



CHRISTMAS EVE.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

It is Christmas Eve and Santa Claus is coming, and the two little girls in their warm bed are anxiously wondering where he will come from, what he will be like, and how he will get into their room. In the daytime they eagerly looked forward to the night; but now that it has come they are just a little bit afraid of the old man who is to bring them so many nice presents for Christmas.

However, their fears will not last long, for in a short time they will be sound asleep, and we are quite sure old Santa Claus will come too softly to wake them.

A PRETTY FACE.

Just a few months ago two little cousins, Sarah Singer and Marion Love, each about six years old, called to see their Aunt Lorinda, who was sick with rheumatism. The children were very fond of their aunt; so they came to see how she was. It so happened that Aunt Lorinda's pastor, the Rev. George Goodwill, a plain, unassuming man, came to see her a few moments before the little cousins arrived. The minister kindly spoke to them when they came in, and asked them about their parents, brothers, and sisters. After a pleasant talk of thirty minutes with Aunt Lorinda and Mr. Goodwill, the little cousins said they must return home, because their mammas wanted to know how Aunt Lorinda was, and had charged them not to stay long. So they must go. Then the

minister kindly said, "We will have worship before the children leave;" so they all knelt down to pray.

Mr. Goodwill tenderly prayed for Aunt Lorinda that she might be comforted in her affliction and soon be well again, and for the rest of her family, and then for the little cousins who had kindly come to sympathize with their sick aunt, and to see the rest of the family.

"Heavenly Father," said the minister in his prayer, "bless these dear little girls; keep them well and make them happy; help them to be good, and make their lives bright with the sunshine of thy love."

The idea that the minister should remember and pray especially for them was a happy thought to the children; so they talked about it on their way home.

"It was very kind in Aunt Lorinda's minister to pray for us, wasn't it?" said Marion, as they walked slowly and thoughtfully away from Aunt Lorinda's house.

"Yes," said Sarah, as she drew her cap over her ears to keep them warm, "it was very nice in him to pray for little children."

"But," said Marion, warmly, with her heart and mind on the personal nature of the minister's prayer, "he did not just pray for little children, but for you and me,—these dear little girls, is what he said, for I was listening."

"Yes," said her cousin, "I believe he did pray for us just in that way."

Then they walked on together nearly a square without speaking, each one thinking of their nice visit to Aunt Lorinda's, and especially of Mr. Goodwill's prayer for them. Presently Marion, who could not forget that the minister had prayed, not for children generally, but for them individually, resumed the conversation.

"Hasn't Aunt Lorinda's minister a lovely complexion?" looking earnestly into Sarah's face. "Do you know what complexion means?" she continued, without waiting for her cousin to answer her first question.

"Of course I do," said Sarah; "you mean that he has a pretty face."

"That's it," said Marion, with her own really beautiful face wreathed in smiles; "he has a nice complexion—a pretty face."

Just then the children reached Marion's home, and as she put her little hand on the door-knob she said: "I am glad we found Aunt Lorinda better, and that we met her minister. He has such a nice complexion. Good-bye, Sarah."

"Good-bye, Marion."

Thus the two little cousins separated. That visit to Aunt Lorinda's will likely remain a bright spot in their memory. They will never forget that minister because he prayed for their sick aunt, their uncle and their cousins, and for them.

Now, boys and girls, why did Marion and Sarah think and say that Mr. Goodwill had a "pretty face?" I have seen Mr. Goodwill several times, and I do not think his face is handsome; indeed, I consider it rather homely. I think it was the minister's heart of kindness and love, and not his face, that pleased the children and made him appear so nice and pretty to them.

It is real nice to have a pretty face and form, but it is much better to have a good kind heart. No matter how beautiful one's face may be, if the heart is selfish, unkind, disobedient, or boastful, that person cannot be really pretty. Remember, children, that a good heart always makes a good impression for the one in whose bosom it beats, and even makes a homely face appear beautiful. I know a girl with a beautiful face but it is spoiled by a bad heart. All good children and grown people, too, are truly beautiful—have "nice complexions," as Marion said.

DREAMS.

As I lie quiet in my bed
Do I just think while I'm asleep?
Or does a little fairy creep,
So soft and still, up to my ear
And whisper dreams for me to hear?

I dream the very nicest things!
I dream my tricycle has wings;
I dream my doll can laugh and talk;
I dream my woolly lamb can walk.
How do the dreams get in my head?