

LETTERS TO PATTY

"Now, Baby, climb on the top bar; stand still while I count ten, and then jump down."

"I can't. I shall fall—Ow!" as the string tied to the elder switch that makes the whip circles lovingly round Baby's thin little legs, and forces her to mount that top bar.

Naturally, before one is counted, Baby has fallen flat on her face in the rough turfy grass, and Baby is roaring, even bellowing.

"You mustn't cry! Soldiers' daughters never cry!"

And to do us justice we very seldom did. Whitefaced and defiant you marched home from one of your lonely prowls in the fields, carrying a heavy, rusty gin in one hand, while the forefinger of the other was locked bloodily in its jagged teeth. You were white beneath your tan, but I never remember your crying, though your finger was bad for weeks.

Like a bullied schoolboy, who bullies back as soon as he is able to, I was remarkably stern with others younger, or with those I chose to consider inferior to myself, wasn't I? Not long after the "railing" episode, the youngest of "the little O's" had a cold, and as Mick, Nora and the two little boys were going out to tea, Clémentine took me over to amuse her. The moment the nurse had