

# LITTLE BETSEY,

THE

## MOTHERLESS GIRL.

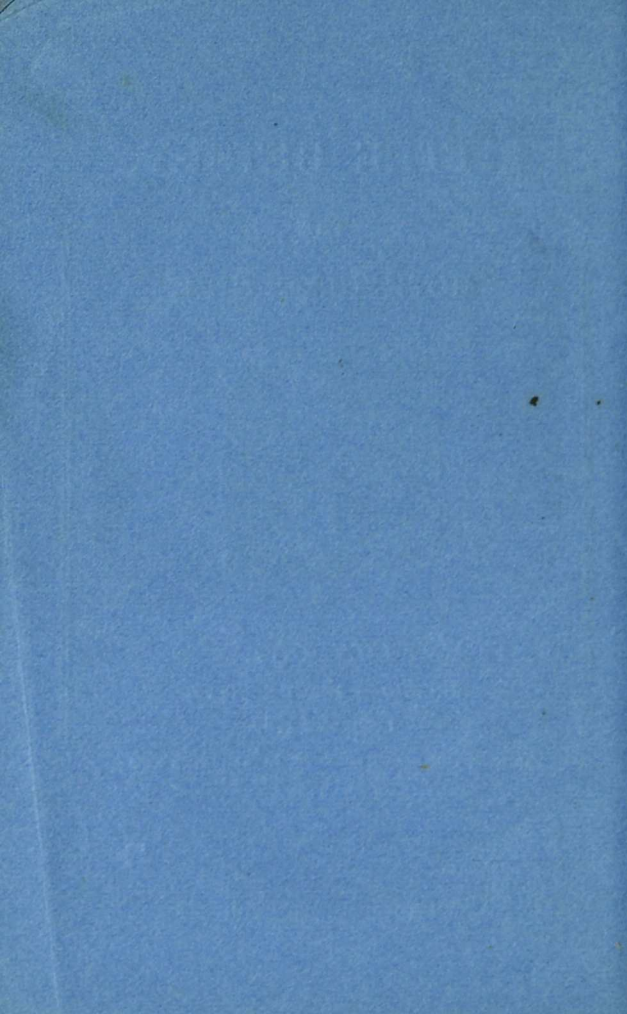


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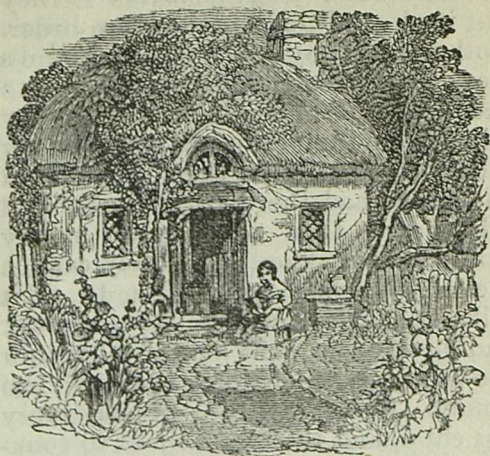
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# LITTLE BETSEY, THE MOTHERLESS GIRL.



It was a sad day at poor John's cottage when his wife died, and left him with six small children: for Betsey was his eldest child, and she was but a little girl, and the baby was not a month old. John was only a day labourer, and could earn but little. I have known many girls a great deal older than Betsey who were scarcely of

any use to their mothers, and who would be worse than useless if they had no mother to keep them in order. But it pleased God to take poor John's motherless baby to himself, and to bless the instructions given to Betsey and her brother John, in the Sunday school; so that they all got through their troubles better than they would have done had there been no Sunday school; or than some poor people would, who cry out that they cannot see of what use learning is to such folks as themselves. Betsey's mother had been wiser, and had got her into the Sunday school when she was very young. She was a tidy, healthy looking child, and though she had to come a good way, she was early and constant at school. I wish I could say as much of all the girls I know.

When poor John's wife was laid in her grave, Betsey began to practise what her catechism taught her, in that part which explains our duty towards our neighbour. Very likely you can say your catechism—that is a good thing; but are you attending to what

it teaches you? It would be possible to teach a parrot to say good words, yet still it would be a useless bird. Of children more is expected, both by God and their teachers, than just repeating a lesson. Betsey showed that she was trying to love, honour, and succour her father and mother. Most likely you have been told that succour means to help or comfort, so that it was no longer in Betsey's power to succour her mother; that she had done as well as she could when she was alive. But though she was now dead, there were ways in which she might still honour her, and prove how much she had loved her: such as doing things as her mother taught her to do them, and acting as she would have wished her to act had she been alive. Betsey made the cottage as tidy as she could; washed herself and her little brothers; and, hand in hand with John, she set off in good time on Sunday morning for school. She felt rather sad, you may be sure; but her teacher pitied her: yes, and God looked down in mercy upon her; for though he is so great,



yet he has respect unto the lowly; and though we cannot see him, yet he sees and knows all things, and he can do all things. So he gave this poor orphan girl favour in the eyes of a lady who frequently visits Sunday schools. She bought Betsey a nice strong pair of shoes, which she greatly needed, and promised to be a friend for time to come, if she was orderly and constant at her school. She was a comfort to her father; and you may think how much happier Betsey was, than she would have been had she been like some idle, vain children, who are always ready to make old shoes an excuse for staying from school, or from the house of God; forgetting that God knows when they make idle excuses, even if no one else finds them out. And every one else knows, that if shoes will serve to go to a wake or fair, or to play about the roads or fields, they would do just as well to go to school.

When Betsey first went to the Sunday school, she could not read much, and knew but little about God who

made her, and Jesus, who died to save sinners. But she soon learned to read, and know more about the Lord. She learned, too, in reading the Testament, and hearing the teachers talk, that she had a very wicked heart, and was not fit to go to heaven if she should die thus; and when she heard that Jesus Christ died to save sinners, she wished to love him for it, and to observe everything he says in his word. Oh, how often I have seen Betsey cry because she had a wicked heart, and did not love the Saviour enough! Betsey became a praying girl, too, by going to the Sunday school; she used to pray to the Lord to forgive her sins, and make her a good girl, for Christ's sake.

Sunday after Sunday, little Betsey tripped away to her school, with a light heart and a clean face; and though she could not learn quite so fast as some children, yet she got before many who had better memories, and who also went to school in the week. Do you wonder how that could be? I will let you into the secret, and then you can try the same plan; and, if you do,

I am quite sure you will find it a good one. Betsey kept her eyes upon her teacher when she was speaking, and listened very attentively while the other scholars were saying their lessons: and when the reward tickets were changed for books, let who would have forfeited theirs by being absent, you may be sure Betsey had not. She always kept company with the best girls, just as the pretty verse in her hymn taught her:

“ Away from fools I’ll turn mine eyes,  
Nor with the scoffers go;  
I would be walking with the wise,  
That wiser I may grow.”

Some time had passed away, and Betsey was able to read well in her Testament; she was grown stout and strong, and the lady who gave her the new shoes, and who had kept her word, and been a constant friend to her, wanted a little maid to run on errands, and to sew; in short, she wanted a girl that could do as she was bid. Now, from what she had seen of Betsey, she thought her likely to suit very well; as she had shown how



willing she was to love, honour, and succour her father and mother; and submit herself to her governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters. She hoped to find her also disposed to order herself lowly and reverently to all her betters, as well as willing to learn and labour truly to get her own living. The lady therefore sent for her father; he came and brought the girl with him, but though he knew it was a very good place, "yet," said he, "I hope you will not be offended with me when I say that I cannot spare her; for indeed, ma'am, she is my greatest comfort; I should be lost without her." "I am glad," said the lady, "to hear you say so; but pray what does she do at home?" "Everything for me and the younger children," said poor John; "she is like a little woman; while I am out all day, working in the fields, she takes care of the house, and cooks my victuals, and brings it me when I am at work, and when I come home tired at night she tries to make me happy. Indeed she is very tidy, and till the rest are grown

bigger, I could not part with her; but I thought it my duty to come and thank you, ma'am, for all favours, and for giving her the offer of your place." Do you suppose, my young readers, the lady was sorry to hear this? Oh, no, she was very, very glad; she smiled upon little Betsey, and promised to continue her friend, telling her that it was certainly her duty to remain at home for the present; and saying, she was rejoiced to find that she was practising at home what she learned at the Sunday school.

At length, John's younger children grew able to do the same things their elder sister had done, and the lady took Betsey into her service. It was a fine thing for her, for it is a good family to live in; and as that lady is particular whom she receives as servants, it is a proof she had observed Betsey's conduct, and thought well of her. Betsey has been some years in service, and I hope is not likely to forfeit her good name.

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EVERY little child relies  
On a care beyond his own,  
Knows he's neither strong nor wise,  
Fears to stir a step alone.

What thou shalt to-day provide  
Let me as a child receive;  
What to-morrow may betide  
Calmly to thy wisdom leave.

Oh! what grace, that Christ should  
Thus for our poor helpless race; [care  
All our burdens kindly bear,  
Clasp us in his kind embrace.