

his angel heart. He knew not what want and suffering were. He had never known them himself—never once heard of them—knew not what a real beggar was. He stopped suddenly before Elsie, and asked her the cause of those tears. She could make him no reply—her heart was too full.

“Has any body hurt you?” asked the feeling little fellow.

She shook her head negatively.

“Have you lost your way?” he persisted.

“No,” answered the child audibly.

“What is the matter, then?” he asked.

“Mother is poor and sick, and I am cold and hungry. We have nothing to eat. Our room is quite cold, and there is no wood for us.—Oh you do not know all—you cannot know all.”

“But I will,” replied the boy manly.

“Where do you live?”

“Will you go with me?” asked Elsie, her face brightening.

“Yes; let me go with you,” said he; “show me the way!”

Through street, lane, and alley, she guided him. They reached the door of her hovel. The cold breaths of the wind whistled in at the cracks and crevices and key-hole before them, as if inviting them in. They entered, a sick woman feebly raised her head from the pillow and gave her a sweet smile. “Elsie have you come?” she faintly said.

“Yes mother,” answered the child; “and I have brought this boy with me. I do not know who he is, but he said he wanted to come and see where we lived. Did I do wrong to bring him, mother!”

“No, my child,” said the mother, “if he knows how to pity you from his very heart, but he cannot pity

me yet—he is not old enough.”

The bright-faced, sunny-hearted boy gazed in astonishment upon the mother and child. The scene was new to him. He wondered if this was what they called poverty. His eyes looked sadly upon the wasting mother, but they glittered with wonder when turned towards Elsie.—Suddenly they filled with tears. The want, the woe, the bareness, the desolation were all too much for him. He gazed mournfully into the empty fire place. His eyes wandered wonderingly over the naked walls looking uninvitingly and cheerless. Putting his hand into his pocket, he grasped the coin that his mother had that very morning given him, and drew it forth. “You may have that!” said he holding it out to the child.

“Oh, you are too good! you are too generous, I fear!” broke in the mother, as if she ought not to take it from him.

“Mother will give me another if I want,” said he; “it will do you a great deal of good and I know I don’t need it. Take it, you shall take it!” and he was instantly gone.

It was a gold coin of the value of five dollars.

Mother and child wept together. Then they talked of the good boy whose heart had opened for them on the new year’s day. Then they let their fancies run and grow wild and revel as they choose. They looked at the glistening piece. There was bread, and fuel, and clothing, and every other comfort in its depths. They continued to gaze upon it.—Now they saw within its rim pictures of delight and joy; visions of long rooms, all wreathed and decorated with evergreens and flowers; visions of smiling faces and happy children; sights of merry sleigh rides, and the glistening of bright