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The Christmas of Baby Ann.

The visitor jumped the baby up and down, to the consternation of Mr. and Mrs. Merion. When parents are trying to bring up a child scientifically it is disconcerting, to say the least to have friends interfere. Mrs. Merion knew the rule by heart: "Never jostle or jump babies. It is bad for their nervous

"You are tired," she finally remarked to Mrs. Wemple-mother of five "Let me take her."

"Oh, she's all right," complacently answered Mrs. Wemple, ignoring the mother's outstretched arms, as the haby gave a crow of delight.

But Mrs. Merion persisted and took her baby. Whereupon, the motion ceasing, Baby Ann set up a prolonged howl, which caused Marie, fresh from the best training school for nurses, to rush in and carry Baby Ann from the

nas time," said Mrs. Wemple. "I suppose you dear children will have un now getting baby's Christmas tree

Mrs. Merica looked at her husband and he looked at her, "Of course," contin you'll have a tree?"

not notice it."

when they were making mud pies, into the category of gifts. you two will have—the joy of getting first when he was only three months. The twilight had fallen. The window. Elita's father and mother and sis old. The lights made him blink, and was bright with myriads of little ter came to dine with them. Before we said that be was a remarkably lights, which, reflecting on the snow, dinner was quite over, Elita, ostens and cried for the Star of Bethlehem— a collection of toys! Dolls, jumping— "I should say," remarked the imwanted to grab it, you know. His fajacks, balls, tea setts and all the won-patient grandmother, "that she was

for the babies that parents do all the small Christmas tree. my trimmings for a tree."

e a waste of money, which had bet she turned to go. Wemple, as she rose to go, "to bother about the education of a five. little star-no money." month-old? Perhaps, when you've had "Have you lost it?" a few more, some of your scientific "Nein. I spent the money, see?" about it? I trimmed it myself, last ideas will vanish. Give the little ones opening a parcel full of glittering Children should look back on nappi- tree."

or mar their own lives," Grant returned from escorting Mrs. proudly stretched out her arms. "Do you think," Elita," he asked, we had better have one?"

no nervous excitement."

a will of her own. In spite of all me send your baby a star." theories, she would not wait the pre- After the woman, profuse in her scribed time between meals. A series thanks and trophies in hand, had denext door neighbor would kindly in iog, she was lost. quire whether she could do anything. "Be sure to come in the morning, Baby Ann had won the day. "The rights of our neighbors," Mrs. ingly admonished the polite salesman, Merion had meekly said, "must be re- as he bowed her out. spected."

Short days and long evenings now ered around the front hall. Christmas gifts. The custom had de- should never be left to nurses?" ories. That would require a person rushed out on the porch. very strong minded or very eccentric. "This way," she called "Bring the "It was mortifying," she confessed, things in here." "to have Sallie give you a gift and She led the way to an empty room

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aunts and uncles, not to mention the

ready. I had a Christmas tree for my fully to the window of the toy shop, until their return from church, smart child. He noticed everything made fields of diamonds. And such ibly to get Baby Ann, slipped away. ther and I both thought he would derful things that help to make up'a a long time getting that child." child's world. In the middle of the "Come into the den!" called Elita's "Christmas isn't Christmas until window, its green color dark and cool - cheery voice, with an air of mystery. the children come. If you think it is under its gaudy trimmings, was a. There, on the table, brilliantly illu

the excuse, If you like, I'll send you window in hesitation, she turned to popcorn, waxen angels and over all face a plainly dressed young German the Star of Bethlehem, stood a Mrs. Merion again stole a glance at woman. The woman was just opening her husband. He shook his head.

No, thank you, Mrs. Wemple," he said, as he bent down to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, pulled up her dress skirt and ly asked Elita, as she held Ann to put a fresh ion, p og on the fire. "Elita and I don't search d a petticoat pocket. Evidently ward him. "Don't you like it? I simove of such nonsense. It would she found nothing, for, with a sigh, ply couldn't resist!"

or be put by for Ann's education." . "Can I-have you lost something?" appointment manifest in his voice. "I What's the use," interposed Mrs. sympathetically asked Mrs. Merion. "Nein," said the woman, "I want a ling to get it myself in a moment.

pleasure, and the morrow will take tissel. I buy much; no money for door, From its black depths he pulled care of itself. That's my motto, star and little Christ Child for baby's forth a second Christmas tree. From ness, It's other folks' business to give "How old is your baby?" Mrs.

> "Eleven months, and so big!" She "And you have a tree for it?" -The woman looked surprised at the Careful, don't break it. Where are deprecatory tone, "Yans, All German kinder have it, My man, he cut it for Recognizing Mrs.

me. Tomorrow I trim. I sew, hard and Mrs. Merion hurried to greet her. sense," said the college-bred mother. It struck Elita Merion as incontinued Christmas tree. 'A baby five months old should have gruous that she should hesitate over a simple pleasure, while this woman "that it was a shame Ann shouldn't ents who had definite plans for her necessity. Before the simple mother tion-" bringing up. She was to have no hood of the young German, even

frills. Even her name must be sen, highly educated Mrs. Merion softened, sible. But Baby Ann early developed "Come inside," she said, "and let the "den." of wailings would rend the air. The parted, Elita lingered. And, hesitatiather.

and to the front door," ," she smil-The next morning Mrs. Merion hov-

betokened the approach of the glori- "You may give Ann her bath," she ous Christmas tide. The streets, in finally instructed Marie, who looked the gathering dusk, were filled with up in surprise. Had not Mrs. Merion happy, bundle-laden people. Mrs. Mer- always attended to baby's bath? Did ion was among the late shoppers. not the rule say, "Every mother Theoretically she disapproved of should bathe her own child; the task generated into give-and-take, unglori- Soon Mrs. Merion was rewarded by hed by the original spirit of good seeing a huge delivery cart labelled will to all. Still, she was not strong "Miller-Toys," stop in front of the enough to live quite up to her the hause, Despite the zero weather, she

you not have one for Sallie.' So she on the second floor, which, wher did a little sensible shopping, for this prosperity arrived, was to be furnish ed as a sewing-room. "Are you sur that it fits the standard all right?' "Yes'm, snug as a bug. I'll set i

up for you. Than you, ma'am. A merry Christmas to ye." That morning she worked, or me properly speaking, she fussed. The only thing to mar her pleasure was the thought. "Will Grant be displeased? Will he think me very, very extravagant and foolish?" And yet the money was her own, and he never questioned what she did with it. At eleven, she was surprised by a telephone message from her husband asking her to come downtown to take

luncheon with him.
"You haven't been down in a long time, Elita, and I thought you might enjoy seeing the crowds and helping me select mother's present." She could not refuse, although was with some reluctance she left her unfinished task.

"You're looking so pretty and happy," observed Grant, as they sat at a table beneath the palms, listening to the music in one of those delightful hits of summerland, found in large

cities in the depth of winter. Only the fur-trimmed garments of the women suggested that snow-covered streets lay without.

"I am happy," replied Elita. "I really believe I'm beginning to feel 'Christmasy.' It was late when they reached

home, so it was not until after dinner that Elita found time to go to the sewing room. "I have a few belated gifts to wrap

use me, dear." To her surprise he made no reme strance, though he had always claimed her evenings. "All right," he replied. "I have an important letter to write. So take

"A business letter," said Elita, and on Christmas eve! We certainly are a sensible couple." Was that a guilty flush on Grant's face when, from economical habit, he

ing-room lights? Later, when Elita went to his den she found the door locked. "All right, Elita, in a minute Grant cried in answer to her sum mons. There was a sound of scurrying the closet door banged, and Grant

"I thought," observed Elita drily, which littered the otherwise neat den

always over-indulgent grandparents. Christmas, queen of festivals, dawn-To Elita's practical mind, even a ten- ed bright, clear and cold. Its religious "Bless your hearts,", said Mrs, cent toy was a waste. Ann needed a significance Elita had always beer Wemple, who had known these two new cap and it might just as well go taught to observe. That their thoughts might not be distracted through the beautiful service, the Nevertheless her eyes turned wist- distribution of gifts was postponed

fussing, you're mistaken. They're only As Mrs. Merion stood before the gold and silver tinsel, snowy white

"But how did you find out?" dis-

-I meant it as a surprise. I was go-It was Elita's turn to look puzzled. "Why how did you know anything lients addressed to him at Halifax will receive his personal attention.

explanations no one heard the door

bell ring. Recognizing Mrs. Wemple's voice. Mrs. Merion hurried to greet her. O. T. Daniels

"I thought," began Mrs. Wemple BARRISTER, Baby Ann had been boin to par of poverty should accept a tree as a have a tree. So in spite of her educa-

> Mrs. Merion cut her short. Choking with laughter she took her guest to Head of Queen St., Bridgetoun Baby Ann crowed and laughed and cried for all the Stars of Bethlehem.

"She will be a saint," said her grandmother "She shall send her superfluous trees to the children's

"Next year," observed Mrs. Wemule, "you two had better plan on one

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