

THE TWO PICTURES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.



TWO beautiful children, a boy and a girl, the oldest but six years of age, came in from school one evening, later than usual, by half an hour. Both their eyes were red with weeping, and their cheeks wet with tears. Their father, Mr. Warren, who had come home from his business earlier than usual, had been waiting some time for their return, and wondering why they staid so late. They were his only children, and he loved them most tenderly. They had, a few weeks before, been entered at a school kept by a lady in the neighborhood—not so much for what they would learn, as to give occupation to their active minds.

"Why, Anna! Willy!" exclaimed Mr. Warren, as the children came in, "what's the matter? Why have you stayed so late?"

Anna lifted her tearful eyes to her father's face, and her lip curled and quivered. But she could not answer his question.

Mr. Warren took the grieving child, in his arms, and as he drew her to his bosom, said to Willy,

who was the oldest—

"What has made you so late, dear?"

"Miss Roberts kept us in," sobbed Willy.

"Kept you in!" returned Mr. Warren in surprise. "How came that?"

"Because we laughed," answered the child, still sobbing and weeping.

"What made you laugh?"

"One of the boys made funny faces."

"And did you laugh too, dear?" asked the father of Anna.

"Yes, papa. But I couldn't help it. And Miss Roberts scolded us, and said she was going to whip us."

"And was that all you did?"

"Yes, indeed, papa," said Willy.

"I'll see Miss Roberts about it," fell angrily from the lips of Mr. Warren. "It's the last time you appear in her school. A cruel-minded woman!"

And then the father soothed his grieving little ones with affectionate words and caresses.

"Dear little angels!" said Mr. Warren to his wife, shortly afterwards, "that any one could have the heart to punish them for a sudden outburst of joyous feelings? And Anna in particular, a mere babe as she is, I can't get over it. To think of her being kept in for a half-hour under punishment, after all the other children had gone home. It was cruel. Miss Roberts shall hear from me on the subject."

"I am sure you take this little matter too much to heart," urged the mother. "Miss Roberts must have order in her

school, and even the youngest, must conform to this order. I do not think the punishment so severe. She had to do something to make them remember their fault, and restrain their feelings in future, and she could hardly have done less. It is not too young for them to learn obedience in any position where they are introduced."

But the over-fond and tender father could see no reason for the punishment his little ones had received; and would not consent to let them go again to the school of Miss Roberts. To him they were earth's most precious things. They were tender flowers; and he was troubled if ever the winds blew roughly upon them.

Seven years have passed. Let us visit the house of Mr. Warren, and look at him among his children. No; we will not enter this pleasant house—he moved away long ago. Can this be the home of Mr. Warren! Yes, small, poor, and comfortless as it is! Ah! there have been sad changes. Let us enter. Can that be Warren? That wretched-looking creature—with swollen, disfigured face, and soiled garments—who sits, half-stupid, near the window? A little flaxen-haired child is playing on the floor. It is not Anna. No, seven years have changed her from the fairy-like little creature she was, when her father became outraged at her punishment in Miss Robert's school. Poor Anna! That was light as the thistle down, to what she has since received from the hands of her father.

The child on the floor is beautiful even