

Poetry.

THE DEAD IN CHRIST.

Lift not thou the wailing voice, Weep not, 'tis a Christian's right—

Willifred was unable to speak, from emotion, he said gently, 'You will come to me in Heaven, won't you?'

Willifred burst into tears, and said, 'If I knew how, I would indeed, Willie.' 'Oh but papa will tell you how, as he told me, Willie answered. That evening my child died, I saw your brother the next day, and my sorrow for my own loss was half lost in gratitude to God for the feelings which I saw were aroused in the young man, whose end, it was apparent, was near at hand.

Mr. Mordaunt paused; but finding that Ellen was silent, and that her tears fell, he continued, 'I should have said to you on our first meeting, had it not been for your brother's request, he spoke of you with the most affectionate earnestness; he said that your heart had not been hardened like his, with the world's contact; that it was open to religious truth; but that you knew not where to seek it; and he asked me to stand with you by the side of his grave, and tell you—they were his own words—that he prayed most devoutly you might be fitter to die than he was.'

Ellen clasped her hands, and exclaimed beseechingly, 'But he is gone to Heaven, oh is he not?' 'It is not ours to decide whether any sin-stained being has found acceptance there,' Mr. Mordaunt answered solemnly; 'the holiest and purest have never felt most deeply their own utter unworthiness of Heaven, save through the merits of our Blessed Saviour: nor is the unrepenting sinner farther from it than he who hopes to win it by his own righteousness. I believe your brother to have felt most fully, that except in the boundless depth of Christ's Redeeming Blood, he had no hope of salvation; and through that, I entertain a humble hope of his pardon and acceptance.'

'Then have you no other brother to play with you?' said Ellen. 'No, mamma and Willie are gone; and papa and I are alone now,' she answered, and shook her little head mournfully.

Ellen put her arms round the little girl and kissed her, saying, 'Then you are like me. Tell me how old Willie was.'

The child's shyness was quite overcome by Ellen's gentle tone and manner, and sympathy with what filled her heart; she leant against her and looked up in her face as she said, 'I'm seven, and Willie was eight. O he was so good; everybody loved dear Willie! and he said when he was a man he would be a clergyman, like papa, and that he would have a very beautiful church, and he would try and teach everybody to be good. Papa says,' she added after a minute's pause, 'that Willie's happier now than he ever could have been, even if he had grown up to be a clergyman; and it must be so, because papa said it out of the Bible.'

'And how long is it since Willie left you?' Ellen asked. 'It's put here,' the little girl said, and she pointed to the foot of the cross, where Ellen read— 'W. M., September 3rd, 18—'

'What then is your name?' 'Alice Mordaunt,' the child replied. Ellen started. Their vicar himself then had lost an only son about the same moment he had just been watching her brother's dying bed; and that must have been the boy of whom Willifred was so fond. Her interest in her little companion increased, and she said, 'My brother too died here, not long after yours,' and turning to the vault, added, 'He is here.'

Alice hesitated for a moment, and then said, 'Was the tall handsome gentleman, who loved Willie so much, and who looked so very pale, your brother?' Alice assented. 'O but then you must not cry!' Alice exclaimed. 'For papa was with him, and told him about heaven, and Jesus Christ waiting for him there, and he read the same words over him that he did over Willie, and I know Willie's happy.'

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