

Reasons.

BY MISS ALFRED HENRY.

One night after tea, Master Johnnie and Sue sat down at the table their problems to do. Their task was in Euclid, and just about where the circle they wished to inscribe in a square. Both eager began the two lines to draw; and when the whole thing little Sue thought she saw, "My string's in a knot!" baby cries with a shout. "Quick, Susie, my darling, help clear his snarls out," said the mother's kind voice; so what could she do but leave mathematics and cope with the shoe. One moment, no more! Then back to her book. O'er the points once gained again she must look. Meantime, unmolested, her dear brother John the first problem finished, to the next plodded on. Quick as flash Susie worked; the circle inscribed, and scarcely the new proposition had tried when again spoke the mother; "It comes to my mind that Johnnie's blue coat wants a button behind. "He can't go to school without it, you know; come Susie, my dear, please let the books go! "Twill take but a second, with fingers so nimble; then jump up, my child, get your scissors and thimble. "There, that's a bright girl! and now run along! But first, be quite sure you fasten it strong." This one she made fast; but alas! for the thread just lost in her book, it had slipped from her head. Again she reawed, worked rapid and well, though oft called away; indeed I can't tell the number of times that this sister Sue was summoned by all, "little things" to do. While uninterrupted, Johnnie sat, feeling sad that a sister so careless of study he had. Till, his lessons all learned, he sprang from the table, with an air that savored of—"We boys are able." Now the house being still, and the hour being late, Susie studied contented that such is her fate. When the door opens quick, her father steps in, "How could I let Susie those branches begin! "John's work is accomplished, and he gone to bed; but you can't give a girl a boy's clearer head." Sue heard the remark, and she thought a reply, but couldn't quite make it, and good reason why. She thought if she queried why John did not stay, and sew on the buttons burst off in his play, or why baby's tangles he couldn't clear out, or help, now and then in the running about— in short if she said all things she could say, Woman's rights there would be, if no other to pay. But next day at school, at the head of her class, ahead of each boy, and ahead of each lass, up stood little Sue; and her points proved as clear as though she had studied for many a year. Both shoulders Johnnie shrugged, and said with a grin: "Yet girls are no students; they glance, and take in the whole of a theme, ere the 'great minds' begin."

—New Northwest.

—It is not necessary to be happy about everything. It is only necessary to do right, and to know that God is doing everything right with us. He will take care of our happiness.

How 'Biny got her Christmas.

BY MARGARET SUKEY.

"I ain't a little, black, smutty nig, neither! so there—I ain't—ain't—AIN'T!" "Biny sat down the pan of potatoes she was carrying, flung herself on the lowest cellar stair, and planted both little black hands firmly on her knees while she glared up at her opponent. "O yes, you are!" he cried in the greatest glee, and hopping from one toe to the other at the storm he had raised on the dark little face before him—"you know you are awful black!" "An' I am goin' to have a Christmas too, I am! Ma'am Sukey said so herself," cried the poor child, working the small fingers nervously, "just precisely like the white folks. Don't Mister Jo, spite it—don't go an' make 'em not give it to me,"—and she got up in her extreme anxiety, and bobbing her head till every little tail stood on its own respective end, she peered into her tormentor's face for comfort. "I'll shine your shoes real splendid—an' I'll say you didn't hook the apples off'n Mis' Peters' tree that I saw you do, an' I'll fetch an' carry for you just forever if you'll only let 'em give me a Christmas, I will!" "Give me a Christmas!" screamed Jo in the utmost derision, and snapping his fingers in her face till each woolly tail vibrated again. "Santa Claus don't come to such black bugs as you. Catch him! No, siree! You've got to fetch and carry for me, any way—and I shall tell everybody I see you don't want any Christmas, and you can't have it—you old horn-bug you!" "I ain't a horn-bug neither!" shrieked 'Biny in a perfect howl, every particle of fear gone at the thought of her longed-for Christmas vanishing from her grasp—"an' I will have a Christmas!" The last was almost lost, in the wail that Master Jo set up, as she sprang like a cat and buried both little black paws in his long light hair, repeating at every tweak—"I will have a Christmas—there!" "Ow—ow! Take her off—do take her off!" came in shrieks from the dark cellar, and penetrated up the stairs, and all over the house—bringing a crowd of astonished rescuers to see Master Jo and little black, Biny spinning around and around on the old brick floor, while the pan of potatoes, which had been kicked over between them, had rattled out all its contents, which were racing off for a good time themselves. "For the gracious goodness sake; what upon earth!" cried old Ma'am Sukey, who was first down the stairs, and reaching one very black arm she grasped 'Biny, who ducked involuntarily, and released her hold on Master Jo's hair, at her approach—"Columbine Seraphina Scott! I reckon you'll smart for this!" And with a stride and a swoop, she hauled her half up the stairs in the face of the whole family assembled at the top. "I—want—a Christ—mus!" came in gusts of despair from the little black mouth—"sh give me one—do!" "A Christmas!" cried Ma'am Sukey giving her a cuff that set the whole array of little tails to trembling so, it didn't seem as if they could ever be still again—"as shore as you're born, you never'll see a Christmas now!" "You can't expect," said the gentle little lady of the house, looking at her hopeful son staggering up the stairs rubbing blindly his aching and tousled head, "to have us do much for you now. I did intend to 'Biny; but you have been very naughty, and—" "Ooh—boo—coo—" 'Biny flew off in a tangent from Ma'am Sukey's violent grasp, and flinging herself down flat on her face on the floor, gave free vent to all the disappointment in her aching little heart in such howls of despair, that all the listeners were fain to stop their ears and flee. "Can't ye stop yer yelping long

enough for the Missus to talk to yer?" cried Ma'am Sukey, dealing her another generous cuff. "Ye whinnying—but ye hain't no more manners n' a cat!"

But the little black figure wailing on, with no signs of stopping, it was presently picked up unceremoniously and thrust up stairs into a dark closet until such a time as her mother should get her dinner off from her hands, with leisure to attend to her.

"Whicky! won't she catch it though!" said Jo, witnessing 'Biny's disappearance. "I wouldn't want old Sukey's big black paws coming down on me! I guess she won't say anything more about Christmas for one spell. And when Christmas does come I'll get one of those horrid masks down to Joneses, and look through the window and give her a scare."

This so tickled the benevolent Joseph, that he went off laughing, forgetting his smarting head, and also forgetting to tease his small brothers and sisters for at least three quarters of an hour.

The night before Christmas came. 'Biny had sobbed herself to sleep long ago. Everybody in the house was abed. Even old Marm Sukey, tired with her heavy day's work getting ready for the festivities of the morrow when a big dinner was on programme, was snoring heavily in a most delightful rest.

All of a sudden 'Biny started up right into the middle of her little bed in the corner of the dark room. Started up so find herself sneezing and sputtering to such a degree that she thought she should choke to death.

"Why—what—what is it, I wonder!" she stammered, half sleep, and screwing her little black fists into her smarting eyes—"tschee! I can't breathe!"

Marm Sukey snored on, and on. Suddenly 'Biny flew out of her little bed, dashed out into the hall, and with little fleet footsteps, ran along into the main corridor. Here she turned down an alcove, and rushed precipitately into Mister Jo's room.

For a second she stopped, one foot on the sill.

"He'll get a burnin'," she said, "an' he's so awful bad to me." Ah! the One who helps little children saved 'Biny now!

Only for a second. The next she was over by the long woolen curtains pulling and snatching with quick, eager hands, to get the long burning shreds down, and stamping meanwhile with bare feet on the smouldering rug where the match had dropped. Oh, how she worked! The burning curtain sent out a flame that, if any one could have seen, would have lighted up a picture long to be remembered! The dark little face, tense and suffering, in which the black, bead-like eyes were set with a purpose strong as death, looked no more black, but shone even as with heavenly light.

"Wake up! wake up!" she cried. But Jo tired out with all the fun of the previous day, slept heavily on. "Oh, dear! my night-gown's catchin'!" 'Biny had a dim, distant notion of how Marm Sukey would scold if any harm befell the little yellow flannel night-gown, and nerved herself to further exertions. And now the time had come when Jo must wake up, if ever. The room was so full of smoke, that 'Biny, with all her efforts, could scarcely breathe. She left the burning curtains, whose flames were now only smouldering, and, rushing up to the bed, she gave all her strength to the vigorous shaking of the sleeping boy.

"You'll be stuff-ocated!" she screamed in his ear. "Oh, Mister Jo, do wake up!" No need for 'Biny to work more! The aroused household, rushing in snatched her up from the floor, where she had fallen, as the greatest treasure the house contained!

"I don't want no Christmas—I

don't!" said 'Biny next day, when conscience-stricken Jo had poured out the whole tide of his remorse to the whole family. "Oh, no, I don't," she added, raising her little blistered face to the tearful, grateful ones around her.

"Why not dear child?" Jo's mother gave her a loving, tender clasp, as she sat in her lap. "Don't say no, 'Biny—why not?"

"You shall have—the best Christmas," cried Jo, with a gush of generous feeling, "that can be bought in this town, 'Biny Scott!" And he gave her such a hug, that 'Biny sat up straight as an arrow, and rubbed her eyes to look at him.

"But I don't want one," she insisted, the amazement a little subsiding. "No, I don't," she reiterated, on Jo's mother repeating her question, "cause I got one already," and she wriggled her toes, and gave a little squirm of delight at the thought. "Right in here—I feel most awful good in here," she finished solemnly, tapping her breast with her little black forefinger.

"Columbine is a good girl, I've allers said, ef she is mine," declared Marm Sukey, at sight of all the attention that now fell to 'Biny's lot, stalking out to the kitchen with such a high step of pride, that her turban nearly flew off from her head. "Aw, she's awful smart, ef I do say it as shouldn't I foreordain nothin' but that she'll have to be a preacher's wife some day, I do ef she keeps on!" —*Demorest's Monthly Magazine.*

"The Solitary."

Last night as I sat by the fireside waiting for Walter to come, feeling so grateful for home joys and comforts, for the sweetness of wifehood and motherhood the years had brought, my thoughts turned to the multitude of women who, unblessed by ties like mine, know not how full of joy life's cup may be. I could but pity them for all they have missed; but, mingled with the feeling, was one of reverent wonder at the work done by some of them, and I questioned, could they have done the same work had they had the varied duties of wife and mother to perform? Did the greatness of their service to others make up for the hunger of their own hearts?

There was the gifted sister of Sir William Herschel, who shared his work and midnight vigils with such untiring devotion and zeal, aiding him as no other could; the sister of Wordsworth who was a constant joy and inspiration, and whose influence lent to his poetry depth and purity it would not have had but for her.

"A perfect woman nobly planned, To warn, to comfort, and command; And yet a spirit still, and bright With something of an angel light."

And poor Mary Lamb who, despite the cloud which hung over her life, gave back measure for measure of her brother's self-sacrificing devotion, and made him feel that the giving up of his cherished dream for her sake was not without its rich reward. But lately gone from our midst was Catherine Beecher who, turning from the broken hopes of her early womanhood gave herself so earnestly to duty that when, in the "fullness of time," she was called to higher work, her brother, out of the love he bore her, gave her memory this beautiful tribute: "Herself motherless, she became a mother to all; homeless, she helped to uplift and make better all homes around her." Alice and Phebe Cary, too, were without home-ties, and many others whose well-used talents have made the world richer and better.

Realizing the richness and extent of the work such women do, is it presumptuous to pity them for what they have missed? Though honor and fame came to them in full measure, their hearts must sometimes have ached for the sweetness of the vanished dreams, and no doubt, to each of them came moments when they would have given

all for the home joys denied them. If each of them could have been set in love-blessed homes of their own, could they not have done just as good work, albeit it might have been widely different? It seems so sad that they, with their rich, loving natures, should have missed the crowning joy of womanhood. Whatever else she may gain, the true womanly heart must yet feel.

"A woman's crown of glory Is a sinless little child."

"I know I must be all my life a lonely woman, with no home, no fire-side to be wholly my own," writes one from the depth of a life-long sorrow, one whose cup of happiness, sparkling to the very brim, fell from her eager lips ere she could fully taste its sweetness. Oh, the pathos of her words! We question why it must be, and she, grown strong and trustful though much suffering, makes answer, "Perhaps. He saw this was the only way to lead me to Him, before I had never been drawn half so near as now," adding, "If earthly happiness had made me careless of the heavenly, had made me an idol worshiper, and suffering has drawn me nearer the only one I ought to worship, would I wish to change?" "Brave heart! thus to find 'sweetness in the Marsh cups.'" Yet, why need earthly happiness draw any away from Him who is the "giver of all good gifts?" It is better to come to Him through suffering than not at all, but earthly parents like not that their children should think of them only when trouble comes, and the All Father must be glad when increases our love for Him. Too often

"Lips say, 'God be pitiful,' Which ne'er said 'God be praised.'" The flowery path, as well as the briar-strewn one, should lead us heavenward.

How true it is that man's best work is done through the inspiration of woman's love and trust, whether she be wife, mother, sister or friend. Though in the love which we may not fathom, God leaves some women with no home to be wholly their own, yet He "hath set the solitary in families" and gives to each some noble work; It is not always best that our little plans should be fulfilled. Often He destroys what we have so carefully builded, that he may build in a larger way for us. Often at some gate where we had not thought to enter, duty stands with the inexorable command; "There is the way; walk ye in it." The voice seems stern to us then, but, in after years, we find it to have been but the sternness of love which would not let us choose any but the best and surest way.

Miss Muloch says, most truly, "We must meet things as they are without perplexing ourselves about what they might have been; for, if we believe in an over-ruling providence at all, there can be no such possibility as 'might have been.'"

Though the roses be gone, violets and daisies still blossom along the life-path, and many there are who, when the nightingale's song is hushed yet hear the sweet notes of the lark dropping from above the clouds. No matter what sweetness a life may have missed, if it leads straight on in the way of right and duty, it is to find

"One by one the dreary places Glow with beauty and gush with light, One by one God's finger traces Moon and stars upon the night."

And if this be true of life here, how much more it is true of the other life where dear dreams are given back with added beauty and preciousness. None need be homeless there, or long in vain for companionship. There is room and love for all, and all may come if they will.—*EARNEST, in Arthur's Home Magazine.*

—There are in Pittsburg and its immediate vicinity seventy-five glass works, twenty-four of which make table ware, twenty-four window glass, eight fruit jars, ten green and black glass bottles and phials, and nine chimneys.