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for him. Say! Look at that shaver, May!" The baby had put his head on one side and was nodding deliberately. "He looks as if he's sayin', 'I'll get you yet, old man!' He's cute, all right."

When Saturday night came Jim rather shamefacedly brought home a new gray suit.

"You seem to be so set on goin' that I thought we'd risk it once," he explained.

Children's Day dawned clear and bright. The big church was fragrant with roses and thronged with bright-faced boys and girls and their older friends.

A place had been reserved for the Cradle Roll babies and their parents, and it would have been hard to find two prouder, happier persons anywhere than Mr. and Mrs. Bennett as they were ushered to seats under the big blue and gold banner that proclaimed "Cradle Roll Section."

Jim himself carried Baby Ben to the front when the latter's name was called, and Baby Ben cooed and chattered and chirped over the pink rose until the entire congregation laughed in sympathy.

When the service was over Mr. Bennett was surprised and pleased to find his wife shaking hands with a circle of friends, and "introducin' him right and left," as he expressed it. Almost before he knew it, he had promised to join the organized Bible Class for men, and to begin that very afternoon.

When he went home at the close of the Sunday School session he found his wife rocking Baby Ben and singing in a sweet high voice:—

"How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word."

Jim listened in silence, but after the evening meal had been cleared away and the baby's eyes were closed in slumber, the father spoke slowly and gravely:—

"May, you know that hymn you were singin' a while ago? Mother used to sing that when I was a little shaver, I kin just remember her workin' around the house an' singin' as she worked. I ain't thought much about her for a good many years. Mebbe if she'd lived I'd a-been a better man. You ain't never had no chance at sich things, an' I don't know much about 'em nuther, but if—if you're willin', s'pose we give the little lad as good a start as we kin, an' fetch him up sorter diff'rent. What say?"

Months passed. Baby Ben's first birthday had come and gone. His

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birthday card and letter were carefully put away, to be shown him "when he's a big boy," as Mrs. Bennett said, proudly.

He could talk a little now, and his funny, crooked words added another charm to his baby winsomeness.

"There is something unusual about him," Miss Travis was prone to assert. "At the Cradle Roll Mothers' Meetings he always gets the most attention. And his mother's really changed. She's different somehow—quieter and gentler."

Then, suddenly, as a thunderbolt from a clear sky occasionally wrecks disaster, a stunning blow fell upon the occupants of the little brown house.

Baby Ben had been down town with his mother, toddling at her side with his uncertain baby steps, but clinging close to her guiding hand. Down one of the side streets came a man carrying a cluster of gay balloons. A gust of wind loosened one of the bright balls and sent it bouncing lightly over the roadway in front of the baby's dazzled eyes.

Baby Ben gave one exclamation of delighted wonder, pulled away from the restraining hand and darted after the gay plaything. Before the startled mother could divine his purpose, he dashed out on the crowded street in front of a passing automobile. The occupants shrieked with horror, the driver swerved his car sharply, clearing the child by a miracle, but he fell, striking his head heavily on the stone pavement.

Tender hands picked him up and carried him into the little home. The blue eyes were closed, the tiny dancing feet were quiet.

Jim, summoned hastily from his work, found his wife staring with wide tearless eyes at the familiar sights around her.

"He doesn't know anything, Jim. Mebbe he never will. The doctors can't rouse him. Oh! Jim it was my fault. My baby! my baby!"

"Hush, dear. Hush, May. You poor, poor girl. Of course, it wasn't your fault. Nobody could have known what would happen. Maybe he'll pull through all right, after all."

Slowly the long day waned. In the still eventide Miss Travis came over. Putting her arms around the dazed tearless mother, she sobbed.

"Dear! I just heard. Isn't he any better? Hasn't he regained consciousness yet?"

"Not yet. The doctors don't think he ever will."

"Dear, dear little Baby Ben! He always seemed to belong to me, too. Do you remember the day I first saw him? Do you remember how he put out his wee little pink tongue so cunningly?"

"Yes, I remember." Suddenly May bowed her bright head, and the blessed tears rained from her hot eyes. "Oh! Miss Travis, you said we ought to want him to be God's baby—"

There was a queer little hush in the room. Jim had held up a warning finger. Suddenly a quavering little voice spoke in startled tones.

"H'lo! faver!"
"H'lo old man!"



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"I fought I was fwightened at somefin."

"Nothing to scare you. Hold my finger and go to sleep."

The wee hand closed around the big, rough finger. Baby Ben smiled up at the tender face above him, sighed drowsily, and drifted off into refreshing slumber.

It was after midnight when the tiny hand relaxed its clasp. Jim, tiptoeing clumsily into the kitchen, found May kneeling by a chair. The man hesitated, then dropped on his knees beside his wife.

"Pray, Jim," she said softly. "Pray out loud."

"Why! May, I don't know how. I can't. Well, I will. Here goes," and slowly, simply, falteringly, Jim Bennett talked to the Heavenly Father.

"God, here we are, May an me. We dont neither of us know much. Nobody showed us or helped us much when we was children. But we've got Baby Ben. To-day we thought you were a-goin' to take him. But you give him back. Thank you, God."

"An' now, God, show a poor father and mother how to be good. Give May and me a helpin' hand an' teach us how to be the right kind of folks for that little feller to live with. That's all, God. Amen."—Sunday School Times.

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