

MOTHER'S APRON STRING.

"Before I'd be tied to mother's apron string—and such a big boy as you are too!"

The boy who uttered these words was looking through the slopes of the fence in front of Widow Lane's cottage, where Harry her only son stood with an axe in his hand chopping wood. Mrs Lane had gone into the meadow to milk her cow, and left Harry to chop some wood, and take care of his sister Clara, who sat upon the door-sill tending her doll.

"There's no use in teasing me, Bill; I've told you a dozen times I can't go, and I don't want to either. I don't care how much you make fun of me."

"Well then, I'll go, Harry. You'll never make anything great till you break loose and have fun like other boys." So saying, Bill Dixon went up to the tavern stoop to join a crowd of boys who were ridiculing a poor old drunkard. Harry's mother soon returned, and they all went in to a good comfortable supper, a quiet chat, and early slumbers.

Though Bill Dixon could not shake Harry's resolution by his ridicule, and had to go his way alone, I thought much of his words, and have feared they might tempt some other boy from his mother's side. "*Tied to your mother's apron strings!*" Who would think, to hear these words, that the mother thus spoken of was the best friend Harry had in the world,—one who was denying herself many comforts to give her only son an education to fit him to act a worthy, honourable part in life? Who would think that she had watched and tended him night and day when he was a sickly baby; and never had lain down to sleep without praying for his soul: and that, next to seeing him a *Christian*, she longed to have him become manly and noble, and far more than Bill Dixon could mean by being something "*great*."

Satan, who goes about "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," puts these words into the mouths of wayward boys like Bill Dixon. He knows he never can make "*anything great*" of the children he seeks to ruin, till he has persuaded them to "*break loose*" from a mother's influence. Till this first step is taken his power is feeble, for nothing guards a boy from sin and dangers like the prayers and counsels of a pious loving mother.

The Son of God, the only perfect one that ever lived on earth, and was "King of kings and Lord of lords," *obeyed His mother*, and in dying gave her into the care of a beloved dis-