

When is the Time to Die?

I asked the glad and happy child,
Whose hands were filled with flowers,
Whose silver laugh rang free and wild,
Among the vine wreathed bowers;
I crossed her sunny path, and cried,
"When is the time to die?"
"Not yet! not yet!" the child replied,
And swiftly bounded by.

I asked a maiden; back she threw
The tresses of her hair;
Grief's traces o'er her cheeks I knew,
Like pearls they glistened there;
A flush passed o'er her lily brow,
I heard her spirit sigh;
"Not now," she cried, "O! not now,
Youth is no time to die!"

I asked a mother as she pressed
Her first born in her arms,
As gently on her tender breast
She brushed her babe's alarms;
In quivering tones her answer came,
Her eyes were dim with tears;
"My boy his mother's life must claim
For many, many years."

I questioned one in manhood's prime,
Of proud and fearless air,
His brow was furrowed not by time,
Or dimmed by we or care;
In angry accents he replied,
And flamed with scorn his eye;
"Talk not to me of death," he cried,
"For only age should die."

I questioned age; for him the tomb
Had long been all prepared,
But death, who withers youth and bloom,
This man of years had spared;
Once more his nature's dying fire
Flashed high, as thus he cried:
"Life! only life is my desire!"
Then gasped, and groaned, and died.

I asked a Christian:—"Answer thou
When is the hour of death?"
A holy calm was on his brow
And peaceful was his breath;
And sweetly o'er his features stole
A smile, a light divine;
He spoke the message of the soul,
—"My Master's time is mine!"

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The Weekly Polk County Signal.

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