

THE CHILD'S DEATH.

The physicians turn gravely and silently away from the couch of the sick child the three years babe, the pride and light and joy of that beautiful home. The quick eye of the youthful mother reads, in their sad faces, the sentence of death, and her white lips breathe the words which rend her heart with its first deep anguish, "*The child must die.*"

"Must die! it cannot, shall not be," cries the father, in his strong, rebellious agony; but the sentence stands unrevoked, "*The child must die.*" Servants, gliding with noiseless footsteps through the luxurious apartments, whisper sadly to one another, "*The child must die;*" and over telegraphic wires, to distant kindred, and through the busy streets, to those more near, speeds the woe-fraught message, "*The child must die.*"

Bowing, with veiled face, before the great white throne, the guardian angel hears the glad message, "*The child may die;* hasten to earth, and bear her ransomed spirit to its heavenly home." The angel swiftly wings his earthward flight, while the joyful tidings speed through heavens's bright courts, "*Our God in love hath granted that the child may die.*"

There is agony in the earthly mansion, for *the child is dead*. No light enters at the darkened windows; no footstep at the door, which bears the sable badge of death; none may intermeddle with the grief of those who wail over their first born, "*Our child is dead.*"

There is joy in heaven. In the glorious mansion which Jesus has prepared for infant souls, are glad welcomes for the new-arrived, and songs of praise to God, from youthful choirs, chanting the sweet refrain, "*The child is dead—is dead to earth—and liveth, liveth forevermore in heaven.*"

The mother looks not up to see that her treasure is in heaven, her heart is in the coffin of her babe, and all the cold clods of the valley lie upon it. But Jesus from his throne of light looks down upon her with divine mercy, and sends his Spirit to whisper in the secret chambers of her soul the effectual call of His sovereign grace. Yet she knows not that the Lord is in the "*still small voice,*" which comes in the calm watches of the night, when she weeps for her child, whispering in harmony with her grief, this heavenly message:

Earth's griefs are abiding; tears cease, but to flow;
Through heaven's bright portals no mourning can go;
Earth's flowers are fading; each rose has a thorn;
Flowers thornless, undying, heaven's bowers adorn;
Earth's hopes but allure, to deceive and betray;
Heaven's blessed fruitions forever will stay;
Earth's inhabitants groan and travail in pain;
Heaven's denizens rest, and the rest shall remain.

Yea, earth is accursed, sin-polluted, defiled;
But heaven is all holy—the home of thy child.
Weep not that she died, unscathed, undefiled,
And liveth in heaven, a sanctified child;
But weep for *thyself*, for thy sins unforgiven,
Which debar thee forever from her and from heaven.
Look up to thy God; trust the hand which hath slain;
Lay hold on the hopes which forever remain.

Now, the mother falls low upon her knees, and prays "*God be merciful to me a sinner,*" and again there is joy in heaven, that the child is dead, and that the mother is "*born again.*"

—*Congregationalist.*

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