

the books on his table, turned round, and put his hand on Ernest's shoulder.

"Do you want very much to go to Treverton Hall, my boy?"

"Yes, papa."

"Why, my dear Ernest?"

"Because they're going to have *such* fun, a real merry Christmas!"

Mr. Leslie smiled, "Is it *necessary* that you should leave home to have a real merry Christmas?"

Ernest looked down rather ashamed.

"Answer me, Ernest."

"They are going to keep it up in real old England fashion; there are to be all manner of things done, papa."

Mr. Leslie looked gravely into his son's face. "Ernest, my boy, I am very sorry."

"Oh, papa! you will let us go, say you will, *do*."

"Do, papa," pleaded Constance.

"I cannot, my children."

"Why, not?" said Ernest, passionately."