

LITTLE CLOAK



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To Alice

from

Mary

By
Feb 26th 1867

LITTLE RED CLOAK.

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS IN OIL COLORS.

PHILADELPHIA:
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PREFACE.



WE trust that our young friends will receive with a warm welcome our Little Red Cloak, and that her example will stimulate them to deeds of kindness and words of love to all, both rich and poor. They will notice that a picture accompanies each verse of poetry. For the verses, and story which explains them, they must thank Miss Harriet B. McKeever, and for the beautiful pictures the designer, Mr. W. L. Sheppard, and the engravers, Messrs. Van Ingen and Snyder. If they are good critics of book-work they will certainly commend the stereotyper, printer and binder for their part in this effort to please and profit them.



Here is the darling at Margery's door!
The dear little girl has been here before.
She wears a red cloak and a hat trim and neat;
See, pussy is glad, for she's rubbing her feet.
Some children think only of candy and cakes,
But these are the walks that kind Alice takes.
"Just lift up the latch, dear, and peep in,
Just knock at the door, dear, and walk in."
Here, waiting, the little Red Cloak we see,
With a basket for good dame Margery,
With the sweetest smiles and the kindest words
That eyes ever saw or ears ever heard.





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I.

Is not that a sweet little girl? Would you not like to know the dear child that looks so bright and happy?

I am sure that you would like to know her name. It is Alice Murray.

Alice Murray is the real name of the "little Red Cloak." She is the second child of a widow, who has taken great pains to teach her little daughters. As soon as Alice began to talk, Mrs. Murray tried to teach her to deny herself, and to find her happiness in making everybody happy.

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When the sun shone bright upon the pretty garden, the mother used to show her children how and what he shone for. He warmed the earth, made the plants grow, and painted the lovely flowers; he drew the water up into the clouds and made the rain fall upon the earth. The sun did not shine for himself, just to look bright and glorious. Oh no,—the sun shone to bless the whole world. Then she would bid them watch the rain as it fell. The rain does not fall for itself. Oh, no,—it “falls upon the evil and the good,” and every drop has its work to do.

But Mrs. Murray taught deeper lessons than these. There was an old book that laid upon the table in her chamber. It was full of pictures, and as soon as Alice could prattle, her mother used to take her on her lap and show her the sweet pictures in the good old book. You have guessed its name, I dare say, for your mother has done the same.

There were two or three pages that contained the

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names of Alice's grandparents and all their children; one page told of their births, another of marriages, and another of their deaths. The mother of Alice and Uncle Robert were all that were left; but under the name of each departed one was recorded "asleep in Jesus," and the mother used to talk to her children about what it was to "sleep in Jesus. Many a beautiful story did she tell about that precious Saviour, and when Alice was a very little girl she knew all about this dear friend. She could tell where he was born, where he was brought up, where he was baptized, and where he preached the most precious sermon that ever was heard. She could tell about his first miracle and all the wondrous things that he had done. She had learned to follow him as he walked through Judea, healing the sick and doing good to everybody. Many a tear had she shed at the story of his sufferings. She had watched him in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary; she had listened to the story of his resurrection, and, with lips



“Grandmother Margery, only just see!
Butter and sugar and very nice tea!”
The good old grandmother pleasantly smiled
As she smoothed the locks of the lovely child.
“You have come a long way through the wintry street,
Step in, little maid, and warm your cold feet.”
Then the dear little child by the fire sat down,
And out of her stores she took a warm gown,
A pair of good stockings and shoes thick and strong,
And Tabby kept singing a pussy-cat’s song.
Now pussy looks wise, how gentle her purr,
Whilst Alice, well-pleased, smooths down her soft fur.





little hand lifting the latch of the cottage door. Uncle Robert is taking a fine ride with sisters Lucy and Jane, but Alice remembered her promise to old Margery.

See! even the kitten is glad to see her. She might go every day to the houses of the rich and great, if she pleased to do so, but Alice would rather go where she could do good.

And here she is, at old Margery Bennett's cottage door, with some very nice things sent by her mamma.

* Mrs. Bennett is poor and old, but she is a child of God, and Alice loves her for her Master's sake. Margery's eyes are old and dim, and it is a great pleasure once a week to hear the sweet young voice reading Jesus' blessed words. She had had a little grand-daughter once, about the age of Alice, but her heavenly Father had seen fit to take her first, and the old woman was all alone. No wonder that she was glad to see the bright young face, as it brought in the sunshine to her lowly cottage.



II.

OW look at Little Red Cloak in the second picture. She is opening her basket. How eager the little maid looks! and the old face is shining too! She has brought old Margery some butter and eggs, and some very fine tea. These are luxuries to the poor woman, for they are too dear for her to buy.

Sitting down, Alice unloads her little basket. "Here are some warm stockings, good dame," said the child, as she laid them in Margery's lap; "and here is a new Sunday cap. Mamma says that we ought always to look nice on Sunday, out of respect for God's day, even though we may not be able to go to church."

"Blessings on your dear heart!" said Margery, "you don't forget old grandmother."

"No, indeed. This is my birthday, and Uncle Robert gave me three dollars for a gift, so I bought you a new Bible with fine large print, and before I go I want to read one chapter to you."

"Bring your chair close," said the old woman, "for I am a little deaf and don't hear quite as well as I used to."

It was a pretty sight—old age and childhood alone together—the fair young face bending seriously over the good book, and the aged pilgrim listening so eagerly to the sweet clear tones, as they flowed from the lips of the child.

"Let not-your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," read Alice, and the tear-drops fell from the listener's eyes.

"These are good words, aren't they?" said the little girl. "Henry Jones brought a small paper to our house, the other day, called 'Good Words,' but they were not like these."

"No, Alice, there are no words like the Master's."

They talked awhile about the precious chapter, and then Alice bade the old woman good-by, promising to come soon again.

"God bless the lamb!" said Margery, as Alice closed the cottage door.





See! here is the Little Red Cloak again,
She is trying to lift up poor Uncle Ben;
But down on the slippery, glassy ice,
Poor little thing, she fell in a trice;
Yet she stayed in the cold and sleety street
Till old Uncle Ben stood up on his feet;
Then she led him on to his lonely home,
But there's nobody glad to see him come.
Up broken stairs to an attic so small,
She watched the old man for fear he might fall,
And the Little Red Cloak left warmth and light
From her loving smiles and her face so bright.







III.

OLD was the day, but Alice Murray's heart was full of sunshine, and she trudged along over the icy pavements, singing the words of a pretty hymn. Icicles hung from the trees and houses, but her heart was warm and joyous.

Just before there limped an aged man, weak and a cripple, hobbling along with an ivory-headed cane.

The pavement was slippery as glass, and before Alice could get near him he had fallen upon the ice.

The little girl sprang to help him, but she was too small and weak to do any good, and, in her efforts, poor "little Red Cloak" came down too. Two men came to

their assistance, and the old man stood once more upon his feet, with Alice by his side.

Laying his hand upon her brown locks, he said, "There is a kind heart in this little body; but, poor lamb, she came down too. I hope you are not hurt, my pretty one."

"Not at all," was the child's reply; "but where do you live, old man?"

"A long way from here, my pet."

"Who takes care of you?"

"No one but my faithful dog; we live all alone."

"How do you get your living?"

"By what a few good people give me. Very soon I must go to the alms-house, for my legs are growing very weak."

Alice opened her little pocket-book, with the remains of her birthday gift.

"Here, old man, take this," said the dear child, handing him twenty-five cents, and then, calling a boy who was passing, she gave him some pennies and bade him take the old man safely home.



The little Red Cloak, on a winter night,
When the snow was falling so thick and white,
Stood close to the window, where the dim gas-light
Just gleamed on a sorrowful, piteous sight.
A poor little match-girl lay shivering there,
But soon was she housed from the frosty air.
"You're cold, little girl, let me warm your hands,"
And the child near the match-girl kindly stands;
"Let me dry your hood;—and your shoes so old
They can never keep your feet from the cold;
I have a good pair," then away she goes,
And the match-girl runs home with nice warm clothes.





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Taking her little hand, he kissed it as he bade her good-by, and Alice slipped a little book, which she had with her, into the open palm. The book was "Welcome to Jesus."

Alice was a happy child on that birthday night, when she hung her little cloak upon the peg in the wardrobe, and sank to sleep, to dream sweet dreams. The peace of God was in her heart.





IV.

ERE, in our fourth picture, is Alice standing by the parlor window after tea, looking out upon the winter night.

There is a high wind, and it has been snowing through the day. It is a cold, cheerless night, and the foot-passengers are hurrying along the dreary streets. The flickering gas-light reveals the form of a poor match-girl, who, weak, hungry and cold, has fallen under the lamp, with her basket of matches by her side.

Out runs little Alice. The child is moaning with pain and suffering, but, with the aid of the cook, the shivering child is brought into the warm kitchen and laid on a settee near the fire.

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"Isn't it a pity, Nancy?" said Alice; "just see how old her clothes are; she has only one thin petticoat and this ragged dress. I know that we have something to spare," and away ran "Little Red Cloak" to seek out mamma.

"O mamma! just come down to the kitchen," said the child, "there is such a poor little girl there, so cold and so hungry. Haven't we something to give her?"

"I will go and look, Alice. I think we have an old cloak and a warm dress and skirt. But run back again, my dear, and tell Nancy to give her a good supper; I will soon follow you."

The kind-hearted cook had not waited for orders, for when Alice returned the child was sitting by the kitchen-table and eating heartily what Nancy had prepared.

Didn't the brown eyes sparkle at the sight?

Alice seated herself where she could enjoy the pleasant picture, and in a little while Mrs. Murray entered, with a bundle of good warm clothing hanging on her arm.

"Poor child!" said the good lady, as she turned up the

old ragged dress and saw the threadbare petticoat and bare legs of the little girl.

In a few minutes a pair of good stockings, some comfortable shoes and warm winter garments replaced the threadbare rags, and the match-girl's eyes filled with glad tears as she said, "Thank you! dear good lady. We are so poor. Mother has been sick all winter and father don't do right. He has had no work for a whole year."

"Where do you live, little girl?" asked Mrs. Murray.

"In Taylor's court, ma'am. Last year we had some nice things in our house—a good table and some chairs, a bedstead and warm bed, and some bed clothes; but they are all gone now."

"Where have they gone to?" inquired the listener.

"Father sold them. Then mother got sick and couldn't work any more, and I sell matches to get something to eat."

Mrs. Murray took the directions and promised to call upon them and see what could be done.

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Little Peggy was a thankful child when she bade good-night, for she carried home a basket of good food, with some money to buy a little coal, and, better than all, the feeling that they had found a friend.

The next was a bright cold day, and Mrs. Murray, with "Little Red Cloak," started for Taylor's court.

Peggy's story was all true.

It was a sight of misery. A poor, sick woman in the corner, on a bundle of old rags, with nothing but a worn-out cloak to cover her, a drunken man by the stove fast asleep, and little Peggy getting something ready for her mother to eat.

Mrs. Murray took the case in hand, had the wretched man sent to the alms-house, provided a physician from the dispensary, and then sent a bedstead, with warm bed-clothes and whatever was necessary for the comfort of the poor woman. Kindness and proper food soon restored the sufferer, and as soon as she was well enough Mrs. Murray got for the mother a good place in a respectable family,

whilst she took little Peggy into her own family, to learn to be a waiter. Thus Peggy was cared for, and also removed from the bad influences of her home.

Alice always felt as if Peggy belonged very much to her, and the little warm-hearted Irish girl in return looked upon the child as one sent by heaven to save her mother and herself from starving.

It was a pleasant sight to watch the love between the two. If any delicacy fell to Peggy's lot, away she would run to Miss Alice with the nice ripe peach, the red-checked apple, or juicy pear.

"And sure it isn't for the likes o' me," the little girl would say; "I niver was used to no sich things, and it's jest the thing for your pretty little mouth."

"But I have had quite enough, Peggy, and mamma likes you to have a share always."

"I know, Miss, that you're often hungry when you come in from school. Jest take it, honey, to please little Peggy. I would a heap rather see you have it than eat



See Little Red Cloak in the nursery,
With Lucy, and Jane, and baby Marie;
How pretty she looks, with basket so neat,
Feeding her sisters with cherries so sweet.
Just watch the dear child, and what will you see?
The ripest ones given to baby Marie.
What a beautiful picture here we see!
They all look so happy, so full of glee,
For Alice, the elder, is gentle and kind;
And good little girls, we always shall find
Ready and willing, in hours of play,
To let the little ones have their own way.





it myself," and the child would run off laughing, leaving the gift of love behind.

Alice would not eat the fruit, but many a time would she return the same to Nancy, telling her to bring it out as her own gift to little Peggy.

Every Saturday the mother came to look after her child, and Alice Murray was very happy when she saw the cheerful, neatly-clad woman, with such a healthy look, and little Peggy smiling by her side; for Alice had not forgotten the cold night when she brought in the little girl from the winter storm, or the miserable home where they had found the two.

Peggy was very ignorant, for their poverty had kept her away from school, and so Alice thought that she must teach her little girl. Accordingly, every evening after tea, the two are seen around the kitchen-table, Alice with her school-books, and Peggy, with her bright Irish face, listening to her kind young teacher. After the lessons were over, nothing delighted Peggy so much as the pretty

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stories that Miss Alice read from her Sunday-school books.

Sweet spirit of love! a little drop of the same that brought Jesus from the skies to bless and save a world of sinners. The dew-drops fell all unconsciously from the lips of little Alice, and found their way into the heart of Peggy, the match-girl.

Good-by, Peggy; we leave you to the care of the "Little Red Cloak." God lead you both from the parlor and the kitchen safely home to the better land!

No wonder that Alice Murray is a blithe singing bird, with a heart so full of love and a life so full of kind actions. She loves to think of Jesus and to study the sweet chapters that tell about his patience, his tenderness and love. She thinks of him the first thing in the morning and the last at night. Alice has other pleasant thoughts, but this is the one great idea that swallows up all the rest. Some are like the little stars, but Jesus is the bright sun of Alice Murray's young heart.

Daily Alice prays that she may grow more like Jesus, and that she may be able every day to do something for her Master; and Alice Murray does serve her Saviour.

It seems a very small thing to take a basket of nice things, that mamma has bought, to a poor old woman, or to stop to help an old man up who has fallen on the ice, or to bring in a poor child to warm herself by the kitchen-fire.

Many little girls might do the very same, you think; but not many would spend a birthday gift for others; not many would give up a ride with Uncle Robert, as Alice did, just because it was the day that she had promised to come to see old Margery.

A little girl with a loving heart might do some of these things; but only one who loved Jesus and was longing to be like him would *deny herself* as Alice Murray did.

This is what makes missionaries.



V.

URN to another leaf of the beautiful, bright pictures. Here she is in the nursery.

Just look at the darlings! Why did not Alice take the large red cherries herself? Baby would know nothing about it; but Alice would. It is her pleasure to give the best to others, and her eyes are sparkling at baby's pleasure.

See how baby opens her little mouth! How eager she looks as Alice drops one by one within.

All four look bright and merry. It is a delight to peep into such a nursery.

Alice always contrives to keep the peace. If Lucy and Jane sometimes get into a dispute, she remembers the

Saviour's words, "Blessed are the peace-makers," and it is seldom that she fails to make up their quarrels.

Is there a dispute about the shape of dolly's hat?

Lucy likes one kind and Jane another; Alice likes neither; but she persuades Lucy to take one for her doll, and Jane to take the other. To make all contented she has one of each shape for her two dolls.

Do the sisters all want to nurse the baby? and does she stretch out her little hands to Alice?

Alice takes the sweet pet, and placing her in Lucy's arms, amuses her with the jumping doll, which she places in Jane's hands, and thus all are pleased.

I think I hear my little readers say, "I don't see any sense in giving up all the time."

It was what Jesus did, my little girl; and if we are to be made bright and polished stones in the new Jerusalem, we must have our selfish feelings rubbed off, just in this way of giving up.

It is a little hard sometimes, because of our sinful

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nature; but, as drop by drop the selfishness dries up in the heart, little fountains of love and peace and happiness flow in, until the soul within is like one great sea of holy love, and then we are companions for the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect.





The Little Red Cloak, by dear mamma's bed,
On a stool now stands, to bathe her poor head;
So quiet, so loving, with kisses so sweet,
Moving about with her dear little feet.
"Be quiet! be quiet! dear Lucy, dear Jane,
Mamma has got such a terrible pain."
Alice looks at her face, so thin and white,
And remembers the weary days and nights
That mother has watched by her children's bed;
And she raises her finger and shakes her head;
Then Lucy and Jane both quiet appear.
Dear mother's at rest when Alice is near.







VI.

NOTHER lovely picture, not bright and sparkling like the last, but sweet and touching.

Little Alice is not always in bright places, but she always takes brightness with her. So it is with all God's dear children, just where the Master places them, there they wish to be, and very often it is among the sick or the needy.

Here she is by dear mamma's sick bed! Lucy and Jane both love their mother, but they love their own pleasure, too.

Alice is afraid that they are making too much noise. They want their sister to come out to play; but she has no heart to play while mamma is suffering, and so she mounts a stool by the bedside and changes the cold ice-

cloths on the burning head, for this always relieves these dreadful headaches. She shades the windows and tries to keep the room as quiet as she can.

Lucy and Jane run off laughing, but Alice stays to watch the dear mother who has so often watched by her.

The voices of nature make the children out of doors *merry*, but the sweet whispers of the Holy Dove are singing in the heart of Alice Murray, even in this dark, still room, and she is *happy*.

When mamma wakes she smiles upon her little daughter.

"Is that you, Alice?" said the faint, low voice.

"Yes, mamma; I have been here all the morning. Are you better now?"

"Yes, my child; these cool ice-cloths are so grateful to my aching head."

"I am so glad that I stayed, mamma. Lucy and Jane wanted me to go out to play; but I thought that I could do you good, and it was so much better here."



Now Little Red Cloak in the garden see,
The brightest, yet kindest of all the three,
Trundling the hoop and tossing the ball,
In a moment ready at sister's call;
At their favorite games so willing to play,
Merry and happy the livelong day.
Next off they run to the green shady wood,
Happy because they are loving and good.
If we had been there we all should have heard
The songs of the children, each blithe as a bird;
But the sun goes down, and obedient then
The Little Red Cloak is at home again.







VII.

UT can this good Little Red Cloak play? Yes, indeed she can and does. See how she beats her hoop.

The next day Mrs. Murray was able to be up as usual, and now we find Alice in the garden full of sport. Her laughter rings out as merrily and sweetly as that of the others, and, whatever game is chosen, into that she enters with all her heart. But even here she is not selfish, as many boys and girls are.

Does Lucy want to trundle the hoop? So does Alice, as long as the spirit for that sport lasts.

Does Jane prefer to play ball? Alice likes that, too, and plays with her.

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Does baby want some flowers? Alice runs to gather them for the little pet. The birds singing on the trees around them are not merrier than Alice Murray.

Little Peggy is coming, too, and Alice plucks a sweet flower for the match-girl. She has scattered many in her way, and will probably scatter many more.

How easy for us to fancy the Lord Jesus watching the "Little Red Cloak!"

We can see him smiling upon her in the nursery and garden just as kindly as in the cottage of old Margery, by the side of Uncle Ben, in the wretched home of little Peggy, or by the mother's sick and suffering bed; for he loved the little children when he dwelt on earth; and when he sees them showing loving, holy tempers, he loves them still.

Could we follow the footsteps of the "Little Red Cloak" throughout a whole year, instead of a few days, we should see the same heavenly temper, for we are describing a child in whom the spirit of the Master dwells.

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It is possible for the readers of this little book to be just like Alice Murray. Only let them go every day to her Saviour and study the sweet lessons that she loved; let them pray with all their heart for the same Holy Spirit, and there may be many Alice Murrays. Instead of the one "Little Red Cloak," whom you all admire, there may be around every fireside just such little Christ-like children as the one whom, we trust, you have almost learned to love.

But how different from this are many of the boys and girls. The first question with them is not, "What will please my brothers and sisters?" but, "What do I want to do?" They do not ask, "What would you like to play?" but they demand that their own game shall be played. They do not give the best places in the game to others; they claim it for themselves. If their playmates do not agree with them, angry words are heard:—"You are a mean thing;" "You cheat;" "I will never play with you again." Perhaps blows follow words,

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This is the spirit, not of Christ, but of the evil one; not of the Christian, but of the wicked.

Happy they who have the Spirit of Christ, who, like him, are full of love and ready to deny themselves to make others happy and good. May we, dear young readers, be thus happy and blessed!





It is evening now, and at set of sun
The day of the Little Red Cloak is done;
Her work is finished, her lessons are said,
The dear little girl is going to bed;
With a kiss for good-night, sisters and she
Are off to the nice cheerful nursery.
The Little Red Cloak is now put away,
For the happy child has just closed a day;
With meek, folded hands her prayers have been said,
And through the dark night, on that quiet bed,
The angels are bending—oh! happy sight!
We'll bid, now, the Little Red Cloak "GOOD-NIGHT!"







VIII.

URN now to the last picture. The dear lamb has closed a day of holy, childish piety. Alice is tired, the red cloak is put off, her prayers have been said, the sweet eyes are closed in sleep, and over that lowly bed the angels are watching the slumberer. Pleasant dreams visit the sleeper; the pale light of the moon is streaming into the room, and nothing is more safe and happy than the trusting child who slumbers there. She is at the threshold of life, but she is in the way of salvation. Not waiting to be old before she begins to love and obey God, her earliest years are given to him. Her hands and feet do his bidding by day, and gently do they rest by night under his guardian care.

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Sleep on, little Alice! to wake with the rising sun, just as often as there is blessed work for thee on earth; and when that is ended and thy pale hands are folded in their last slumber, sleep on, to wake in heaven among the risen saints. May you live to bless the world long after the "Little Red Cloak" is worn out and cast aside.



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