

an intense pathos, though she said never a word more. To her those simple words meant the rending of a whole life's ties.

Three months after, the wedding of Carmelita and Andrew Rutherford took place. The bridegroom made his first Communion upon the wedding morning. The young couple left K— immediately for a few months' trip to Europe.

So another May had slipped around, when Hepzibah stood waiting with uncontrollable impatience for the coming of Carmelita, this time with her husband. The front door was thrown wide as upon that other May eve. But the old house had taken on a new lease of life. Skilled workmen had been at work; paint had worked wonders.

Hepzibah, tired of waiting, had run into the kitchen to see if the kettle was boiling. She did not hear steps approaching. All at once she felt a pair of arms clasping her tightly round the neck. Then she knew that Carmelita had come back, to continue her mission of warming and brightening the old house. Henceforth it was to become a centre of Catholic life, spreading its influence for good afar. Of this Hepzibah knew nothing. She only knew that Carmelita had come back and that they were sitting by the kitchen fire as on that first evening.

"You do so remind me to-night of Araminta," said Hepzibah. Was it because her sight was failing, or because her memory, growing duller, blended past and present. "You're powerful like her, only not so good lookin', not but what you've got your own share of good looks, too, or Squire Rutherford's son he'd never have married you."

"Are you glad to have me home, Hepzibah?"

"Well, I guess so. It wasn't very cheerful livin' here alone."

"I've come back never to go away again," said Carmelita, laying her head on the old woman's shoulder. For father and mother being dead in the South, and sisters

and brothers married, she had no strong tie there.

"Well, I guess you're here for good, if Squire Rutherford's son's got anything to say about it. Seems most as if Araminta had come back and the Elder and his wife gone on a pleasure trip."

"God grant they have," said Carmelita, seriously, "and I have come to take Araminta's place forever."

Such was Carmelita's second home-coming to the old house.

[THE END.]

THE CRIB.

WHO lies there? How? and why? are questions that appeal to the meditative soul at Christmastide. The good saint of Assissi has given us the crib as it appears in our churches to-day. The only begotten Son of God,—the eternal One who said "Before Abraham was I am,"—true God and true man,—the long expected Saviour is He who lies in the crib. And how does He appear? Poor, weak and suffering because "He came among His own and His own received Him not." The answer to the third question. What caused Him to become a helpless child? is told in one word—Love.—P. A. B.

THE THREE MASSES.

IN the Carmelite Breviary we read that St. Telesphorus, Pope and martyr of the Order of Mount Carmel, was the Pontiff who ordained that three masses be celebrated by each priest on the Feast of the Nativity. The first mass is celebrated at midnight to commemorate our Lord's birth at Bethlehem in the dark hours of night. The second mass is said before daybreak the time when the holy Babe was adored by the shepherds, and the third time is the Holy Sacrifice offered to signify the birth of a Redeemer for us. St. Telesphorus likewise commanded that "*Gloria in Excelsis*," the hymn of the angels, be sung at the masses.—P. A. B.