled,
And placed them with his chosen few
When, cradled on its mother's breast,
A babe was brought to Jesus' feet,
He laid his hand upon its head,
And blessed it with a promise sweet.

"Forbid them not!" the Saviour said,
"Oh! suffer them to come to me!
Of such my heavenly kingdom is:
Like them may all my followers be!"
Young children are the gems of earth,
The brightest jewels mothers have;
They sparkle on the throbbing breast,
But brighter shine beyond the grave.

MRS. MARY S. B. DANA.

— ♦ —

A TRUE STORY

"Greater love hath no man than this."

From a home that had two darlings
One was called and went away,
Baby Ralph; and little Willie
Missed him sorely at his play.
As one day he talked about him,
Wondering much where he had gone,
Wishing much he would not tarry,
Brother Willie was so lone,
Said the mother, so beguiling
Something of her secret pain,
"What would Willie give if only
Baby Ralph could come again?"
Drooped the little head in silence,
Thinking hard, 'twas plain to see;

Then he spoke out strong and tender,
"Mamma, I would give God me."

Rev. J. W. Chadwick.

– ♦ –

DEATH'S WHISPER

"Be, rather than be called, a child of God,"
Death whispered. With assenting nod,
Its head upon its mother's breast,
The baby bowed without demur;
Of the kingdom of the blest
Possessor, not inheritor.

Coleridge.

– ♦ –

EPITAPH

Bold infidelity, turn pale and die!
Under this stone an infant's ashes lie;
Say, is it lost, or saved?
If death's by sin, it sinned, for it lies here;
If heaven's by works, in heaven it can't appear.
Ah, reason! how depraved!
Revere the Bible's sacred page — the knot's untied,
It died through Adam's sin — it lives, for Jesus died.

"I Shall Go to Him"



THIS is the utterance of a submissive heart. David had greatly sinned against God, and God had chastised him in not granting his request that the child whom he so dearly loved might live. His prolonged fastings and earnest prayers were unavailing. Under the searching reproof of Nathan, the king of Israel had said, "The man that hath done this shall surely die." But in view of his penitence God forgave his sin, though he commanded his prophet to proclaim as a punishment of his guilt, that although *he* was spared, the child should surely die. And the child did die. It went to a better world.

So David thought. He did not believe that the child though dead was for ever lost to him. He submitted to God's just chastisement in taking away the child, but he derived great consolation from the persuasion that he should meet him again. Hence his tranquillity and expression of resignation to his servants: "Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." "The elders," says Dr. Chalmers, "had quite miscalculated the influence of the death of the child upon the mind of the afflicted king; but the real history is in perfect keeping with all experience of the workings of the human heart. The object was no longer to be prayed about, and far less to be felt about than before. So much more tolerable is a state of decision, even when adverse, than a state of uncertainty and suspense." The words, "I shall go to him," are expressive of his full conviction of a future meeting and recognition of the *child* for whom he had prayed, and for whom he mourned.

David believed that the purpose and promise of God of a future life of blessedness to all who trust in him, was applicable to his child as to himself. This belief, moreover, did not rest upon a mere fancy or impression, for David was among the holy men of God who spake as moved by the Holy Ghost, who was in covenant with God, and whose words come down to us with a divine authority and sanction. The faith therefore of David ought to comfort the mourner: that in the wise arrangement of Him who doeth all things well, the little child who is released from suffering has gone to a better world.

An interesting question, which I presume not positively to answer, but which has doubtless exercised many a thoughtful mind, as it has contemplated the possibilities of the unseen world, is the physical — if I may use the term in speaking of a spirit which has left the natural body — and mental condition of infants in paradise. Are they infants there, as here? Will they be children in Christ's coming kingdom, as they were when on earth? Will David again meet and embrace his child as a child, or will that child have grown to manhood?

The question is thus presented in verse:

"WHAT SHALL IT BE?

"An infant's soul — the sweetest thing on earth,
To which endowments beautiful are given,
As might befit a more than mortal birth —
What shall it be, when midst its winning mirth,
And love, and trustfulness, 't is borne to heaven?
Will it grow into might above the skies —
A spirit of high wisdom, glory, power,
A cherub guard of the eternal tower,
With knowledge filled of its vast mysteries?
Or will perpetual childhood be its dower —

To sport for ever, a bright joyous thing,
Amid the wonders of the shining throngs,
Yielding its praise in glad, but feeble tones,
A tender dove beneath the Almighty's wing?"

There are two opinions upon this point. One is expressed by Longfellow in his verses on "Resignation," when he says,

"There is no flock, however watched or tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

* * * * *

"Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child,

"But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace,
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face."

The other view, and that which seems to be more generally received is, that infants and children who are transplanted from this world of sin to a world of bliss, may remain children, that they will not lose their identity: the mother shall again clasp to her bosom the babe she lost, and families reunited shall find their home in one of the many mansions of our Father's house. Nor does this militate against the idea of mental and moral progress in the child. For, released from sin and suffering, and weakness and deformity, the child will be perfected in beauty and purity. We think the hope is warranted that "infant voices," in unison with the great multitude which none can number,

"Shall proclaim
Their glad hosannas to his name,"

who redeemed them with his blood, and who said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The Rev. E. H. Bickersteth in his celebrated poem, "Yesterday, To-day, and For ever," thus manifests his belief of the continuous identity of infants in glory:

"A babe in glory is a babe for ever.

* * * * *

Infancy
Is one thing, manhood one. And babes, though part
Of the true archetypal house of God
Built on the heavenly Zion, are not now,
Nor will be ever, massive rocks, rough-hewn,
Or ponderous corner-stones, or fluted shafts
Of columns, or far-shadowing pinnacles;
But rather as the delicate lily-work
By Hiram wrought for Solomon of old,
Enwreathed upon the brazen chapiters,
Or flowers of lilies round the molten sea.
Innumerable flowers thus bloom and blush in heaven."

In unison with this thought is the following extract from an address by Rev. Dr. Schauffler,

"TO BEREAVED PARENTS.

"It seems to me we need infant choirs in heaven to make up 'full concert to the angelic symphony.' Who will sing like unto them, of the manger, and the swaddling clothes, and of the Lord of all drawing nourishment from the bosom of a mortal mother! True, these are themes of infinite interest, and the delight and

wonder of angels. But ah! they are too tender for the archangel's powerful trump, too tender for the thundering notes of seraphim and cherubim.

"We must have infant choirs in heaven! And is it no privilege to know one of *our* dear ones among them? What an interest does not a father feel in listening to the sweet voices of the children in a choir, when he knows his beloved child is among the happy songsters. And is it not incomparably more precious to know them among the songsters of heaven? And oh! with what additional interest, with what quickened anticipations do I now look beyond the grave! I think of the moment when I shall fold my little ones to a father's bosom again, and that for ever, and tears of joy and gratitude flow down my cheeks involuntarily. Even now, while I am writing, the voices of two of my children — is it possible? — yes, of *my* children, are singing praises unto Him who became a poor babe and a man of sorrows for them and for all men. Oh, let them sing then! I can only wish to join them soon."

Our children with the Saviour will learn in one minute more of God and Christ and heaven, than we could ever teach them in all our lives. Oh! let us leave them there, all of them, and become daily more ready to join the

"Angels who stand round the throne,
And view our Immanuel's face"

and the

"Saints who stand nearer than they!"

redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and called close around his throne to sing the song, not of creation and providence only, but of redeeming love and sovereign grace.

S. C.

FOR EVER SAFE

WOUNDED, bleeding parents, weeping
O'er your earthly treasures lost,
Think not of the body sleeping
Cold and mouldering in the dust!

Think not of the ties thus sundered,
Never more to reunite —
Of your household casket plundered
Of a gem so pure and bright!

Rather let your chastened spirits,
Bowed to Heaven's supreme behest,
Think of her who now inherits
Perfect, pure, eternal rest.

Think — the privilege of sending
Spirits to that world so fair;
Then, in glad submission bending,
Bless Him that your lost one's there.

Lost? oh, no! but found for ever,
Never to be lost again,
Rescued by peculiar favor
From a world of sin and pain!

Raised to seats of heavenly glory,
Equal to the angel throng,
Hear her tell redemption's story
In her rapturous, endless song.

Cease, then, cease your sad complaining,
Let your inmost soul submit;
Soon with her may you be reigning,
Crowned and throned at Jesus' feet.

WILLIAM CUTTER.

— ♦ —

FAREWELL, MY CHILD

FAREWELL, my child! the Lord thy spirit calls
To leave a world of woe:
Sad on my heart the heavenly summons falls,
Yet since He wills it so,
I calm the rising agitation,
And say, with humble resignation,
Farewell, my child!

Farewell, my child! lent for a little while
Our drooping hearts to cheer;
Dear is thy loving voice, thy gentle smile,
Ah! who can tell how dear?
The sands are run, too quickly falling:
The Giver comes, his own recalling:
Farewell, my child!

Farewell, my child! enjoy in heaven's pure day
What earth must still deny;
Here many a storm awaits thy longer way,
And many a tear thine eye.
Go, where the flowers have never faded,
Where love may smile unchilled, unshaded:
Farewell, my child!

Farewell, my child! soon shall we meet again
In the good land of rest:
Thou goest, happy one! ere grief or pain
Have reached thy gentle breast.
Happy, our thorny path forsaking,
From life's vain dream so early waking:
Farewell, my child!

Farewell, my child! angels are bending down
To set thy spirit free;
The Saviour holds in heaven the golden crown
He won on earth for thee.
Yea, now in Him thou art victorious:
Go, share his rest and triumph glorious.
Farewell, my child!

HOFFMAN.

"Thy Children Shall Come Again"



This language need not be limited to the past. It is a promise applicable to us and to our children, as well as to God's ancient covenant people. The things written by the prophets of old were written for our learning, that we, believing God's promises, might have hope.

By referring to the promise of Jeremiah, "Thy children shall come again," it will be seen that events pertaining to Christ's kingdom are evidently shadowed forth in the restoration of Israel. Whether we interpret the language literally or spiritually, there is yet to be a great gathering of the saved, who shall "sing in the height of Zion," and "the people of God shall be satisfied with his goodness."

The prophecy in which is found the promise, "Thy children shall come again," and which I have often used at the burial of children as appropriate and consolatory, is as follows:

"Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." Jer. 31:15-17.

We are told by Matthew that this prophecy was partially fulfilled in the slaughter of the children under two years old in Bethlehem and its neighborhood, when Herod, angry and disappoin-

ted that the infant Saviour had escaped the death he planned, cruelly resolved that they should die. Matt. 2:16-18.

What was the import of this prophecy and promise to those heart-broken mothers? As the descendants of Rachel through the tribes of Joseph and Benjamin, she, in them, is represented as weeping over her murdered offspring. But their sorrow, however deep, was not hopeless. For although refusing comfort, in view of the horrible cruelty which had made them childless, there was, in the very cause of their grief — as though their babes had died for Christ, early martyrs for his kingdom — an assurance, in some way not perhaps clearly discernible to them, of a blessed reunion in the life beyond. For they had the testimony of God, "Thy work shall be rewarded." "Thy children," slain by Herod's executioners, "shall come again from the land of the enemy." In view of all God's promises to Israel, and the additional light of a thousand years since David said at the death of his child, "I shall go to him," some of these Bethlehem mothers were no doubt comforted with the hope of again clasping their babes, never more to be separated. If indeed they belonged to the spiritual Israel, they believed in the resurrection from the dead, and that God's promises to them belonged also to their little children through faith. And on this basis would there not be deep meaning to them in the promise, "Thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy" — death! "They shall come again," in the resurrection, "to their own border" — the promised land?

If these Judean mothers, in the twilight of the Christian dispensation, could apply the prophecy and the promise to themselves, may not Christian parents, under the clearer light of the Saviour's mission, of his teachings, his example, his death and resurrection, his ascension into heaven, and the promise of his second coming in glory to gather his elect, also find great consolation in the assured hope of the safety of their babes? Have they

not gone to be with Jesus? Did he not, when on earth, as he took them in his arms and blessed them, say, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"? Mourning mother, if you are trusting in Jesus as your Saviour, and are living in obedience to his laws, your child shall come again to you! You will go where he has gone, to be with Jesus! But it is not for us to know the glories of that meeting. Enough to know we must be like little children in humility and obedience and love, that we with them may sing together, and sing for ever, the enrapturing song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

S. C.

– ♦ –

THE SHEPHERD AND THE LAMB

"There is hope that thy children shall come again." Jer. 31:17.

Tender Shepherd, thou hast stilled
Now thy little lamb's brief weeping;
Ah, how peaceful, pale, and mild,
In its narrow bed 'tis sleeping,
And no sigh of anguish sore
Heaves that little bosom more.

In this world of care and pain,
Lord, thou wouldst no longer leave it;
To the sunny, heavenly plain
Thou dost now with joy receive it;
Clothed in robes of spotless white,
Now it dwells with thee in light.

Ah, Lord Jesus, grant that we
Where it lives may soon be living,
And the lovely pastures see
That its heavenly food are giving;
Then the gain of death we prove,
Though thou take what most we love.

— ♦ —

DEATH OF AN INFANT

"Death found strange beauty on that cherub brow,
And dashed it out."

There was a tint of rose
On cheek and lip; he touched the veins with ice,
And the rose faded.
Forth from those blue eyes
There spake a wishful tenderness, a doubt
Whether to grieve or sleep, which innocence
Alone may wear. With ruthless haste he bound
The silken fringes of those curtaining lids
For ever.
There had been a murmuring sound,
With which the babe would chain its mother's ear,
Charming her even to tears. The spoiler set
His seal of silence.
But there beamed a smile
So fixed, so holy, from that marble brow,
Death gazed — and left it there. *He dared not steal*
The signet-ring of heaven.

Mrs. Sigourney.

THE ALPINE SHEPHERD

A shepherd long had sought in vain
To call a wandering sheep;
He strove to make her pathway plain
Through dangers thick and deep.

But still the wanderer stood aloof,
And still refused to come;
Nor would she ever hear reproof,
Or turn to seek her home.

At last the gentle shepherd took
Her little lamb from view,
The mother turned with anguished look,
She turned and followed too.

— ♦ —

SAFE HOME

The lamb is in the fold,
In perfect safety penned;
The lion once had hold,
And thought to make an end;
But One came by with wounded side,
And for the lamb the Shepherd died.

THE BEST FOR THE BABY

WELL done of God, to halve the lot,
  And give him all the sweetness:
For me the empty room and cot,
  For him the heaven's completeness.

S. N. G.

"Are They Not Ministering Spirits?"

❦

The apostle is speaking of angels. But the term ministering spirits may apply to other than angelic messengers. We understand that a ministering spirit for good is one sent of God to aid and bless the person ministered unto. And many a mother mourning the removal of her child by death, loves to think of it, though without scriptural warrant, as a celestial being whom God may commission to watch over and to comfort her. God's angels are spirits; may not her absent one, introduced, perhaps, into their fellowship, and sharing their employments, be very near to her?

The service of angels is a truth often and clearly revealed in the Bible. It is indeed a principle in the divine government in this life, that the strong shall minister to the weak. Parents are to provide for their children; the rich to care for the poor; the learned to instruct the ignorant; the pure to raise the fallen. In fine, one great lesson which revelation teaches us is, do good to all, minister according to the ability God has given you.

But God takes the child from these earthly ministries. So far as from revelation he has given us any glimpses of the unseen world, and any innate ideas of the condition of the infant-dead, it is not improbable that the unformed mind when separated from the body is, in the benevolence of God's plans, transplanted for its development and training to a better school and better influences than it were possible to have in this world of sin. And so, in faith, the Christian parent says, "I shall go to him." We have a conviction indeed that the infant of a day, or the little child, is not lost; that death does not end all with him. Sure we are that the spirit

— God's breath — is not buried in the churchyard. The little grave which love has planted with flowers, and which affection waters with tears, contains only the *casket*; the *jewel* is in a brighter, better land.

Hence we venture the suggestion, that the young child, in its spiritual nature, may be developing its powers under the Divine tutelage, and waiting with the saved the redemption of the glorified resurrection body at the coming of its Lord and Saviour. For the consummation of the believer's hope is reserved until that hour, although, with the Psalmist, even now, he can anticipate its blessedness, and say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

And so, the child in paradise may wait. It may even make great progress in its spiritual growth. Unincumbered by its corporeity, it may learn more of God and of heaven in one of our years, than in a lifetime on earth. The consideration that infants have no actual transgressions for which to answer, and that the death of Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven to them, as to believers, is, we think, a valid reason for the early development of the spiritual nature, and for growth in wisdom and knowledge unattainable here. And so, while we cherish the blessed hope of recognition in the world of spirits, we can conceive that God, through angelic ministries, may be educating the little child in paradise for a higher service than he could have filled on earth, though he had lived his fourscore years; and that myriads of mourning parents may have cause to praise him, through eternity, for his love in removing to the better land, ere sin had marred its life, the beautiful child which might have proved a hindrance in their way to heaven.

S. C.

A MINISTERING ANGEL

MOTHER, has the dove that nestled
  Lovingly upon thy breast,
Folded up his little pinion,
  And in darkness gone to rest?

Nay, the grave is dark and dreary,
  But the loved one is not there;
Hear'st thou not its gentle whisper
  Floating on the ambient air?

It is near thee, gentle mother,
  Near thee at the evening hour;
Its soft kiss is in the zephyr,
  It looks up from every flower.

And when, night's dark shadows fleeing,
  Low thou bendest thee in prayer,
And thy heart feels nearest heaven,
  Then thy angel babe is there!

EMILY JUDSON.

REDEEMED AND GLORIFIED CHILDREN

Sure, to the mansions of the blest
When infant innocence ascends,
Some angel, brighter than the rest,
The spotless spirit's flight attends.
On wings of ecstasy they rise
Beyond where worlds material roll,
Till some fair sister of the skies
Receives the unpolluted soul.

Fond mourner, be that solace thine!
Let Hope her healing charm impart,
And soothe, with melodies divine,
The anguish of a mother's heart.
Oh, think, the darlings of thy love,
Divested of this earthly clod,
Amid unnumbered saints above
Bask in the bosom of their God.

Of their short pilgrimage on earth
Still tender images remain;
Still, still they bless thee for their birth,
Still filial gratitude retain.

Each anxious care, each rending sigh,
That wrung for them the parent's breast,
Dwells on remembrance in the sky,
Amid the raptures of the blest.

Hark! in such strains as saints employ,
  They whisper to thy bosom peace;
Calm the perturbed heart to joy,
  And bid the streaming sorrow cease.
Then dry, henceforth, the bitter tear:
  Their part and thine inverted see,
Thou wast their guardian angel here,
  They guardian angels now to thee!

— ♦ —

THE SINGING OF CHILDREN

Who shall sing, if not the children?
  Did not Jesus die for them?
May they not, with other jewels,
  Sparkle in his diadem?
Why to them were voices given —
  Bird-like voices, sweet and clear?
Why, unless the song of heaven
  They begin to practise here?

There's a choir of infant songsters
  White-robed, round the Saviour's throne;
Angels to their music listen,
  Oh, 'tis sweeter than their own!

Faith can hear the rapturous choral,
  When her ear is upward turned;
Is not this the same, perfected,
  Which upon the earth they learned?

Jesus, when on earth sojourning,
  Loved them with a wondrous love;
And will he to heaven returning,
  Faithless to his blessing prove?
Oh, they cannot sing too early;
  Fathers stand not in their way!
Birds sing while the day is breaking —
  Tell me, then, why should not they?

— ♦ —

THE ANGELS' CALL

"WHAT sounds so sweet await me?
  What fills me with delight!
O mother, look! who sings thus
  So sweetly through the night?"

"I hear not, child, I see not;
  Oh, sleep thou softly on;
Comes now to serenade thee
  Thou poor sick darling, none!"

"It is not earthly music
  That fills me with delight;
I hear the angels call me,
  O mother dear, good night."

CELESTIAL HARMONIES

And when glad faith doth catch
Some echo of celestial harmonies,
Archangels' praises, with the high response
Of cherubim, and seraphim, oh think —
Think that your babe is there.

— ♦ —

COMMUNING IN HEAVEN

Oft in my mansion would some elder saint
(For dignity was there humility)
Linger and tell his story, or ask mine:
Or I would listen from an infant's lips
A tale of such delightsomeness as poured
New meaning into words henceforth. And oft
A group of the beatified enlinked
In all the bonds of holy lineage,
Would cluster underneath the trees of life,
One eye kindling another, one deep thought
Waking another thought, and this another,
Until all bosoms overflowed with love,
And all perforce would hasten to the throne,
And at their Father's footstool pour their hearts
In one full tide of rapture forth.

E. H. Bickersteth.

Recognition in Heaven

A recognition in the future life, of those we have known and loved in this world, is the prevailing sentiment of believers in the Christian revelation. "Life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel."

> "The kindred tie that bound us here,
> Though rent apart with many a tear,
> Shall be renewed in heaven."

The following selections, from the writings of distinguished theologians, will give their views, and serve to illustrate the probabilities of the doctrine of a heavenly recognition and reunion of parent and child.

Doddridge wrote: "Let me be thankful for the pleasing hope that, though God loves my child too well to permit it to return to me, he will ere long bring me to it. And then that endeared paternal affection, which would have been a cord to tie me to earth and have added new pangs to my removal from it, will be as a golden chain to draw me upwards, and add one further charm and joy to paradise itself."

Edwards said: "The father shall know that such a one was his child; the husband shall remember that such a one was his wife; . . . and so all other relations of persons shall be renewed and known in heaven."

The Rev. William Jay wrote to his daughter on the death of an interesting little girl under five years of age, who had been a patient sufferer: "This is an event of congratulation rather than of

condolence. At the grave of infants we always feel a peculiar satisfaction, arising from the persuasion that they are disposed of infinitely to their advantage. Under the protracted illness of this little martyr, the Saviour said to the parents, 'Suffer this little child to come unto me, and forbid her not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' The Shepherd has gathered this lamb with his arms, and now carries it in his bosom."

To a parishioner and friend, on the death of two of his children, Mr. Jay also wrote: "Intervening objects are often removed that God may be seen, and even death commands silence that He may be heard. And the *blessed* sufferer, the *sanctified* sufferer, is the *humble suppliant*, who wipes his eyes and says, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.' 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' . . . If my prayers for you are answered, . . . you will be enabled to say, 'Well, my darlings are not lost, but provided for. . . . I shall find them again in yonder happy world. I shall embrace them all perfect and immortal.'"

"Our journey is a thorny maze,
But we march upward still,
Forget the troubles of the ways,
And rest at Zion's hill."

Dr. Emmons wrote: "All pious brothers and sisters, all pious parents and children, all pious husbands and wives, and all pious friends, . . . will be for ever known to each other and intimately connected in heaven, and mutually promote each other's felicity."

Matthew Henry in his Commentary says: "This may comfort us when our children are removed from us by death: they are better provided for, both in work and wealth, than they could be in this world. We shall be with them shortly, to part no more."

Rutherford, September 7, 1647, writes to Lady Gaitgirth: "Let the Lord pluck his own fruit at any season he pleaseth. Your

children are not lost to you; they are laid up so well, as that they are coffered in heaven, where our Lord's best jewels lie."

Similar encouraging thoughts relating to the heavenly reunion and recognition of parents and children might be multiplied. These, however, may suffice to reconcile some sorrowing mother, perhaps some murmuring father, to God's righteous ways; to get a glimpse of his loving-kindness in what is, for the present, a most grievous trial; to realize, as never before, the nearness to the world of spirits; and to draw the affections heavenward. In the light of revelation, what more consolatory and hopeful than the death of a little child! God loaned the treasure for a little while. As he has seen fit to send for it, let it be cheerfully, or at least submissively returned. For he will keep it and train it, as no earthly parent can, for the highest good of the child, and for the ultimate blessedness of the Christian parent in the heavenly reunion of parent and child,

> "Where worlds no more can sever
> Parent and child for ever."

S. C.

— ♦ —

WAITING FOR YOU

One little lamb in the upper fold,
From the heat of summer, and winter's cold,
Safe from earth's guile
And its dreams untrue,
One little lamb
Is waiting for you.

One little darling, whose pattering feet,
With the prophets of old, tread the golden street,
Or wander for ever
'Mid Eden's bowers,
Is waiting for you
Through the golden hours.

One little spirit, that only came
Earthward to murmur her mother's name,
Luring her heart
To the land above,
In the broken accents
Of baby love.

One little lamb, from all sorrow free
Through the long years of eternity —
From the heat of summer
And winter's cold —
Is waiting for you
In the upper fold.

T. P. M.

— ♦ —

TRUST AND HOPE

Ye who mourn
Whene'er yon vacant cradle, or the robes
That decked the lost one's form, call back a tide
Of alienated joy, can ye not trust
Your treasure to His arms, whose changeless care
Passeth a mother's love? Can ye not hope,

When a few hastening years their course have run,
To go to him, though he no more on earth
Returns to you?

– ♦ –

THE MEETING

Oh, when a mother meets on high
  The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
  The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
  An over-payment of delight?

R. Southey.

– ♦ –

THE DYING BOY

It must be sweet in childhood to give back
The spirit to its Maker, ere the heart
Has grown familiar with the paths of sin,
And sown — to garner up its bitter fruits!
I knew a boy whose infant feet had trod
Upon the blossoms of some seven springs;
And when the eighth came round, and called him out
To revel in its light, he turned away,
And sought his chamber, to lie down and die.

* * * * * * *

This was his last request:
"Now, mother, sing the tune
You sung last night; I'm weary, and must sleep.
Who was it called my name? Nay, do not weep;
You'll all come soon."

J. H. Bright.

— ♦ —

WITHIN THE FOLD

There was once a Shepherd — and He ever liveth — whose tender, loving care was over his flock by day and by night. One of his flock would not follow him; so he took her little lamb in his arms, and then the mother turned and sought him.

Children in the Resurrection

❦

The Christian doctrine of a resurrection of the body comes to our comfort in the death of little children. It might be asked, Shall we see the same tiny form and the features of infancy and childhood? or will they be raised perfect in stature as in spirit? We naturally desire to see them again just as they were; and yet we associate with a form like theirs the idea of weakness and imperfection. This, however, may be a prejudice of earth. The little form may be retained, and yet be a vessel large enough to contain the fulness of God's blessing, for even here his gifts and grace are not measured by size and stature. . . . . We may carry our little ones in our memories, and imagine how they will look when we again behold them — not to find, as when we have long been separated on earth, that they have changed out of all recollection, but that they are still the same, though beautiful and perfected in cherubic glory. The child shall appear, we may hope, as when cradled in our arms: only those eyes which then looked up and gladdened us shall shine with a heavenly lustre, that voice which then was music to us shall have more of the tone of the world of sacred song; but we shall know at the first glance that this is the little form which once sported about our homes, which has often, after separation, visited us in our dreams, and now in living reality is to be clasped in our arms, no more to be rent from us. We will await that meeting, thankful for the comforting recollections of the past and the cheering anticipations of the future, which alleviate our present bereavement, and with full hearts blessing God that so much mercy is mingled with the trial.

That moment of reunion will repay all our sorrows. "Should any parent," says Dr. Chalmers, "feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we venture too far when we say that he has only to persevere in the faith and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and it will there gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him, who if on earth would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers to sorrow not even as others who have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation."

— ♦ —

THE WORM AND THE CHRYSALIS

"MOTHER, how still the baby lies!
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes —
They tell me this is death.

"They say that he again will rise,
More beautiful than now;
That God will bless him in the skies.
O mother, tell me how!"

"Daughter, do you remember, dear,
The cold, dark thing you brought,
And laid upon the casement here,
A withered worm, you thought?

"I told you that Almighty power
  Could break that withered shell,
And show you, in a future hour,
  Something would please you well.

"Look at the chrysalis, my love;
  An empty shell it lies;
Now raise your wondering glance above
  To where yon insect flies!"

"Oh yes, mamma! how very gay
  Its wings of starry gold!
And see! it lightly flies away
  Beyond my gentle hold.

"O mother, now I know full well,
  If God that worm can change,
And draw it from its broken cell,
  On golden wings to range,

"How beautiful will brother be
  When God shall give him wings,
Above this dying world to flee,
  And live with heavenly things!"

MRS. GILMAN.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM the golden! there all our birds that flew,
Our flowers that half unfolded, our pearls that turned to dew,
And all the glad life music, now heard no longer here,
Shall come again to greet us as we are drawing near.

— ♦ —

RESURRECTION

And see!
'T is come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heaven and earth! Awakening nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life,
In every heightened form, from pain and death
For ever free.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

— ♦ —

REUNION

I have heard you say
That we shall see and know our friends in heaven;
If that be true, I shall see my boy again;
For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,
To him that did but yesterday suspire,
There was not such a gracious creature born.

SHAKESPEARE, KING JOHN.

Children with Jesus

❦

We cannot pretend to determine in what manner the spirits of little children will be employed in the mansions of glory. But surely those purest and loveliest, where all are pure and lovely, will not be without their appropriate employment. They may be, perhaps, the choristers of heaven. How inexpressibly sweet these melodious voices of the innumerable multitude of redeemed children, as they celebrate the praises of him who has washed them from their sins in his own blood, "till not a spot remains." Oh how sublime, how magnificently glorious that burst of praise, as it swells through the aisles of heaven's great sanctuary. Heart-stricken parent, who art mourning with such bitterness of soul over the death of thy beloved child, and almost refusing to be comforted because he is not, what if God removed thy child, to supply the room of one promoted to a higher place in the children's choir? Dost thou grudge him to God for such a purpose? Wouldst thou be so selfish as to detain him from such glory, that he might please thee for a while on earth? No, surely, if a wish could bring him back, thou wouldst not breathe it. It is a happiness and a glory far beyond what it has entered the heart of man to conceive; and this will reconcile thee to the thought of separation, assured as thou art, that thy loss is his unspeakable gain.

Rev. W. B. Clark.

THE CHERUB BAND

God looked among his cherub band,
And one was wanting there,
To swell along the holy land
The hymns of praise and prayer.

One little soul which long had been
Halfway 'tween earth and sky,
Untempted in a world of sin,
He watched with loving eye.

It was too promising a flower
To bloom upon the earth,
And God did give it angel power,
And bright celestial birth.

The world was all too bleak and cold
To yield it quiet rest;
God brought it to his shepherd's fold,
And laid it on his breast.

There, mother, in thy Saviour's arms,
For ever undefiled,
Amid the little cherub band,
Is thy beloved child.

CHILDREN IN GLORY

AROUND the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand,
Children, whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band,
Singing, Glory, glory, glory be to God on high!

In flowing robes of spotless white
See every one arrayed,
Dwelling in everlasting light
And joys that never fade,
Singing, Glory, glory, glory be to God on high!

What brought them to that world above,
That heaven so bright and fair,
Where all is peace, and joy, and love?
How came those children there,
Singing, Glory, glory, glory be to God on high?

Because the Saviour shed his blood
To wash away their sin,
Bathed in that pure and precious blood,
Behold them white and clean,
Singing, Glory, glory, glory be to God on high!

On earth they sought the Saviour's grace,
On earth they loved his name;
So now they see his blessed face,
And stand before the Lamb,
Singing, Glory, glory, glory be to God on high!

The Shepherd and the Lambs

When the good Shepherd would draw his wandering sheep away from danger and gather them safely into his fold, he has no more effective mode than to take the little lambs up in his arms. Then the sheep will follow him. So he wins our worthless hearts. He takes our lambs away. He allures to brighter worlds by removing our brightest objects of affection here. Where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. He cuts the ties which bind us down, that our affections may be free to aspire upward to things above. How near the gate of heaven seems when we know that our children have just passed through it! And how precious the Saviour seems when we feel that our lambs are in his bosom! The ties which bound our hearts to earth will henceforth bind them to heaven. Who would not follow the good Shepherd to that house of many mansions, where he has been gathering these children of our love? Where is the Christian parent who has the precious and the unspeakable honor of a child ascended to God, who has not thereby been made to drink in more of the beauty and power of the gospel? And when the image of that sainted one has been obliterated here by lapse of time from all other hearts, how will it still linger, like the fragrance of crushed flowers, around his own! And though years may pass, and distance intervene, he will still love to breathe forth the tenderest sympathies of the soul in memory of the infant's dying couch and lowly tomb.

Dr. L. J. Halsey.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

When on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little rill from memory swelled,
Which once had soothed my bitter thirst;

And I was fain to bear to you
Some portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death
Like a long twilight haunting lay,

And friends came round, with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
This story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love:

"They in the valley's sheltering care
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The shepherd strives to make them climb

"To airy shelves of pastures green
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

"But naught can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie,

"Till in his arms the lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go;
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on o'er rock and snow.

"And in those pastures lifted fair,
More dewy soft than lowland mead,
The shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed."

This parable, by nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free
O'er frozen brooks, that float, unsheathed
From icy thraldom, to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the Good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the stony way,

Holding our little lamb asleep;
And like the burden of the sea
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, "Arise and follow me."

MARIA W. LOWELL.

The Better Land

❦

He who is infinite in love as well as wisdom has revealed to us the fact of a future life, and the fearfully important relation in which the present stands to it. The actual nature and conditions of that life he has hidden from us; no chart of the ocean of eternity is given us, no celestial guide-book or geography defines, localizes, and prepares us for the wonders of the spiritual world. Hence imagination has a wide field for its speculations, which, so long as they do not positively contradict the revelation of the Scriptures, cannot be disproved.

The brief hints afforded us by the sacred writings concerning the better land are inspiring and beautiful. Heaven is described as a quiet habitation, a rest remaining for the people of God. Tears shall be wiped away from all eyes; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. To how many death-beds have these words spoken peace! How many failing hearts have gathered strength from them to pass through the dark valley of shadows!

Yet we should not forget that "the kingdom of heaven is within;" that it is the state and affections of the soul, the answer of a good conscience, the sense of harmony with God, a condition of time as well as of eternity. What is really momentous and all-important with us is the present, by which the future is shaped and colored. A mere change of locality cannot alter the actual and intrinsic qualities of the soul. Guilt and remorse would make the golden streets of paradise intolerable as the burning marl of the

infernal abodes; while purity and innocence would transform hell itself into heaven.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

— ♦ —

"ONLY"

ONLY a little snow-white flower,
  Clasped in a baby's hand,
As she lay on a marble slab at rest
  With her soul in another land:

Only a little fragile flower:
But we have treasured it hour by hour,
And eagerly wait the moment when
We shall see our little one again.

Only a curl cut from her head,
  As she lay in her coffin at rest,
With one dimpled hand beneath her cheek,
  The other on her breast.
Only a little lock of hair,
Cut from a baby's head so fair;
But oft at even I sit and weep,
Longing with my babe to sleep.

Only a grave beneath a tree,
A tiny baby's grave,
But it bids me trust my treasure dear
To a Saviour ready to save.
Till after life's turmoil I shall see
My beautiful babe beyond the sea,
Where on another, brighter shore
I shall find my little babe once more.

K. Garnet.

— ♦ —

LOOK UPWARD

"Look upward, and your child you'll see
Fixed in his blest abode;
Who would not therefore childless be,
To give a child to God?"

Letter from Bishop Leighton

❦

My Bereaved Brother: I am glad of your health, and the recovery of your little ones; but, indeed, it was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead; and I felt it truly more than, to my remembrance, I did the death of any child in my lifetime. Sweet thing! and is he so quickly laid to sleep? Happy he! Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor of being sick, nor of dying; and hath wholly escaped the trouble of schooling, and other sufferings of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years — this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now much more akin to the other world; and this will quickly be passed to us all. Johnny is but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world and all things superfluous, beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down. It shall refresh me to hear from you at your leisure.

Your affectionate brother,
R. Leighton.

EDINBORO', JANUARY 16, 1677.

THE ETERNAL GAIN

Oh think, that while you're weeping here,
  His hand a golden harp is stringing:
And with a voice serene and clear,
His ransomed soul, without a tear,
  His Saviour's praise is singing.

And think that all his pains are fled,
  His toils and sorrows closed for ever;
While He whose blood for man was shed
Has placed upon his infant head
  A crown that fadeth never!

And think that in that awful day,
  When darkness sun and moon is shading,
The form that midst its kindred clay
Your trembling hands prepared to lay
  Shall rise to life unfading!

Then weep no more for him who's gone
  Where sin and suffering ne'er shall enter;
But on that great High Priest alone,
Who can for guilt like ours atone,
  Your whole affections centre.

Dr. Huie.

THE HAPPY EXCHANGE

Weep not for those
Who sink within the arms of death
Ere yet the chilling wintry breath
  Of sorrow o'er them blows;
But weep for them who here remain,
The mournful 'heritors of pain,
Condemned to see each bright joy fade,
And mark grief's melancholy shade
  Flung o'er hope's fairest rose.

Mrs. Embury.

Among the Graves

❦

Thanks to our Heavenly Father, the valley of the shadow of death is no longer "a land of darkness, and where the light is as darkness." The presence of a serene and holy life pervades it. Above its pale tombs and crowded burial-places, above the wail of despairing humanity, the voice of him who awakened life and beauty beneath the grave-clothes of the tomb at Bethany is heard proclaiming, "*I am the Resurrection and the Life!*" We know not, it is true, the conditions of our future life; we know not what it is to pass from this state of being to another; but before us in that dark passage has gone the Man of Nazareth, and the light of his footsteps lingers in the path. Where he, our Brother in his humanity, our Redeemer in his divine nature, has gone, let us not fear to follow. He who ordereth all aright will uphold with his own great arm the frail spirit when its incarnation is ended; and it may be that,

"When time's veil shall fall asunder,
The soul may know
No fearful change nor sudden wonder,
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,
But with the upward rise and with the vastness grow.

"And all we shrink from now may seem
No new revealing;
Familiar as our childhood's stream,
Or pleasant memory of a dream,
The loved and cherished past upon the new life stealing.

"Serene and mild the untried light
May have its dawning;
As meet in summer's northern night,
The evening gray and dawning white,
The sunset hues of time blend with the soul's new morning."

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

— ♦ —

THE CHEERFUL GIVER

"WHAT shall I render Thee! Father supreme,
For thy rich gifts, and this the best of all?"
Said a young mother, as she fondly watched
Her sleeping babe. There was an answering voice
That night in dreams. "Thou hast a little bud
Wrapt in thy breast, and fed with dews of love;
Give me that bud; 'twill be a flower in heaven."

But there was silence, yea, a hush so deep,
Breathless and terror-stricken, that the lip
Blanched in its trance. "Thou hast a little harp;
How sweetly it would swell the angels' songs!
Give me that harp." There burst a shuddering sob,
As if the bosom by some hidden sword
Was cleft in twain. Morn came, a blight had found

The crimson velvet of the unfolding bud;
The harp-string rang a thrilling strain, and broke,
And that young mother lay upon the earth
In childless agony. Again the voice
That stirred the vision: "He who asked of thee
Loveth a cheerful giver." So she raised
Her gushing eye, and ere the tear-drop dried
Upon its fringes, smiled. Doubt not that smile,
Like Abraham's faith, was counted righteousness.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

— ♦ —

THE HEAVENLY GARDEN

PERHAPS God does with his heavenly garden as we do with our own. He may chiefly stock it from nurseries, and select for transplanting what is yet in its young and tender age, flowers before they have bloomed, and trees ere they begin to bear.

REV. DR. GUTHRIE.

Triumphs of the Cross

THE most precious belief of the church of God is the salvation of the infant dead. Perhaps the greatest of all the triumphs of the cross of Christ will be found at last to be this, that it has saved half our race in a body, by calling them away from the world in infancy.

Perhaps the greatest joy that is now felt in heaven, in view of all things done on earth, is caused by this one event, which creates the deepest, widest wave of sorrow here, the infant's death. For if there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, can we doubt that there is joy there at the happy release of each little sufferer, as they pass from death's iron gates, one by one, into the heavens, to be for ever blessed on the bosom of their God? "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." How beautiful and glorious must be the infant's death!

DR. L. J. HALSEY.

— ♦ —

GOD'S LOVE

EVERY human tie may perish;
Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish;
Heaven and earth at last remove;
But no changes
Can avert the Father's love.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright;
But can never cease to love thee,
Thou art precious in his sight;
God is with thee,
God, thine everlasting light.

— ♦ —

THE RESURRECTION MORN

When we see a precious blossom
That we tended with such care,
Rudely taken from our bosom,
How our aching hearts despair!
'Round its little grave we linger,
Till the setting sun is low,
Feeling all our hopes have perished
With the flower we cherished so.

We shall sleep, but not for ever,
There will be a glorious dawn;
We shall meet, to part no never,
On the resurrection morn.

Christ's Sinless School

A thousand times over have I pitied more the mother of a living sorrow, than the mother of a departed joy. Parents, spare your tears for those whom you have laid down to sleep in their narrow beds of earth, with the now withered rosebud mingling with their dust. They are safe. Christ is their teacher now, and has them in his sinless school, where lessons of celestial wisdom are learned by eyes that never weep. Save your tears for your living children if they are yet living in their sins, unrepentant and unconverted.

Dr. Theo. L. Cuyler.

— ♦ —

A FLOWER REMOVED

Yes, thou art fled, and saints a welcome sing:
Thine infant spirit soars on angel wing.
Our dark affection might have hoped thy stay,
The voice of God has called the child away.
Like Samuel early in the temple found —
Sweet rose of Sharon, plant of holy ground,
Oh, more than Samuel blessed, to thee is given,
The God he served on earth to serve in heaven.

Cunningham.

DEATH

DEATH did not first strike Adam, the first sinful man, nor Cain, the first hypocrite, but Abel, the innocent and righteous. The first soul that met with death, overcame death; the first soul that parted from earth went to heaven. Death argues not displeasure, because he whom God loves best dies first, and the murderer is punished with living.

BISHOP HALL.

The Saviour's Love for Children

I am deeply impressed with the Saviour's love for little children. What is more precious and what more loved in the household than the babe, the precious life towards which all lives are looking and all hearts are beating; the centre of all interest and endeavor in the household? In my early manhood, I am ashamed to say, I used to have a dislike to children, and I thought that if ever I should be thus encumbered, I should prefer boys, who, I thought, were worth five times as much as girls. And behold, the first two births in my family were girls! Ah, but they were precious gifts! They have grown up to be Christian women, blessings to their father and invalid mother.

Well, the Lord gave us a boy, and what a blessing he was to my heart! When I used to come home from church, wearied with my labors, he, although only four years old, would come to the lounge on which I lay, and run his fingers through my hair, and say in his baby voice, "Are you tired, papa?" God took him to himself, and as he lay on the bed of death, his mother, lifting up her hand, said through her tears, "I thank thee, O God, that thou hast taken my boy, and given me a child in heaven." In neither mother's or father's heart was there the least rebellion, and we felt indeed that Christ was in our house. Thank God for the little children! Sometimes, when called to minister to bereaved parents, I have thought, what would heaven be without children? There is a beautiful picture by Murillo, the Spanish painter, of the Virgin Mary, with a circle of children, like a wreath of roses round her

head. I wish he had represented Christ instead, surrounded by the children he had called to himself.

I do not know the author of the verses which I add. They represent the scene in which little children were brought to the Saviour by "THE DARK-EYED MOTHERS OF JUDAH."

"They brought Him their babes, and besought Him,
Half kneeling, with suppliant air,
To bless the brown cherubs they brought Him,
With holy hands laid in their hair.

"Then reaching His hands, He said lowly,
'Of such is my kingdom;' and then
Took the brown little babes in the holy
White hands of the Saviour of men;

"Held them close to his heart, and caressed them,
Put His face down to theirs as in prayer,
Put their hands to His neck, and so blessed them,
With baby hands hid in His hair."

REV. C. H. A. BULKLEY.

— ♦ —

THE ANGEL AND THE INFANT

SMILING, a bright-eyed seraph bent
Over an infant's dream;
To view his mirrored form he leant,
As in the crystal stream.

"Fair infant, come," he whispered low,
"And leave the earth with me;
To a bright and happy land we'll go —
This is no home for thee.

"Each sparkling pleasure knows alloy,
No cloudless skies are here;
A care there is for every joy,
For every smile a tear.

"The heart that dances free and light,
May soon be chained by sorrow;
The sun that sets in calm to-night,
May rise in storm to-morrow.

"Alas! to cloud a brow so fair,
That griefs and pains should rise!
Alas! that this dark world of care
Should dim these laughing eyes!

"To seek a brighter land with me,
Infant, thou wilt not fear;
For piteous Heaven the sad decree
Recalls that sent thee here."

It seemed on him the sweet babe smiled,
The seraph spread his wings.
They're gone, the angel and the child,
To meet the King of kings.

From the German.

"Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me"



Oh forbid them not by one repining thought, one vain regret, one unbelieving fear. Weep, for Jesus wept; but sorrow not without hope. They sleep in Jesus; they shall be raised from dust incorruptible, made like to Christ's most glorious body, and enter the fulness of redemption. Weep, for nature must have relief; but weep in faith on the bosom of Him who from the cross comforted his only parent; yet a little while and he will take you up where you shall weep no more.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Dr. Bethune.

"'Oh!' said the gardener, as he passed down the garden-walk, 'who plucked that flower? who gathered that plant?' His fellow-servant answered, 'The Master!' and the gardener held his peace."

– ♦ –

RESIGNATION

I have had my days of blessing,
All the joys of life possessing;
  Unnumbered they appear!
Then let faith and patience cheer me,
Now that trials gather near me:
  Where is life without a tear?

Yes, O Lord, a sinner looking
O'er the sins thou art rebuking,
  Must own thy judgments light.
Surely I, so oft offending,
Must, in humble patience bending,
  Feel thy chastisements are right.

Let me, o'er transgression weeping,
Find the grace my soul is seeking,
  Receiving at thy throne
Strength to meet each tribulation,
Looking for the great salvation,
  Trusting in my Lord alone!

While, 'mid earthly tears and sighing,
Still to praise thee feebly trying,
  Still clinging, Lord, to thee;
Quietly on thy love relying,
I am thine — and, living, dying,
  Surely all is well with me.

C. F. Gellert.