

A CHRISTMAS CHORD.

BY MABEL EARLE.

I.—LOVE.

The angel said unto them, Fear not.

All heaven is hushed in silence strange and tender ;

White on the soundless streets the light is lying.

Ten thousand thousand faces bow their splendour

To listen for a new-born baby's crying.

Fear not ! the days of fear are done,

Though God is great, and ye are lowly.

The Morn of Mercy is begun,

Though ye are vile, and God is holy.

Fear not, though ye have waited long ;

His loving-kindness waiteth longer.

Fear not, though fierce your foe and strong ;

The Saviour born to you is stronger.

Fear not ; good news of bliss we bring ;

All glory unto God be given !

For He is born to be your King

Who is the light of earth and heaven.

A' earth is thrilling to the solemn story,

Hushed in its farthest haunts of dread and danger,

Bright through its darkest midnight from the glory

Above His baby brow in Bethlehem's manger.

II.—FAITH.

The shepherds said one to another, " Let us go."

The lambs are folded safe from fright,

The hills are hushed with snow ;

Now they have gone who came in light—

O brothers, let us go !

Their song was news of bliss to-night ;

O brothers, let us know !

" Fear not," he said ; we were afraid,

And turning us to flee ;

" Fear not, fear not : " we sank and prayed ;

O brothers, can it be ?

" The Christ is born to be your Aid."

O brothers, come and see !

Then, with the throng which gathered fast,

Bright on the steeps behind,

" Glory to God !" he sang and passed ;

And down the echoing wind

" Peace upon earth !" we heard at last.

O brothers, come and find !

III.—HOPE.

We have seen His Star.

The dawn was pure across the paling sky

Whenso our hearts looked up and wondered, waking ;

What voice of God beyond that glory high ?

What answer in the silver light out-breaking ?

(Morning, and noon, and night,

Across the desert white,

Our way lies out before us, bare and burning ;

But since our eyes have seen His Star of light,

Our feet shall know nor faltering nor returning.)

The solemn sun moved onward to the west,

The flaming noon above the palm-trees dying.

Our toiling hands grew weary for their rest ;

Our asking hearts grew faint for God's replying.

(Noonday, and night, and dawn,

Unresting have we gone

Across the desert mountains far unfolding

Unto that limit evermore withdrawn ;

His star has shone, and we are come beholding.)

The night beyond the western hills grew deep ;

" Nor will it pass," we said, " for all our pleading."

We laid us down in sorrow to our sleep—

When, lo ! His Star was lighted for our leading.

(Midnight, or morn, or noon,

By sunlight or by moon,

Yet shall we see His face, and fall before Him ;

Our hearts shall find His comfort, late or soon,

For we are coming, coming to adore Him.)

IV.—LOVE.

Light of the world, the world is dark about Thee ;

Far out on Juda's hills the night is deep.

Not yet the day is come when men shall doubt Thee,

Not yet the hour when Thou must wake and weep ;

O little one, O Lord of glory, sleep !

Love of all heaven, love's arms are folded round Thee,

Love's heart shall be the pillow for Thy cheek.

Not yet the hour is come when hate shall wound Thee,

Not yet for shelter vainly must Thou seek.

Rest, little one, so mighty and so weak.

Lie still and rest, Thou Rest of earth and heaven ;

Rest, little hands—our hope of bliss ye keep ;

Rest, little heart—one day shalt Thou be risen ;

O new-born life, O Life eternal, sleep !

Far out on Juda's hills the night is deep.