

sive affection, upon the faces of our own offspring. Through them the same wise and beneficent Being gives us an insight also into that blessed relationship, with all its requirements, by which we are entitled to look up to Him, and say, "Our Father!" By them, as by angels ministering upon earth, has He, who can bless and sanctify the humblest and weakest means, sometimes led even a parent's wandering feet into the paths of holiness and peace. By them has the Great Author of all good thus not only brightened earth, but beacons heaven.

How many cares have yielded to the senseless but musical prattle of a child! How many afflictions have been assuaged by the brightness and beauty of their presence! How many estranged hearts have concentrated and become reunited, in this common focus of affection; and how many jarring and discordant spirits have been attuned to harmony by a child's touch!

Children, ye are welcome to this earth of sin, of suffering, and care! Would that it were a better and a brighter heritage; a safer and a smoother path for your little feet to tread in! Would that there were, for your sakes at least, no thorns with its flowers; no poisons with its sweets; no sufferings with its enjoyments; no frowns with its smiles; no sickness, decay, or death with its beauty and its life! But thus it may not be; and, though we cannot always see it so, we have been taught to trust "what is, is best." Whatever your heritage on earth, man's sin hath made it what it is; and you, as man's offspring, must enter into his sins and his sorrows. Such is the Father's will. Through the tribulation and darkness of this sin-stained world must you enter into, and be disciplined for, your prepared and happy kingdom.

Children, we welcome you to earth! She has her stately trees, and goodly shrubs, and verdant plains; and at their feet, or on their breast, bloom little winsome flowers of varied hue and fragrance: the former excite our wonder and admiration, the latter win upon and refresh our hearts. What these are to the bodily eye, are ye to the eyes of the Spirit. Ye are the little way-side flowers, which gladden and beautify with your presence the dusty highway of life, so trodden by the busy feet of weary men. Those who may not linger to enjoy your sweetness, and cannot pluck you, or wear you in their bosoms, may at least be refreshed in passing by your brightness and your beauty.

Little tender ones, we welcome you among us! We open not only our arms to you, but our homes, and our hearts. We acknowledge your soft yet mighty influence; for the darkest spirits, and the most hardened hearts have yielded to it. There are heirless palaces and childless homes yearning for your presence. There are ancient titles, time-honored names, and ample means awaiting your acceptance. Troops of attendants, and a couch of down, with canopy of lace would start into existence