

wishes to the household, Miss Smith went away.

In about half an hour nurse came upstairs with the dainty flannels on her arm and, after hanging them up to air, she went to the crib to take up the baby.

'Mrs. Cameron,' she said, 'where have you put the baby?'

'The baby?' exclaimed his mother.

'I left him in this crib,' said the nurse.

Mrs. Cameron almost fainted; she kept crying, 'Where is my baby, my baby? Some one has stolen him, I know. Call cook upstairs, search the house over; oh, where can my darling be?'

The house was searched, and the cook was closely questioned; but no light was thrown on the baby's disappearance till the cook suddenly remembered that the front door had been left open all the afternoon. 'I saw a beggar woman,' she said, 'standing there with a big bundle wrapped up in a shawl. I remember she hurried down the walk when I passed through the hall.'

'Of course she stole the baby!' cried the poor mother. 'She probably slipped upstairs while we were talking, and took the baby out of his crib and hurried off. Telephone to the police and to my husband.' If Mrs. Cameron had stopped to think, she might have remembered that poor women generally have enough children of their own without stealing extra ones; but she was very much excited, and felt as if everyone wanted just her baby.

In a short time Mr. Cameron came home, pale and trembling. Two policemen and a detective came soon after.

It was just at this time that Judith awoke from her nap, and seeing by the sinking sun that it was getting late in the afternoon, she concluded that she would slip into the house and see if Miss Smith were gone, before she carried back the still sleeping baby. On entering the house what was her surprise to find her mother crying, her father looking almost ill, and three strange men talking and asking questions. Nurse, too, and cook, were talking fast and earnestly to the strange men.

'Oh, my darling child!' cried Mrs. Cameron. 'What do you think has

happened? A horrid, wicked, woman has stolen our baby boy!'

'No, she hasn't,' said Judith, thinking her mother meant Miss Smith; 'she didn't get him, I hid him where she couldn't find him!'

'Hid him from a beggar woman?' asked the detective.

'No, no,' replied Judith! 'from Miss Smith. She said she was going to steal him, so I went softly upstairs and carried him off.'

'Where is he now?' asked the nurse.

'In the stable, in the hen's nest,' said Judith, bursting into tears as she saw the nurse, with a wrathful look, run out the door to get the baby. 'I didn't mean any harm!' Then with sobs and tears she told what Miss Smith had said to her, and how she remembered the promise she had made to her father the day baby came, that she would always protect him.

'She is a noble little sister,' said the father, 'and she shall not be blamed. Here comes the little fellow, none the worse for his outing. Don't cry, little daughter.'

The detective and the policemen left the house, laughing over the joke. By night the household had settled down into the usual quiet, and no one outside would have learned of the afternoon's excitement had it not somehow got into the newspaper, with a picture of baby asleep in a hen's nest.

### 'Little Gentleman Bob.'

(By Florence Stratton Weaver, in 'Pres. Banner.')

The day was moist and depressing, the children were elastic and gleeful; the teacher was worn out and helpless. Her nerves pricked as needles—they almost had possession of her. The air grew denser, the children louder, the nerves waxed victorious, and the teacher exclaimed:

'The next one who speaks one word, even whispers, shall stand in that corner one-half hour. I mean it.'

Instant silence. Miss Agnes leaned back in the chair to the more fully enjoy the calm, before continuing the classes. Suddenly a shrill little voice, a giggle and incessant talking by the same little voice.

'Who is it? Come right up; I can't break my word.'

A little shrinking figure, with

heavy, oncoming sobs, stumbled forward.

'Annetta, I am sorry, you have been with us such a short time, but you must go and stand there.' With head sunk deep into the hollow of her tightly clasped arms, she went to the dreaded spot and stood with her back to the class. Louder and more convulsive grew the sobs, until it seemed that the little white Niobe would fall into a heap on the floor.

Miss Agnes felt no nerves now; she sat erect. 'That's the way,' she reflected; 'it is always so whenever I punish these children; I end by punishing myself. It's dreadful to keep that little frail, delicate new scholar standing there. Why, I have not had her long enough to teach her to love me; but what can I do?—oh! my—' and she wiped off her face most vigorously, took out her watch and laid it on her desk. Oh! how she longed for rooms with no corners, and for the red-headed beau whom she had despised, taking the school instead for a support.

There was felt silence in the class now; the children looked awed and frightened and the sobs knew no diminution.

Suddenly a boyish form slipped out from the desk, and with pocketed hands marched up the aisle. Miss Agnes looked up and leaned over to receive Bob, glad of anything for a diversion. But he walked past her over into the corner and touched the little form on the shoulder, and said in a loud, gruff voice:

'Go on and sit down; I'll stand here for you.'

(To be continued.)

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