

tell her you will never offend her again. But she is not there now ; your sister or a nurse is in her place. Mother is resting, you are told. She has hardly slept during your illness, and she is resting now. You wait all day. How long she rests ! And to-morrow you wait, and to-morrow ; but she does not come. Can it be serious ?

"Oh, no !" they tell you. "Her nerves are a little overstrained. The doctor thinks she had better remain in bed a day or two. She sends you a kiss and wishes you to be careful.

You are almost well now ; a little weak, perhaps, but strong enough to bear the news your father brings :

"You may go to her, my son, but she is very, very sick. In fact,"—there is a sob in the good man's voice when he tells you this—"the doctors say there is no hope, and she has asked to see you before she dies. Brace up, son, and try to bear it for her sake."

You go to her—your brain in a whirl—and when you see her pale, thin face and sunken eyes you fall upon your knees and sob as you used to do when you ran to her for comfort in your little trials. Her hand is on your head, and she tells you not to weep any more ; you were forgiven long ago. They take you away, but in a few days you see her again. The eyes that so often smiled upon you are closed in death ; those hands, folded so peacefully upon her breast, will never comfort you again ; the lips that used to kiss away your childish tears will never kiss you more. You beg her to speak to you, but her dear, sweet voice is silent forever. You weep as though your heart would break, but she cannot dry your tears now—she is dead. For days and days the mere mention of her name, the mere thought of her will bring the scalding tears to your eyes. All through your youth and when your hair is gray there is a little shrine in your heart where the memory of your mother is worshipped, and you never tire of telling your friends and your children and your children's children what a dear, sweet little mother she was, and how she gave her life to win you back to health.

This is more than an idle tale or play of fancy. Take a crucifix in your hand. Lo ! Here is One who has loved us more than mother. For we were sick unto