

THE BLIND BOY.

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It was a blessed summer day,
The flowers bloomed, the air was mild;
The little birds poured forth their lay,
And everything in nature smiled.

In pleasant thoughts I wandered on
Beneath the deep wood's ample shade,
Till suddenly I came upon
Two children who had thither strayed.

Just at an aged birch-tree's foot
A little boy and girl reclined—
His hands in hers she kindly put,
And then I saw the boy was blind.

The children knew not I was near—
A tree concealed me from their view;
But all they said I well could hear,
And I could see all they might do.

"Dear Mary," said the poor blind boy,
"That little bird sings very long;
Say, do you see him in his joy?
And is he pretty as his song?"

"Yes, Edward, yes," replied the maid;
"I see that bird on yonder tree."
The poor boy sighed, and gently said:
"Sister, I wish that I could see."

"The flowers, you say, are very fair,
And bright green leaves are on the trees,
And pretty birds are singing there—
How beautiful for one who sees!

'Yet I the fragrant flowers can smell,
And I can feel the green leaf's shade;
And I can hear the notes that swell
From those dear birds that God has made.

"So, sister, God to me is kind,
Though sight, alas! he has not given;
But, tell me, are there any blind
Among the children up in heaven?"

"No, dearest Edward, there all see—
But why ask me a thing so odd?"
"O Mary! he's so good to me,
I thought I'd like to look at God."

Ere long, disease his hand had laid
On that dear boy, so meek and mild;
His widowed mother wept and prayed
That God would spare her sightless child.

He felt her warm tears on his face,
And said; "Oh! never weep for me;
I'm going to a bright, bright place,
Where Mary says, *God I shall see.*

"And you'll be there, dear Mary, too;
But, mother, when you get up there,
Tell Edward, mother, that 'tis you—
You know I never saw you here."

He spoke no more, but sweetly smiled
Until the final blow was given,
When God took up that poor blind child,
And opened first his eyes in heaven.

"THAT BROUGHT ME."

In a pleasant rural town lived a well-to-do farmer, named Foster. At the time we write of him he had known few of the ills of life beyond that occasional petty disappointment of his plans and crossing of his purposes which a career of business brings to every man. His pastures and meadows were always green and sweet with fragrant feeding for his fat flocks and herds, and his productive fields brought him in wealth every year from willing markets. His family grew up around him in health; and as his years increased, and manhood strengthened into its prime, the neighbours spoke of him as of one high in their esteem; one whose character and opinions were worthy of general respect.

In the large and flourishing church of his native village, Mr. Foster had long been an honoured member, occupying a prominent pew, and contributing well to her charities; and days had been when her prayer-meetings saw him a faithful attendant, and when, better still for his own soul, the closet and the family altar gave witness to his daily visits, and his heart bore away tokens of God's approval, grateful as the summer rain.

But "the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches" had made sad havoc with Farmer Foster's piety. From an occasional neglect, he gradually passed to a habitual carelessness of religious duties till at length he became lost in the world, and forsook the church almost entirely.

Mr. Foster had a son eighteen years old, named Herbert, a young man of promise, who was pursuing a course of study in his native town. The heart of the father was bound up in the youth. In the days when religion had held Foster in the love of its gentle duties, he had prayed for Herbert's soul, and God had answered his prayer and converted him. His influence since had not been salutary upon the lad, and he had gone astray like his father, disappointing for a while the hopes and ambi-