

memory of the mother who has been taken from you ; not to remember any word or look of hers ; not to hold any token of her love ; not to know anything of her life or of her death. This was little Alice's sorrow. Taken, while yet an infant, from I know not what abode of misery and suffering, brought up for eight years in an almshouse, she was taken at last by a lady, who wanted a little girl to attend to her children.

You have heard of Cape Cod. It is a rough place ; ocean-washed, and tempest swept, on whose barren sands no flowers bloom, in whose wild sea-winds is heard no echo of the song of birds. Cape Cod became little Alice's home. It was not an unkind one ; it was better than she had ever known or dreamed of before, but mingling for the first time with other children, she realized most painfully her own inferiority, her own solitary and unloved condition. The children whom it was her duty to wait upon, teased and tried her, as children will, though she endeavored most earnestly to win their hearts. The children whom she met at school, bright, loving, full of smiles which they brought from happy homes, seemed, in her desolation, to be not fit companions for her. She shrank from them at first, and they never renewed the attempt to make her their friend. It was then that I first knew her, and I well remember how hopeless seemed the task of bringing any healthful gleam of animation into those dull eyes, of awakening any energy or emulation in that benumbed intellect. But God knew better than I. He could touch the rock, and bring forth the gush of sweet waters. It chanced one morning that, in the daily reading of Scripture, this verse came to her share : " He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him : he was despised, and we esteemed him not." I know not what the child's thoughts were, but something in the passage seemed to touch her. She held the book open, and her pencil pointed to those words through all the remainder of the lesson. Finding her studying them later in the day, I asked, " Do you know who that was, Alice ?" She made no answer. Her face wore the same unmoved, dull, hopeless expression as ever ; but, half an hour afterwards, a large tear, the first I ever saw her shed,—though I had often reproved her, and, perhaps, harshly sometimes—gathered slowly, and dropped upon the page.

I cannot tell all the work that was wrought in the child's heart, for I do not know it ; but soon after, little Alice became, as we trust, a Christian. She had little earthly help or counsel. She did not know the way, but in her helplessness she asked God to help her—and he did ; helped her as he will help you little girl, if you ask him ; if you are sorrowful and sad, seeking his face, and mourning because you have not found it. Child as she was, little Alice was not too young to love Christ ; neither are you.

From that time it was very beautiful to note the gradual outward change that came over her. The dull, stony look changed into an expression of wistful tenderness ; the hands which I had so often noticed crossed idly upon the desk through a whole recess time, became busy in deeds of love ; the voice which had never had the ring of childhood, began to have something of the softness and sweetness of happy girlhood. Alice had but one joy in life ; she clung to that with an intensity which no word can express, until all her lonely and painful life became, by it, transfigured and glorious.

Leaving the Cape soon after this, I lost sight of the child in whom I had become so deeply interested. I heard from her but seldom, for she was by nature reserved and timid still, and only the very few who saw her intimately, could realize anything of the loveliness of character which was quietly but surely developing. Two years passed away, and then came heavy tidings. Little Alice had always been delicate. Knowing nothing of her early history, it is impossible to say whether the seeds of early death were hereditary, or implanted in those eight fearful years of neglect and suffering, whose history must be for ever unwritten. They had laid dormant for a while, but germinated at last with fearful