

"But the children did," she replied coloring deeply as she returned to her seat.

"Please Everard wont you read to us?" asked Amy.

When he had finished, Amy asked Isabel if she would play the hymn she promised.

"Not to-night dear," replied Isabel.

"Oh please, Miss Leicester," coaxed Rose.

"If I am the cause of their disappointment I will go, but indeed I should like to join," said Everard.

"As you please" said Isabel, ashamed of being so much out of temper.

"You know you promised, Miss Leicester," interposed Alice, gravely.

"So I did, dear," returned Isabel, going to the piano: and she was quite repaid, as they all sang very sweetly, and quite correctly.

"Good night," said Everard, when the hymn was ended.

"Forgive me, Miss Leicester if I seemed rude, I did not intend to be."

Isabel was distressed to find how much the children had been neglected; true they were tolerably proficient in their studies, but in all religious instruction they were miserably deficient.

Left entirely to the care of Miss Manning, who was a very frivolous, worldly minded woman, they were led, (tho' perhaps unintentionally) to regard all religious subjects as dry and tedious, and to be avoided as much as possible. Isabel determined to try and remedy this evil by the exercise of patient gentleness, and by striving to make religious instruction a pleasure and a privilege. No easy task did this appear considering the dispositions she had to deal with, nor was it without a struggle that she put aside her own wishes and devoted her Sunday afternoons to this purpose. She certainly did not meet with much encouragement at first; again and again did the question recur to her mind, what good am I doing, why should I deprive myself of so many pleasant hours for the benefit of these thankless children; but the selfish thought was conquered, and she persevered. On week days also, she had morning prayer and read a portion of scripture, then they sung a hymn, always taking for the week the one they learnt on the Sunday