



A SOFT ANSWER

MARY and Ellen were cousins about the same age, and lived not far from each other, in a little country town. They were great friends, and spent much of their time together. Sometimes, however, difficulties would arise between them, and sharp, cutting words would be sure to follow. Their schoolmates had noticed this, and wondered how cousins, and friends could talk so to each other.

One winter the Holy Spirit touched the heart of Ellen, and she gave her heart to God. All her schoolmates were surprised, and no doubt wondered how this wild, quick-tempered girl could ever come to be a humble Christian.

They watched her closely, and it was not long before the test came. It was at noon, when the scholars were all engaged in some lively game or social chat around the stove. Ellen had unconsciously offended Mary in some way, and in loud, angry tones, so that all the school could hear, she said to Ellen, "You are a pretty Christian!" and sneered about her religion.

Every eye turned toward Ellen. They knew that she had always been ready to "give as good as was sent;" and now they were interested to see what grace had done for this sensitive girl. For an instant her eye flashed, and her lip quivered, but before she could speak she heard a still voice whisper, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." A mild look came into her eye,

and in a trembling voice she said:

"If I am not a good Christian, I want to be."

There was silence for a moment, but Mary was too proud to let the school think Ellen had conquered, and for several minutes she continued to ridicule her in a sarcastic manner, but only received in return, meek and quiet answers, and tender glances from tearful eyes.

The school-bell rang, and the trouble ended; the scholars had learned something of the power of meekness under trial; but Mary was far from being contented with herself. She spent an uneasy and unhappy afternoon, and at the close of school kindly took Ellen by the arm and walked home with her, seeming to desire by unwonted kindness to atone for the injury her unruly tongue had wrought. They parted kindly at the gate, Mary showing by her

acts if not by her words that she regretted what had happened, and that she too wished that she were a Christian.

Many years have passed since then; the school days are ended; and many of the pupils in that school have since proved the power of grace divine. Ella still lives to rejoice in him who has done so much for her, but Mary's course is run. She rests in hope, and her last words to her cousin were, "I'll meet you in the kingdom."—*Little Christian.*

FULL, YET ROOM ENOUGH.

"MAMMA," said six-year-old Fred, "I can't love God and you both, so I'll choose you."

"Why, my child! what do you mean by saying that you cannot love both?"

"'Cause that's what the Sunday-school lesson says; it says that I must love God with all my heart, and there isn't but one 'all' to it, so if I love him with all, there won't be one bit left for you."

Mamma laughed, and only asked Fred to come with her. Going to the cellar, she quietly asked him to help her fill a large pan with potatoes.

"There," said he, piling on the last big fellow, "it's full."

"Full, yet there's room," answered mother, as she next took a bag of beans and commenced to shake them into the big crevices between the potatoes. She poured and shook until a quart or more had dis-

appeared, and the pan was specked with white.

"Neither is it full yet," she said; and taking up a shovelful of sand she scattered that over the pan, and it, too, disappeared, and another after it.

"Not full yet," she said again, as she took a cup and began pouring water on the pan; and she poured and poured until several quarts were gone.

"Now, you see how a thing can be full and yet hold more—of something else. So your heart may be full of the love of God, and plenty of room left for me and papa and sister and play books."

"HANDSOME IS WHO HANDSOME DOES."

ONE time I met a little girl
Whose face was fair to see;
Of all the pretty girls I knew,
The prettiest face had she.

"A charming little girl," said I.
Aunt Hannah wisely smiled:
"It takes more than a pretty face
To make a charming child."

I wondered what she meant; but, ah!
I knew it very soon.
I said no more "A charming child,"
But sung another tune.

For she—the girl with pretty face—
Was cross as cross could be;
Her snarling words and pouting lips
Soon disenchanted me.

"You see, my dear," Aunt Hannah said,
"A handsome face alone
Will never make a charming child,
Nor for cross words atone.

"But handsome is who handsome does,
When heart is filled with grace;
And pleasant words are lovelier far
Than many a pretty face."

"WHY HE PROMISED TO."

A LITTLE maiden, about seven years old, was once asked: "My little girl, are you a Christian?"

Looking up with a happy smile, she answered: "Yes!"

"How long have you been one?"

"Ever since last night," she said. "I was at the meeting, and I felt I was a sinner, and I went home and kneeled by the side of my bed, and I asked God to put away my sins; and he did it."

"How do you know he did it?"

"Why, he promised to," was her reply.

How this dear child's faith took God simply at his word, believing that what he had promised he would fulfil.