

A PLEA FOR THE BABIES.

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

But these others—children small,
Spilt like blots about the city,
Quay and street and palace wall,
Take them up into your pity.

Ragged children with bare feet,
Whom the angels in bright raiment
Know the names of to repeat,
When they come on you for payment.

Patient children!—think what pain
Makes a young child patient—ponder!
Wronged too commonly to strain
After right, or wish, or wonder.

Sickly children that whine low
To themselves and not their mothers
From mere habit; never so
Hoping help or care from others.

Can we smooth down the bright hair,
O my sisters, calm, unthrilled in
Our heart's pulses?—can we bear
The sweet looks of our own children.

While these others lean and small,
Scurf and mildew of our city,
Spot our streets, convict us all,
Till we take them into pity.

If no better can be done,
Let us do but this—endeavour
That the sun behind the sun
Shine upon them while they shiver.

O my sisters! children small,
Blue eyed, wailing through the city
Our own babes cry in them all,
Let us take them into pity.

PRAISE WAITING.

PSALM LXX. 1.

I cannot praise Thee now, Lord,
I cannot praise Thee now!
For my heart is sorely riven,
And a cloud is on my brow,