

Be Kind to Thy Father
Alonzo Abbey, 1879.

Be kind to thy father, for when thou wast young,
Who loved thee so fondly as he?
He caught the first accents that fell from thy tongue,
And joined in thy innocent glee.
Be kind to thy father, for now he is old,
His locks intermingled with gray,
His footsteps are feeble, once fearless and bold:
Thy father is passing away.

Be kind to thy mother, for lo! on her brow
May traces of sorrow be seen;
Oh! well may'st thou cherish and comfort her now
For loving and kind she has been.
Remember thy mother, for thee will she pray
As long as God giveth her breath;
With accents of kindness, then cheer her lone way,
E'en to the dark valley of death.

Be kind to thy brother; his heart will have dearth
If the smiles of thy joy be withdrawn;
The flowers of feeling will fade at the birth,
If love and affection be gone;
Be kind to thy brother, wherever you are;
The love of a brother shall be
An ornament purer and richer by far
Than pearls from the depths of the sea.

Be kind to thy sister; not many may know
The depth of true sisterly love;
The wealth of the ocean lies fathoms below
The surface that sparkles above.
Thy kindness shall bring to thee many sweet hours,
And blessings thy pathway shall crown;
Affection shall weave thee a garland of flowers
More precious than wealth or renown.