

And to her, once more, thus spoke the Mother of the First born: "Behold and see, if there be any blessedness like unto mine!"

In joy, or in sorrow, Mother and Son together. By sorrow she, too, had learned sympathy with others, even as, when first her darling lay within her sheltering arms, she had felt akin to every mother that had known such joy as hers. This Mother, who had known joy and sorrow such as none had known, would she not share in every joy and sorrow of her sister-women?

How she told her husband, she never knew. It was all so strange, so new, so utterly at variance with their most cherished convictions. And yet so manifestly true. Beyond the veil that hides our other life was "Home," and, in its many mansions, all whom He had called to be with Him, all who had loved and served Him truly. And, in that Home of His who should have chief place, next Himself, if not His Mother? Close to that veil they two had lived ever since their little one had passed beyond its folds into the light that shines upon the other side. Close: Striving to catch some echo of her baby voice, some sound of her tiny feet; to feel some touch of her baby hands. And lo! to one of them, at least, had come the voice; for one, at least, and that one the mother whose joy had been deepest, and whose sorrow keenest, as it needs must be, the veil had been lifted, and from beyond it had her darling come to speak to her once more, if but for one passing moment. How could she doubt that it was really so? Nor could her husband doubt it, hearing her tell it all.

Surely, if but for an instant's space, the veil had been lifted for this mother whose sorrow had made her "kind as the Blessed Mother of God herself." And, beyond it, she had seen the

memory of a sorrow like unto none beside; the presence of an abiding blessedness with which none might compare. She had seen her darling holding the Christ Child's Hand, had seen the Christ Child in the arms of His Mother. No wonder that her husband, as he listened, seemed to see and hear what she had heard and seen.

But the lifting of the veil is not for those who yet must linger long on this side of it. Not many months had passed ere Eastbury Saint Simon's was, once more, in need of a rector. There had been a Catholic requiem at Gauntsbridge, over the body of the late rector's wife, a Catholic funeral in Eastbury Saint Simon's parish churchyard. And, over the grave, he who had been their rector told the weeping men and women how, from beyond the veil that bounds our narrow life, a little child had come to lead them both to Him who was a Child, born of a Pure Virgin, the Only Son of His Mother, who had stood by the Cross and had seen Him die, for us sinners. Told how the Son must love the Mother, and the Mother her Son: how, by her joys and sorrows in which He had His share, as she in His, she has learned to share, as He shares, in all the joys and sorrows of His brethren and sisters, to whom He gave her from the Cross, to be their Mother, too. Told how one had said of her they mourned, that she was "as kind as the Blessed Mother of God herself," and of the lesson that had taught her—and him.

So there is a cross in Eastbury Saint Simon's churchyard, with an inscription ending thus: "A little child shall lead them." And, in the Carmelite House at Barbury, there is an old lay-brother of whom they say that he is favored with strange visions of God's Paradise for children. I know not if it be so; if for him, too, the veil has ever been lifted. But, if it were, he would see, I think, his two best loved ones there: the little one holding the Hand of the Christ Child, and the wife and mother holding that of the Mother of Christ.