

"Mamma," said Nelly, "is it really *true* that *we* have a *Father* in Heaven?"

"My dear child, have I not often told you about the great and good God, who is our Father, who made us, and keeps us alive from day to day?"

"Yes, mamma, but when I get to thinking about his being *our Father*, it does seem strange, that he should let us suffer so much, when he might, if he is so great and powerful as you say, at once supply all our wants I am sure; my own dear papa, who died so long ago, even before I can remember, but of whom you and sister Mary have told me so much, I am sure he never would have let so much sorrow come upon us, if he could have helped it."

"My dearest Nelly," said Mrs. Collins, "you are a very young child, only eight years old, and cannot understand all that is said to you, and Satan has taken advantage of your ignorance, and put these wicked thoughts into your heart. Let me tell you about God, our kind Heavenly Father. He loves us, and cares for us, and though we are very poor and often have nothing to eat, and no fire to keep us warm, still God sends us many blessings, and has promised to take care of us while we live, and that if we love Him, and try to serve Him, by and by he will take us to a beautiful and happy home in Heaven. Ought we not to be willing to live here a little time, even if we have to suffer many things, if we shall then go to live for ever in a glorious bright home in heaven?"

"Yes, mamma, and I always feel so when you talk to me; but when I sit still and think how miserable we are, and how much pain you suffer, and how hard sister Mary has to work, it makes me so unhappy; and to-day, I felt so more than ever, and so I spoke out my thoughts, which I never did before."

"What makes you feel so more to-day? we have bread in the house, and a kind gentleman has sent us a load of wood; I am sure we ought to be very grateful to God, who has provided these things for us."

"Well, mamma, I went yesterday to the Sunday school, and before our teacher came, the girls were talking about the fine things they had at Christmas, and what they expected to have for New Year's gifts. They all had nice new dresses, warm worsted ones, and fine hats and cloaks, and they looked at my