

"Well," said the boy, "why do you weep so long, then. Pray, and he will help you."

"Good child, thou art right!" said his mother, and her tears flowed less bitterly, and comfort was mingled with her sorrow. She folded her arms and raised her moist eyes towards heaven, and Ferdinand folded his hands also, and looked upward, and the bright moon shone upon mother and child.

And the mother began to pray, and the boy repeated every word after her.

"Great Father in heaven," she said, "look down upon a poor mother and her child—a poor widow and poor orphan raise their eyes to thee. We are in great need, and have no longer any refuge upon the earth. But thou art rich in mercy. Thou hast thyself said, 'Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee.' Oh! to thee we pray. Thrust us not from this dwelling; take not all from a poor orphan, his only little inheritance. Or, if in thy mysterious but still most wise and benevolent purposes, thou hast otherwise decreed, prepare for us a resting place upon the wide vast earth. Oh, pour this consolation into our hearts, lest they break as we wander forth, and from yonder hill turn to look for the last time upon our house!"

Sobs interrupted her; weeping, she gazed towards heaven, and was silent. The boy, who yet stood with folded hands, suddenly exclaimed, with outstretched finger:

"Mother, look! What is that? Yonder moves a light. Yonder flies a little star. Look, there it hurries by the window. Oh see, now it comes in. How bright, how beautiful it shines! Look, only look, it has a greenish light. It is

almost as beautiful as the evening star. Now it moves along the ceiling. That is wonderful."

"It is a fire-fly, dear Ferdinand," said his mother. "In the day time it is a small, unsightly insect, but in the night it gives out a most beautiful light."

"May I catch it?" said the boy. "Will it not hurt me, and will the light not burn me?"

"It will not burn thee," said the mother, and she laughed, while the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Catch it and examine it closer, it is one of the wonders of Almighty power."

The boy, entirely forgetful of his sorrow, at once tried to catch the sparkling fire-fly, now on the floor, now under the table, now under the chair.

"Ah me, what a pity," said the boy, for as he stretched out his hand to catch the bright insect it flew behind the great chest that stood against the wall. He looked under the chest.

"I see it plainly enough," he said, "there it is close against the wall; and the white wall and the floor, and every bit of dust near it, shines as if the moon shone upon it; but I cannot reach it, my arm is not long enough."

"Have patience," said the mother, "it will soon come out again."

The boy waited a little while, and then came to his mother and said, with a soft imploring voice—

"Mother, do you get it out for me, or move the chest a little from the wall, and I can easily catch it."

The mother rose, moved the chest from the wall, and the boy took the quiet fire-fly, examined it in the hollow of his little hand, and was delighted with it.

But his mother's attention was attracted by a different object. As she moved the chest, something