

babbling of the river below the dingle. Besides, the lads and lasses were all humming their tasks. I told the boy to open the door; and he jumped up briskly, glad to put down his lesson book, if only for a minute. Still when the door was open I could see nothing but the large flakes floating in, and the children catching at them.

"Eh! but he's a gradely little chap!" cried the boy at the door in a tone of surprise.

"Tell him to come in," I called, bidding the class make way for our visitor.

Well, well! I never saw such a beautiful boy before nor since. He was about seven, but rather small and delicate for his years. His eyes were as blue as the forget-me-nots that used to grow along the river-side; and his brown hair was sunny, as if it had a glory round it. Somehow I thought all in a moment of how the Lord Jesus looked when He was a blessed child on earth. The little fellow had on a thin, thread-bare sailor's suit of blue serge—so thin that he was shivering and shaking with cold, for the snow had powdered him over as well as everything else. He looked up in my face half smiling, though the tears were in his eyes; and his little mouth quivered so, he could not speak. I held out my hand to him, and called him to me in my softest voice, wishing it was as soft as it used to be when I was young.

"What are you come for, my little man?" I asked.

"I want to come to your school," he said, almost sobbing; "but I haven't got any money; and Mrs. Brown says you'll not have me without money."

"Who is Mrs. Brown?" I asked, feeling my heart strangely drawn to the child,

"She's taking care of me," he answered, "till father comes back. Father'll have lot's of money when he comes home. But he's been away a long, long while, and nobody's kind to me now. Sometimes Mrs. Brown says I must go to the workhouse. Father brought me a parrot last time he came; but it flew away one night while I was asleep, and nobody ever saw it again."

I felt the tears start in my own old eyes as he spoke, and all the scholars looked to me as if there was a mist in the room.

"Poor boy!" I said. "And where is mother?"

I might have spared him the question if I had thought a moment. His little mouth quivered more than ever, and the tears slipped over his eyelids, and ran down his cheeks.

"Never mind!" I said hastily, and drawing him near to me, closer and closer, till his curly little head was on my bosom; "you shall come to school, my little lad."

Yet before the words were off my tongue, I began to wonder how it could be managed. There was not a spare inch of bench—not even at the end of the loom, where my best scholars sat. Only the day before I had refused steadily to take in a boy for fourpence a week; ay! six-