

THE LABOURER'S DYING CHILD.

A fair and blue-eyed little child  
Lay on a dying bed,  
And by her side a widow sat,  
Who fervent tears did shed.

She was a very little child,  
But seven years was old,  
Though young, she was so sensible,  
As her faint accents told.

“My mother dear, what makes you so  
Full of deep despair?  
Is there a cause? oh, speak to me,  
And tell me all your care.

I fain would know what 'tis that ails  
To make you sob and weep;  
Now, tell me, dearest mother, tell,  
Your darling cannot sleep.

All day, all night, you sit and cry,  
Your tears drop on my bed,  
And yet I cannot think why you  
Such bitter tears doth shed,

Can it be right, my mother dear?  
If so, seems very odd  
That you should weep, and when you know  
I'm going home to God.

You say it is a blessed land  
Where all is peace and rest,  
And oh! what happiness 'twill be,  
To be one of the blest.

Then happy mother you should be,  
That I am near the shore,  
But, oh my mother, do not vex  
When I shall be no more.

Though this poor body you shall see,  
My soul is beyond view,  
Yet be assured you there may come,  
Though I cannot to you.”

Thus spake this little dying child  
To her mother, full of care,  
Who sat heart-broken by the bed,  
'Twas more than she could bear.

“My innocent, I do not vex,  
I know thy soul will be  
Caught up in realms of glory, when  
It leaves thy frail body.

But when I look upon this bed,  
I see thy father there,  
And oh, the vision rends my heart,  
And fills it with despair.

'Tis two long years ago he died,  
And ever since that day,  
I've had my share of troubles sore,  
But God hath been my stay.

For know my darling child, that,  
Thy father died of want,  
And oft his noble spirit doth  
Thy mother's vision haunt.

And oh, my child to see thee there,  
Upon thy little bed,  
I know thy pains are caused thro' want,  
Because thou art not fed.

It makes me feel such bitter woe,  
Mine eyes recoil to see,  
Thy slender form so glide away,  
Thro' sheer necessity.

I feel it so that when I pass  
The dwelling of the rich,  
I oft do think can this be right?  
I rise to such a pitch.

O, can I think that God most high,  
The poor have quite forgot;  
It seems as though the rich had all,  
The poor how hard their lot.

I do not envy them, but still,  
When I our lots compare,  
Tho' not my fault, I must exist,  
Upon the poor house fare.

Two shillings and two loaves of bread,  
Is all the parish pay,  
And eighteen pence I pay for rent,  
And earn nought all the day.

I cannot leave thee darling child,

A little more to yield,  
Tho' much I miss, the pence I earn,  
A toiling in the field.

I know thy time is short on earth,  
And I will stay by thee,  
Until thy spirit takes its flight,  
To great eternity.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Yes mother dear,” the child replies,  
“Twill not be very long,  
For even now I hear the sounds  
Of the angelic throng.

There poverty it is not felt,  
There riches is unknown,  
Unless it be the richness of  
The Lamb upon the throne.

Ten thousand, thousand now I see  
With golden harps in hand,  
And look there see, they beckon me,  
Away to that bright land.

So mother dry those fervent tears,  
O soon I shall be there,  
Dispel the sorrows of your heart,  
And drive away your care.

My mother dear, come nearer now,  
I hear the angels cry,  
Kiss me once more before I go,  
O mother dear, good bye.”