

Mrs. May viewed Sam's intimacy with Tom Winter with anxiety; for, warm-hearted, generous, and open-handed as Tom was in the things of this life, in matters relating to the welfare of his soul he was almost reckless.

And yet, even if Mrs. May had gained Sam's consent to it, she could have hardly summoned up heart to have banished Tom from her doors; for his mother, with her latest breath, had committed her six-year old Tom to Mrs. May's charge.

Mrs. May did not forget her promise to the dead mother of the lad; she tried carefully to minister to soul and body; his socks and clothes were mended just as regularly as Sam's; and on Sundays Mrs. May would take the two boys to church together, in the evenings reading to them from her Bible. Tom was therefore not destitute of religious knowledge; and bits of hymns and texts of Scripture, learnt at Mrs. May's knee, were still fast in his memory. But he made an unfortunate marriage; and marriage, as says the old proverb, "makes or mars a man." Susan Winter was the handsomest girl in Scard, but she was also the vainest and the most thriftless; she loved her husband and children after a fashion, but not with the true love that pours itself out in self-sacrifice. Her home was dirty and untidy; her children had an uncared-for, neglected appearance, for a good gossip with a neighbour was a much more congenial employment to Susan than cleaning and washing and mending; and the money that ought to have been saved to purchase household comforts or put by against a rainy day, was spent in useless finery. Yes, there was no disguising the fact, Susan Winter was not the sort of wife to draw a man either to his earthly or to his Heavenly home.

There were two children, Jackie and May. Jackie, a sturdy little lad of some seven summers, with a figure erect and lithe as a willow, was dark as a gipsy, the warm blood glowing through his sunburnt cheeks, and raven locks curling over his mischievous brown eyes; while May—well! where May got her looks from no one could tell, certainly not from her parents, for her hair was flaxen, her eyes were blue, and her skin was white as a lily's.

Poor little May! if her figure had only been as



"REST YE CERTAIN, THERE'S LOVE IN IT."

faultless as her face; but underneath the flaxen curls (which Susan curled so carefully, hoping it might escape observation) rose a small hump, and, when coaxed into a game or a run, one tiny foot would drag itself painfully. Such physical defects would no doubt have proved a source of sorrow to any mother; but to Susan Winter, who set so much store by good looks, and whose time and thoughts were principally engrossed in trying to present a smart appearance to the outside world, these infirmities were very galling.

"Such a pretty face as the child has, too, and such lovely hair!" she would remark to Mrs. May sometimes (for kind old Mrs. May, whose heart was so full of loving sympathy, was the only person to whom Susan Winter could bring herself to speak of her child's infirmity); "tis just horrible to think she shouldn't be