

## Jenny's Christmas Eve.

'Sunday Reading for the Young.'

Well, the old broom was gone! When she had begun to sweep her crossing that morning in the falling snow a rude boy had come and laughed at it, calling it 'an old stump without a bristle,' and had pushed her and it from their accustomed place, which he took himself with a brand new broom. And she had gone away, and looked at her old one, and thought it must be dead since it could work no more; and so she had carried it away to a lonely corner and buried it and cried; for, when old Johnson up the street could work no more, had he not died, and did they not take him and put him under the ground out of sight? True, no one cried for him; but, then, no one loved him, and little Jenny loved her broom. It was the only friend she had, and she was sure no man or woman could ever be so good a friend, for it could not beat her, and it used to win for her all the food she ever got.

And now old 'broom' was dead, and little Jenny cried, and the snow fell fast. She did not care to go home, for her father was always drunk, and she had lost her mother long ago. So she wandered about until the evening time. This was a busy day in town. The shops looked merry and warm and bright, and though it did snow fast, people hurried to and fro with baskets on their arms and many parcels and kinder faces than usual, at least so Jenny thought. Oh, how many coppers she might have had had broom been alive! But, then, broom was dead, and Jenny all alone.

She crept within the shadow of a great church, which sheltered her from the snow, and watched the people coming in and out. Some had lovely flowers, and some big bunches of holly, with, oh, so many berries! and some had little books. Ever so many went in, and then she heard music and such happy singing, and she remembered that it was Christmas Eve, and that was why every one looked so bright and sang for joy.

Jenny had once been to a Sunday-

school, but she never went again, for the other children drew away from her and said she was dirty and common, and their mothers did not like them to sit next dirty, common girls. True, they did not let their teacher see this; but when she went away they teased her, and followed her to see where she lived, and she dodged them up one street and down another until they lost her. But she did not go home for hours afterwards, lest they should

He was alive now, doing good somewhere, only she could never find Him, though she had been on the lookout for Him ever since. And this, she remembered, was the evening before His birth-day, when, long years ago, He had been born a little Baby. She knew people were always glad at this time. She, too, could have been glad if only she could have found Him. She would have asked Him for a new broom and a good crossing; and perhaps,



"JENNY WOKE UP."

find out the wretched garret she shared with her father, and which was her only home. And she never went to school again.

But in that one lesson at the Sunday-school she learnt that Jesus was some one great—'God,' the teacher said; and how He became a little Baby, and then grew up to be a Man; how He was quite poor himself, but always lived to be kind to other poor people if only they would ask Him for help; and how

as He was so very kind, He might have given her one or two pennies. But, then, He never came where she was, so why should she rejoice? All this passed through Jenny's ignorant little head as she cuddled half hidden close to the church's heavy door.

Then the music stopped, and the people came out, and when all was quiet again she pushed the door open a little and peeped in. It was so warm in there!—she pushed it