

## "I AM GOING TO BE AN ANGEL."

Children have an instinctive dread of the grave, and though heaven may be associated with delightful thoughts, they shrink from a passage to it through the tomb. The following beautiful sketch, from one of our exchanges, teaches this aversion may sometimes be overcome :

The last rays of the setting sun stole through the dancing leaves, and shed a golden radiance over a lovely garden, imparting an additional beauty to every bud and blossom. But the fairest flower upon which the sunbeams shone, was a pale, spiritual child, who stood inhaling the perfumed air, and surveying, with apparent delight, the many hued flowers. As she looked and admired, her blue eyes sparkled, and a faint color just tinged her fair cheek, as if reflected from the roses, which, as she passed, scattered their blushing petals upon her head. Presently her attention was withdrawn from the flowers, and directed to the western sky, which the sun's departing rays had dyed with gorgeous hues. The trees upon the mountain's brow seemed as if painted upon the glowing horizon, and clouds of silver white, tinted off with gold and crimson, floated above them.

As the child stood enraptured with the beauty of the sky, light fingers strayed through her sunny tresses, fond eyes were bent upon her, and a voice, sweet and gentle, said, "Of what are you thinking, Lilly?" The child pointed upward with her slender finger, saying, "O, mamma, how beautiful! How I should like to be away up there with the angels!" The mother looked up and answered, "Yes, darling, the clouds are very beautiful, to-night." "But, mamma, do you know what makes them beautiful? I do; it is because the angels are in them, and I was just thinking that when I died may be I would look right down here, some time, upon you, mamma. Say, don't you think I will?" The mother made no reply, for tears were in her eyes, and a shadow upon her heart, and tenderly embracing the fragile little creature, and kissing her white brow, she tried to divert her thoughts.

But the child continued, "Mamma, I want to be an angel; but I don't want to die, as little Bessie did, and be laid in the cold ground. You won't let me die and be buried up, will you, mamma?"

"When the Saviour calls my little lamb, I shall have to give her up. You would be willing to go to Jesus and never be sick any more, wouldn't you darling?"

"Yes, mamma, if He would take me right up to the beautiful sky; but O, mamma, I don't want to be put in the ground."

The mother kissed the tearful eyes, and caressing the trembling form, said, "Don't you remember, darling, the little dark root which you saw me plant right here in the Spring?"

"O yes, mamma, I remember you dug a little hole in the ground and put it in, and then you covered it all up."

"Do you know what became of that little root, Lilly?"

"Yes, mamma, I do," replied the child, with brightening eyes. "It came up with two lovely green leaves, and it grew into this tall shrub, which has so many beautiful flowers upon it."

"If I had not planted the root in the cold ground, would we have had these sweet flowers, which you love so well, Lilly?"

"No, mamma, we would not."

"Listen to me, darling: we must die and be buried up in the cold ground, that our spirits may rise up—as these flowers do above the earth—in beauty and purity to heaven. If we do not die, my child, we can never go to heaven to live with Christ and the angels."

The child looked for an instant upon the flowers, then exclaimed, with her fair face and blue eyes radiant with hope, "O, mamma, I do not feel afraid now to die and be buried up in the ground, because I shall rise up far more beautiful than I am now, to live away up in the blue sky with Christ and the angels."

And little Lilly never thought again of being afraid to die; but when at length she lay upon her little bed, and could not walk, or be carried out into the garden to look at the flowers and the sunset clouds, she thought of that beautiful home whither she was going, and as her blue eyes closed in death, she murmured :

"Mamma, I am not afraid to be put into the ground, for I am going to be an angel."

From Scripture it seems to me, that a minister's chief business commences, instead of finishes, when a soul is brought to life.—*Ibid.*