

things like that. What a contrast to a poor little lad like he was, only a burden as he was often called at home, and only seeming to live to endure hardship.

Then there came into his mind the remembrance of the last Christmas-day he had spent in the country; how the Vicar, after Evensong, had given an address to the children; how he had told them of Jesus Christ being born into the world on that day; of the wise men who had come from afar to adore Him, and brought costly gifts to Him as He lay, a little Child, in His blessed Mother's arms. Then the Priest went on to tell the children how they also might each bring a gift to Jesus, a birthday present, so to speak: they might give themselves to Him; give their wills and affection into His keeping; give the qualities of their minds, if they had any special gift or talent; give their best, whatever it was, to God's service, and God would bless them both here and hereafter.

Arthur, as he remembered this, thought there was nothing about him which was worthy to be given to God; but patience, Arthur, you have a gift which no grown person, however rich or clever, can possess, and be sure you will be permitted to devote it to God.

The building of the church, as it went on, had a great attraction for Arthur, and what spare time he had he generally spent in watching it.

One day his forlorn appearance, and wan, spiritless face, devoid as it was of all childish glee, drew the attention of Henry Grey, the workman to whom he had before spoken.

"Why, what do you do here so often, child?" he said; "you ought to be at school this time of day."

"I don't go to school," said Arthur, sadly; "mother is very poor, and she says she hasn't the money to send me; but I used to go when father was living, and I'd like to go again if I could."

"So you've no father," said Grey. "What's your name, child?" and as Arthur told him, the man looked compassionately on him. "It's worse than no father you have," he said, "if you're the boy at the corner house." And Grey, who was a

good-natured, upright man, began to think how he might help the poor boy. "Do you go anywhere on Sundays?" he asked.

"I haven't been to church for a long time," replied Arthur; "mother says it's too far, and sometimes she goes out a walking on Sundays, and I have to take care of little sister. But oh! I should like to go, like I used to with father," he went on, looking wistfully up in the kind face of his new friend.

"Well," said Grey, "you may go with me next Sunday, if you like; so go home and ask your mother to spare you."

Arty looked delighted.

"Oh, I'll be sure to come if mother will let me," he said; but—"he hesitated, and his face fell,—"I'm afraid I've no clothes fit, and I don't think mother is able to get me any."

"Never mind, Arthur, make yourself as decent as you can next Sunday with what you have, and I'll see about getting you in the way of earning something for yourself, that is, if you are willing to work."

"Oh, I'd like to work," said Arty, "only I must not be away all day from mother; I must help her at home."

Grey was as good as his word; he got some light employment for the child, got his mother to let him go to church and to the Sunday catechising, lent him books, allowed his children to make him their companion, and made life altogether brighter for Arthur, whom, as time went on, he found good and trustworthy.

Meanwhile the splendid structure which was to be the parish church daily grew in form and beauty; fair indeed it looked within and without, as it stood at last, a finished erection, awaiting its consecration. As had been said, all was of the best about it; the architect had given the best of his talent to its design, and ably had the skilled workmen wrought out his plan.

The morning sun of that clear November day, on which this little story opens, shone out brightly through the richly-painted glass of the east window. Its rays fell on the alabaster reredos, formed a halo of glory round the sacred head of the Saviour, as He made Himself known to His