

—"I have felt quite sick all the morning ; my head has ached badly—so badly, that I have had to lie down. I always give you your dinners when you come home, and try to make you comfortable. To-day I let Aunt Mary do it, because I felt so sick ; but I am sorry that I did not get up, sick as I was, and do it myself ; then I might have prevented this unhappy outbreak of my boy's unruly temper, that has made not only my head ache ten times as badly as it did, but my heart ache also."

Clarence burst into tears, and throwing his arms around his mother's neck, wept bitterly.

"I will try and be good, dear mother," he said. "I do try sometimes, but it seems that I can't."

"You must always try, my dear son. Now dry up your tears, and go out and get your dinner. Or, if you would rather I should go with you, I will do so."

"No, dear mother," replied the boy, affectionately ; "you are sick ; you must not go. I will be good."

Clarence kissed his mother again, and then returned quietly to the dining-room.

"Naughty boy !" said Aunt Mary as he entered, looking sternly at him.

A bitter retort came instantly to the tongue of Clarence, but he checked himself with a strong effort, and took his place at the table. Instead of soothing the quick-tempered boy, Aunt Mary chafed him by her words and manner during the whole meal ; and it was only the image of his mother's tearful face, and the remembrance that she was sick, that restrained an outbreak of his passionate temper.

When Clarence left the table, he returned to his mother's room, and laid his head upon the pillow where hers was resting.

"I love you, mother," he said, affectionately ; "you are good. But I hate Aunt Mary."

"O no, Clarence ; you must not say that you hate Aunt Mary, for Aunt Mary is very kind to you. You mustn't hate anybody."

"She isn't kind to me, mother. She calls me a bad boy, and says everything to make me angry when I want to be good."