

## From the Top to the Bottom.

## A QUITE TRUE STORY.

When I was a little girl, I was very plump and roundabout. I think my face must have looked rather like a small full moon, and I know I had very red cheeks, and a quantity of tight little curls all over my head, just the color of a new penny, fresh from the mint. I had very dumpy legs, and generally wore a straight up-and-down pinafore made of white diaper, and tied behind with strings.

I believe I was usually fairly well-behaved, but what I have to tell you now is the terrible story of a piece of disobedience, and how I got punished for it. Our house was a tall one, and our night-nursery was above the day-nursery, at the back of the house, up two flights of stairs while my mother's room was further up again, so that it was quite a climb to get there.

Now, the back-stairs had no carpets on them and they were very steep, and twisted about like a corkscrew, so that it was really dangerous for little people to go up and down them.

My mother had given orders that we younger children should use the front stairs instead, as they were much easier, and being carpeted, less likely to hurt us if we slipped—and for a long time I never thought of disobeying her. But one day a wonderful thing happened. A new baby arrived, a little brother, to my delight, and I was told that I might go up to my mother's room to say 'How do you do?' to him. It was hard work to tear myself away from the new brother, but when he wanted to be covered up, and go to sleep, my mother said it was time for me to go down again, and I obeyed her. I don't know whether it was the sight of the little infant's helplessness that made me feel unusually proud and independent, but when I came to the top of the back stairs I stood still a moment to think.

'How I should like to try them!' I said in my heart. 'Mother is so busy with the baby that she won't know, and I am quite sure I could go down all right. I will be very, very careful.'

The house was quiet, and no one

was about. So, holding on to the railings, I put first one foot and then the other cautiously down, and felt that my perilous journey had really begun.

It was dark, as the swing door at the top closed behind me, and I quaked inwardly, but would not allow, even to myself, that I was frightened. After three or four steps I began to feel more confidence, and, I suppose, was not so careful, for, at an awkward corner, my foot slipped, and it was all over with me!

Trying to regain my footing, I lost my hold on the banister, and down I went, crash, tumble, bang! with a terrible feeling that I was going to be killed, and that it was entirely my own fault.

Being, as I told you, plump and roundabout, I bounded like a ball, and not content with descending one flight, I rolled across the landing, and down the next one, finally alighting on my head at the bottom.

You may imagine that I screamed!

The servants came rushing to pick me up, and I remember distinctly how big a lump I had on my forehead, and what a lot of butter they rubbed into it.

All the rest of the day I felt sick and miserable. I could not play nor eat, nor do anything but sigh, and think of my poor aching head, and wonder why I had been so foolish as to fancy my own way was better than my mother's. After all, though it is hard to believe sometimes, grown-up people do know what is best for one; and that lesson, though it was a severe one, did me a great deal of good.

I did not get any other punishment for being disobedient. My mother thought that what I had had was more than enough.

'Do you know, Flossy, that you were very nearly killed?' she said to me afterwards. 'You might have been picked up dead at the bottom of the stairs, or you might have hurt your back and grown into a poor little cripple, with nothing but pain and suffering before you all your life. We must thank God for having spared you, and we must thank Him to make you a better girl. No one who is not obedient can ever be of much use, and it is no good to think it safe to do wrong things because you are not seen—God sees you

always, never forget that, even when you are quite alone, and in the dark. And now you have a new little brother, you ought to be extra good, to set him an example. You will try, won't you?'

So I said, 'Yes,' and I did try, for I was altogether ashamed of myself, and I hoped that no one would ever tell the baby of the naughty thing his sister did on the very first day that she ever saw him.—'Children's Friend.'

## 'God Claims Me.'

When the late Earl Cairns was a little boy, he heard three words which made a memorable impression upon him, 'God claims you.' Then came the question, 'What am I going to do with the claim?' He answered, 'I will own it and give myself to God.' He went home and told his mother, 'God claims me.'

At school and college his motto was 'God claims me.' As a member of Parliament, and ultimately as Lord Chancellor, it was still 'God claims me.'

When he was appointed Lord Chancellor he was a teacher of a large Bible class, and his minister, thinking that he would have no time to devote to that purpose, said to him, 'I suppose you will now be obliged to give up your class?'

'No,' was the reply, 'I will not; God claims me.'—'Sunday Friend.'

## A Gentlemanly Boy.

(H. L. Charles in 'Temperance Record'.)

A gentle boy, a manly boy,  
Is the boy I love to see;  
An honest boy, an upright boy,  
Is the boy of boys for me.

The gentle boy guards well his lips,  
Lest words that fall may grieve;  
The manly boy will never stoop  
To meanness, nor deceive.

An honest boy clings to the right  
Through seasons foul and fair;  
An upright boy will faithful be  
When trusted anywhere.

The gentle boy, the manly boy,  
Upright and honest, too,  
Will always find a host of friends  
Among the good and true.

He reaps reward in doing good,  
Finds joy in giving joy,  
And earns the right to bear the  
name—  
'A gentlemanly boy.'