

ing; and kneeling down before the chair, he buried his head in its cushions, and wept.

Mr. Netherton entered unperceived, and thinking that he was praying, stood a moment unwilling to interrupt him, while his own heart ascended in earnest supplication to the throne of grace; until aroused by a passionate sob.

'My son, my dear son!' exclaimed Mr. Netherton, bending over him. The sight of his pale face recalled to Frank his aunt's warning, and he hastily arose.

'Forgive me,' said he. 'I could not help weeping just for a moment when I thought of all the happy hours we have spent here together. But I dare say that I shall be very happy at school after a time.'

'I hope so, Frank. You must write to me. My chief pleasure, when you are away, will be to hear of your well-doing. It is a comfort that your cousin Frederick will be with you.'

Frank was too truthful to say yes; so he said nothing. Mr. Netherton sat down in his easy chair, and Frank placed himself once again at his feet.

'Tell me a story, papa,' said he, after a pause: 'one more story, as you used to do before my aunt came.'

'There is no time for a story now, Frank; or we shall keep that kind aunt waiting tea for us. But I will tell you a little anecdote I read the other day, and which I believe to be a fact.'

'O, thank you. I like facts,' said Frank, leaning his head on his father's knee.

'A negro woman, in one of the West India Islands,' began Mr. Netherton, 'was once forbidden by her master to attend public worship, and threatened with severe punishment if she ventured to go. Although only a slave, the poor woman was a sincere and humble follower of Him who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. The only pleasure which she had was in going to the house of God to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ, and that better land where there shall be no sorrow nor sighing, and which he had purchased for her with his precious blood. Her disappointment was great; but she only lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and answered meekly, 'I must tell the Lord that.' It is said that this touching reply, this quiet appeal to a higher tribunal, so affected her owner that he no longer refused the desired permission. God softened the heart of this cruel master, for the sake of his poor, oppressed servant.'

'What a nice anecdote!' said Frank.

'And will you endeavor to remember it, my

dear boy; and bring all your little trials and troubles to the Lord, to your heavenly Father—in full assurance of his love and tender compassion for Jesus' sake? Commit your way unto the Lord, and he will bring it to pass. Tell your difficulties and disappointments to him. Leave everything in his hands. He knoweth best, and will do for us above all that we can desire or deserve. You believe this, Frank?'

'I am sure of it,' replied the boy, raising his bright, trustful glance to his father's face.

'It is well. And now I have a present for you, my dear boy, which I think you will like,' said Mr. Netherton, placing a small clasped Bible in the hands of his son. 'I need not tell you to value it.'

'O, thank you, dear papa. I do like it very much indeed,' replied Frank with glistening eyes.

'You will read a chapter, as usual, morning and evening,' said Mr. Netherton. 'And you must not neglect to pray at the same time. I know that you will have a great deal to do and think at school, and very little time to yourself; but, as the good Mr. Cecil observes, 'a Christian will find his parenthess for prayer even through his busiest hours.'

'I suppose he meant that he would make it,' said Frank.

'It is not improbable that such was his meaning. But I have one more thing to say: I am not afraid of your being idle, Frank, so much as I am that you will study too hard. Remember that I would rather see a little color in your cheeks, than the first prize in your hand.' He could not trust himself to add more; but Frank knew by the faltering voice, and the trembling of the hand which rested upon his shoulder, how tenderly he was beloved, and promised faithfully to recollect and obey his injunctions; after which they went into the drawing-room to tea.

Notwithstanding all Mrs. Mortimer's efforts to the contrary, in which she was warmly seconded by her son, the evening passed gloomily away. Little Helen wept at the thought of parting with her 'two brothers,' as she called them; and Frank, but for shame, would fain have sat down and mingled his tears with hers. Although he endeavored to exert himself to appear cheerful, his heart was sad whenever he looked up and met his father's gaze fixed earnestly upon him.

It had been arranged that the boys were to start by an early coach on the following morning, accompanied by a trusty servant; and Mr. Netherton had promised not to attempt to rise

at so unusual an hour: the parting therefore, was to take place at night. Frank bore it bravely for his father's sake.

'What if I should never see him again!' exclaimed Mr. Netherton, as the door closed.

'Let us hope better things,' said his sister; but endeavor, nevertheless, to say, 'God's will be done.'

Mr. Netherton bent down his head, and his whispered 'Amen' spoke of a meek and chastened spirit.

Mrs. Mortimer came into Frank's room after he was in bed. The pillow was wet with his tears, and he turned away his head that she might not see how he had wept.

'Never mind, Frank,' said his aunt, tenderly embracing him. 'It is natural that you should grieve at leaving home for the first time. You have shown a great deal of self-control before your poor father, and I am much pleased with you.'

'Do you think my father so very ill?' asked Frank, earnestly.

'He requires great care; but there is nothing at present that need render you uneasy. I need not tell you that he will be taken great care of in your absence.'

'And if he should be worse——?'

'I will send for you at once: not that you could do any good, but because it would be a comfort to you.'

'My dear, dear aunt, how kind you are!' exclaimed Frank, clasping his arms round her neck. 'How much I love you!'

'I am glad of that. I want you to love me, and to look upon me as a mother.'

A remorseful pang went through Mrs. Mortimer's heart as she pronounced the last word; but Frank's affectionate caresses soothed her again.

'Now go to sleep,' said she, after a pause, and laying him gently back on the pillow, 'that you may be able to rise early to-morrow morning. I hope you and Frederick will be good friends. I give you the same advice I have always given him:—Let nothing induce you to deviate from the truth, or to tell tales of your companions: the liar and the talebearer are despised. Study in school and play out of it. The more exercise you take, the better. Be neither be a tyrant nor a slave; be kind and ever ready to oblige. Do your duty; and always to act rightly, without caring about the consequences. Have no fear but the fear of God.'