

**AUNT
SALLY'S LIFE**

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Aunt Sally's Life by Mrs. Alfred Gatty

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MRS. ALFRED GATTY

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DOLLY AND HER SICK MISTRESS.

AUNT SALLY'S LIFE.

BY

MRS. ALFRED GATTY.



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AUNT SALLY'S LIFE.

“ Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive?”

TENNYSON'S *Maud*.

THERE is a “Shahrazád” or story-telling sister in most large families, and a great blank falls on the home-party when she is away. The “Shahrazád” of the following tale, “Aunt Judy,” as she was always called, knew this, and when she was leaving home on a visit, promised to make up for

her absence by writing letters and sending the little ones something to amuse them.

Now this "something" generally proved to be a written instead of spoken story, and was ordered to be read aloud in the evenings; and this was certainly the next best thing to hearing Aunt Judy tell one herself.

She would sometimes have been puzzled for subjects to invent upon, however, had not the elder girls sent her word from time to time of the little home-incidents that were going on, and even added an occasional hint of what would be acceptable.

Witness the following postscript in a letter to Aunt Judy from a sister half way between little and grown-up:—

"P. S.—I had almost forgotten the most important news of all. Just think! The boys have dug up mother's old doll again,

and she is being painted and done up for an Aunt Sally. She is to have a frilled cap on, and a pipe in her mouth, and to be fixed on the stump of a tree. Can't you just imagine how she will look, staring out of her huge black eyes at all the world and his wife, as complacently as if this was just the thing she was born to? Act fifth, scene last, surely, of poor old Blackamoor's life. By the way, what fun it would be, if you would write it—her life, I mean. The adventures of a doll half a century old. And the little ones are so fond of her, they would be enchanted. And so should I, for I love the poor old thing. She has been buried and dug up again three times at least. And now there is quite an excitement of delight because of her revival as Aunt Sally. Do think about it, please."

Aunt Judy's lips curled into a smile as she read, and she did what she was asked ; she thought about it ; the result of which was, that in due time there arrived by post a mysteriously large packet, containing a letter and enclosure, addressed to the half-way Sister, whom we will call No. 4, and at the happy evening hour, when the enclosure within was opened, it proved to be a manuscript, headed, "The Life of Aunt Sally, *alias* Blackamoor, *alias* Rosabella, *alias* Amelia, *alias* a 'Judith,' as related by herself."

Shouts of delight followed the reading aloud of this title ; so much so, that going on was for a time impossible ; but when composure was restored, No. 4 proceeded to begin the life aloud, every eye fixed upon her in eager expectation.