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THE VOICE OF THE
OLD CHURCH





IS the plain old church that's speaking,
and I beg you hear to-day,
For when this day comes round again
I will all be torn away.

Every brick and beam and timber
must make room for newer things;

I confess I am old-fashioned, but your thoughtless
parting stings.

I have sheltered you, dear children, and have
echoed songs of praise,

Words of counsel and of warning--faithful friend
through all the days.

When your feet passed o'er my threshold I have
been your Sabbath home;

Many are the prayers I've echoed that you might
not, wayward, roam.

And I miss the sweet child faces that have
changed and older grown;

But wherever they are guided I still claim them
for my own.

'Tis at Children's Day we're parting--and you'll
pardon your old friend--

For your days are but beginning; mine will soon
be at an end.

Think then 'tis the old church speaking--build
your lives so strong and true.

Take Christ for your master builder; let him
plan your lives for you.

And, friends, while you build the temple, with
its walls so wide and high,

For the old church and its memories; give me
but a parting sigh.

I have witnessed tears and partings; I have
witnessed joy and praise;

Garnered souls in God's great harvest; trials of
faith and long delays.

Yet through all your God has led you--noted
faith and prayers and tears.

I have heard your prayers answered--for these
old brick walls have ears.

God has told you through his servants, standing
in my pulpit old--

You should lead the little children, that not one
lamb from the fold,

Should stray through your careless teaching,
thoughtless word or prayerless life.

He is strength when you plead weakness; He is
peace above all strife.

Sing your songs to-day the sweetest for the sake
of days gone by;

For the roses that have withered--though their
fragrance lives on high.

For the dear and missing faces; for the new
friends here to-day;

For the strength that will not falter in the
straight and narrow way.

And when Children's Day is over and the old
church is no more,

When no more you'll cross my threshold, nor
come through my open door,

Think how brick and beam and timber will be
gone next Children's Day;

Think that I am nearly human, and I've loved
you in my way.

—Ella Strathmore White.