



THE BABY.

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DEAREST little darling,
Brightest little flower,
Sent direct from heaven,
Our glad hearts to dower.
Oh! that head so radiant,
With its sunny hair;
Oh! those eyes so star-like,
Glancing here and there.

Hands so full of dimples,
Limbs so round and white,
Lips that smile upon us
With a rosy light.
Dearest little baby,
Darling little boy,
God himself looks on thee
As a wondrous joy.

And in heaven the angels
Sweeter sing for thee,
While the Virgin Mother
Loves thee tenderly.
And on earth the flowers
Put on colours gay,
For the little baby
Who may pass their way.

All things bright are brighter
Since you came to earth;
All things dark must vanish
By your baby mirth.
Love beyond description,
Love beyond compare;
No one else can rival
Baby anywhere.

MOTHER SPECKLE'S LESSON.

"How unpleasant it is to be sure, to be shut up in this coop!" said a young hen to her chickens one afternoon.

"Just when I could be taking you round, and showing you the world, that tiresome poultryman goes and stuffs us in here! And as though even that were not enough, he must needs cover us with a net beside, to make it closer still. It is too bad! Oh, dear! Could I but tear the cage to pieces, I would do it this minute, and set myself free, and you, too, my little pets."

But all the while Mother Speckle was grumbling away, she could not see far up in the sky, a tiny speck, which, however, grew larger and larger each moment, and at last began to swoop downward in wide circles. It was a great hungry hawk, looking for prey for himself and for Mrs. Hawk and for the little Hawks in the nest at home.

Down he came swiftly, for he knew there was something good in that coop—something that would make a dainty meal for his family.

A shriek of despair came from Mother Speckle as she felt the dull thud that was made by the great bird as he alighted upon the coop.

"Alas!" she cried, "these wretched bars close us in, so that we cannot run anywhere for safety! Farewell, my chickens; we shall be gobbled up in a few moments by this terrible creature!"

"I'll have you! I'll have you all in a

trice!" yelled the hawk, in response. And he tore at the netting with his powerful claws, to reach the coop that sheltered his prey. But the more he tore the netting the more entangled he became; and soon, worn out with his struggles, he hung there quite helpless and weak, till the poultryman came and took him away, and punished him for all his evil deeds.

"I hope, Mrs. Speckle, you won't grumble again at a coop and net;" said a wise old guinea-fowl that was walking around the yard with measured steps. "What you called your prison has been to you a refuge, a shelter from death. Learn, my dear, to know the difference between being kindly protected, and cruelly imprisoned; and remember that those in whose charge God has placed us, know better than we do, what are our needs, and what are our dangers."

ONE DROP OF EVIL.

"I DON'T see why you won't let me play with Will Hunt," pouted Walter Kirk. "I know he does not always mind his mother, and smokes cigars, and once in a while swears just a little. But I have been brought up better than that; he won't hurt me. I should think you would trust me. I might do him some good."

"Walter," said his mother, "take this glass of pure, clear water, and put just one drop of ink into it."

"O, mother, who would have thought one drop would blacken a whole glass so!"

"Yes, it has changed the colour of the whole, has it not? It is a shame to do that. Just put a drop of clear water into it, and restore its purity," said Mrs. Kirk.

"Why, mother, you are laughing at me. One drop, nor a dozen, nor fifty, won't do that."

"No, my son; and therefore I cannot allow one drop of his evil nature to mingle with your purity."

A SNOW PRAYER.

A LITTLE girl went out to play one day in the fresh, new snow, and when she came in she said: "Mamma, I could not help praying when I was out at play."

"That was right, my darling. What did you pray?"

"I prayed the snow-prayer, mamma, that I once learned in Sunday-school. 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'"

What a beautiful prayer! And here is a sweet promise to go with it: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The Bible says: "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb."