

The Club That
Knocked Half
The Rub Out
Of SCRUB

SCRUB



A Jew Baby's Christmas

Written for the Western Home Monthly by Nan Moulton.

CHRISTMAS stories always end at Christmas. But they begin all along through the year. Some of them have begun even many years before and weave through chequered chapters to The Star in the evening sky. This story, as far as the Day Nursery is concerned, begins in June.

There are many good things about being a worker in Winnipeg. One is, that you get your morning air in June early, all clean and sweet from the prairies, some memory of wolf-willow, or hinting of wild rose, or tang of plum blossom borne in through the freshening night.

So the faces of the mothers coming to the Day Nursery this morning in June were uplifted, mostly subconsciously, to some country memory of sun and scent, and they lingered with a smile, for their babies to capture the gold of a dandelion astray in a trim boulevard.

"Morgen!" hailed German Mary in her hearty man's voice as she left two terribly clean children at the front gate.

"Oh, say Good Morning!" pleaded Nurse O'Brien, snowy on the welcoming

"Missis crazy," sighed little O'Brien, twisting up her rope of hair. "Is that all the reason, Mary?"

Mary considered.

"Ich bin gesund, darum Ich bin fertig," she discovered.

The Matron gave her a push. "Go along, Mary! That's philosophy, not poetry. Work good!" And she ran up the steps in pursuit of Mary Marchuck. (there was a plethora of Mary's at the Day Nursery) whose usually ruddy olive face looked strangely white this June morning. Mary was a hoyden, first, last and all the time, but this morning she seemed possessed. She gurgled and kicked and squirmed and screamed with laughter in Nurse O'Brien's arms. Her short, fat legs waved, her short, black curls bobbed, her two-or-three-inch plaid skirts whirled, she was incarnate with every form of activity except speech, which she steadfastly refused.

"A dynamo like that can't be sick," said Nurse O'Brien, just as Elder Sister Marchuck hurried up to explain, "She want be like Englishwomans. My Mother put powder on her."

THE WEST.

(For The Western Home Monthly)

Get your face toward the sun,
When you ask the way to run,
Or the impulse you should follow in your quest.
Can't you see the sun and moon,
As they chant their daily tune,
And the stars, too—swinging ever to the West!

Can't you find it in your blood?
Like a tempest, or a flood;
That bears you, unresisting, to the West.
'Tis Nature's way, we know,
That, like as planets go,
We, sunset-wise, should also seek our rest!

William Wye Smith.

Toronto, October, 1913.

steps. "For it is a good morning. And as we say in Ireland, this is the top of it, oh, such a heady top!" And Nurse O'Brien, the demure Matron of the Day Nursery, did the Heather Broom jig most undemurely up and down the Day Nursery verandah to the great joy of German Mary, and even the terribly clean over-solemn children had a trembling of their features that might have betokened glee. The Matron ended her jig and swooped down on Mary at the gate, catching her by her heavy shoulders.

"Good morning, Mary! The top o' the mornin' to ye!"

"Guten Morgen, Missis!" laughed Mary obediently.

"And how do you say in Germany it's a broth of a day?"

Mary caught the spirit.

"Schon!" she waved her hand around the world. Then her eyes widened as Nurse O'Brien's hair fell in a dazzle down her shoulders. "Schon!" she pointed to the tumbling gold. "Missis have beeg hair!" she marvelled. And the two stood and laughed at each other in the morning sunlight while the terribly clean stodgers, who must have taken after their father, did a funeral march through the hall in the wake of some flying game.

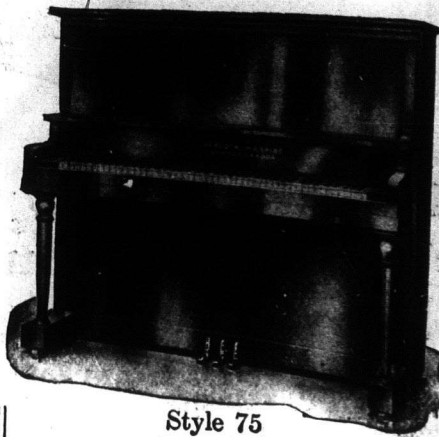
"I'm so glad you're happy too, Mary. Surely the whole North End is happy this June morning. Sometimes it's hard to be happy in the North End. Why are you happy, Mary?"

"Missis fertig," said Mary.

"You little rascal!" laughed Nurse O'Brien. "Kiss me then, English-womans." And she rolled the ecstatic Mary on the mat.

Across the fun arose a thin wail from the dining-room beyond. Nurse O'Brien hurried in. But Nurse Melvor, the assistant, was already at the perambulator. "It's juist that thin bit wean," she stated. "She greets wi' her bottle and she greets wi'oot her bottle. She's fair spoiled, that bairn! Luik now, ma doo, luik at yer braw white goon and yer blue ribbons. And yon's yer fine milk. Whist, now, weanie! Cuddle doon, ma dawtie!" But the infant wailed and wailed. "Would it be the teeth, think ye? We'll juist try some cold-wather in the bottle." A lull came in the wailing. "The 'wather' did the trick. Come to think of it, she is a blue-ribbon baby." And Nurse O'Brien escaped to direct the playground activities in the back yard before the Melvor had time to respond.

By nine all the usual working Mothers had left their tale of bairns, and, with a cheery word given and taken, had gone to their washing or scrubbing for the day. Sometimes an older brother or sister on the way to school had left the smaller ones at the Nursery. There were infants in prams, creepers and toddlers, and riotous three and four and five-year-olds. That they all were so clean was the leaven of the Nursery. That some of them were in ribbons and frills was the adorningness of the working mothers. Nurse O'Brien, stopping in the kitchen door to give 'Arriet di-



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