

"What is he doing?"

"Oh, I don't know; Mary can tell you."

"He has a beautiful, kind face; and there is a lady in the picture. What is she doing?"

"Praying."

"Do you ever pray, grandpapa?" asked the child earnestly.

Grandpapa growled something in answer. He did not want his young inquirer to learn that for years he had scarcely ever bent his knee.

"Grandpapa is too busy," he added aloud.

"If you tell me how, I will," said the child eagerly.

Something like an expression of pain crossed the old man's face, as he rose and left the room. He was a skilled workman, and had risen to a foreman of the factory wherein he had worked for forty years. No one could replace him when he was absent, and he taught many of the new hands their work. But he had never taught one to pray. He had almost forgotten how himself.

As the weeks and months went by, the picture and Mary's daily offering of flowers before it made a spot of beauty in the house. The bare walls of the sitting-room seemed less dreary. The perfume of flowers had replaced that of new carpet or of stale varnish.

Once when Mary spoke of removing the picture to her own room, her father almost sternly bade her "Leave it where it was."

It had so far worked its way into his hardened and toil-worn heart.

II.

Spring had softly stolen away at the touch of Summer, and the ripe fruits of Autumn had fallen before the vigorous blast of a northerly Winter. Icicles hung upon