

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

by
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Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers--
And that cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
The young flowers are blowing toward the west--
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly!--
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see,
For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy--
"Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary;"
"Our young feet," they say, "are very weak!"
Few paces have we taken, yet are weary--
Our grave rest is very far to seek.
Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children.
For the outside earth is cold,
And we young ones stand without, in our bewildering
And the graves are for the old.
"True," say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time."

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