

bars of the crib and reached appealingly for the departed hand, which was more than mamma could bear; so she took 'The Jefful out of the crib and into her own bed and arms, and just then the clock struck the half hour. In the next half hour 'The Jefful was a very busy little girl. First she had to look grateful at mamma for two or three minutes, in which mamma made up her mind that it wasn't of the slightest consequence how often or how early she was aroused in the morning; she might even be willing to let papa be robbed of his needed sleep, for why should he not be in a position to know what an angel 'The Jefful really was—and his own daughter too? When 'The Jefful had done the grateful as far as she thought proper, she began to inquire and try experiments. She picked open mamma's eyelids when the latter closed them for a moment in an ecstasy of thankfulness, she tightened one of her little hands around just three hairs upon mamma's forehead, and found that they would stand, without breaking or pulling out, the heaviest strain that 'The Jefful could put on them. Mamma tried to end this experiment, but baby protested so earnestly that mamma endured to the best of her ability, and indulged in facial contortions that 'The Jefful enjoyed amazingly, never doubting that they were given for her special diversion. Indeed, she laughed so heartily that mamma was again fearful for papa's rest, so she cuddled 'The Jefful very close to her and kissed the top of her flossy little yellow head. But this treatment did not suit the young lady at all; kisses and pettings were all very well when she was tired or in need of consolation, but early in the morning, after a night of healthful sleep, they were out of place; so mamma, while in the act of giving 'The Jefful a very affectionate hug, was stopped suddenly by a smothered noise, which sounded somewhat thus:

"Ya—ya—wa—wa—wogh!"

The squeeze was discontinued, and so was mamma's dream of bliss; but still 'The Jefful was quite a charming little body, so mamma did a great deal of pantomime for her with face and hands, and even extemporized a game of peep-bo between her fingers. But 'The Jefful was beginning to think that it was time for her to be up, instead of reclining in one position or another; so she put one of her pudgy hands behind mamma's head and took hold of one of mamma's ears with the other, and attempted to raise herself to a sitting position. She might have succeeded, for mamma was willing to be a stepping-stone, or a pulling block, or anything else that would benefit her children. But 'The Jefful's wee finger-nails were so many sharp little lancets, and as they closed, all together on the back of mamma's ear they caused so much pain that mamma herself could not keep from groaning as she attempted to remove the little hand. Then there was a conflict of opinions, and mamma won by main strength, and 'The Jefful declared, in her own spirited way, that it wasn't fair, and she began to weep, and refused to be comforted; so mamma sat up with her, and swayed to and fro, and then 'The Jefful spied the back of papa's head, and grasped at it, and almost got it before mamma could slightly change her position. Even then 'The Jefful wriggled and worked her little head around so that she could see the coveted prize; so mamma got softly out of bed, intending to get a plaything for her darling, but, approaching the bureau, 'The Jefful spied the cup from which she had been fed, and she straightway reached for it and said a great deal in the haste that comes in true earnestness. There was very little bread and milk in the cup, and mamma feared it might be sour; but finding it was not, she gave it to baby, reseating herself upon the bed to feed her. Moving about the room had chilled mamma, and a return to the warmth of her bed was delightful,

but the baby felt so strengthened by her light lunch that she insisted upon jumping; so mamma jumped her up and down until her arms were so tired that she could hardly have tossed a doll of down. Then she stretched herself for just a moment of rest, when the little clock made the remark with which our narrative opens, and mamma wondered how near dead she would be by bedtime, as she felt almost dead already. But mamma had too much to do to wonder long; there were her three other children to wake, and one of them, three-year-old Burnie, to be dressed; while the twins, Fred and Bertha, who dressed themselves, never did so until after being stimulated by great quantities of talk, which was more exhaustive than the work of dressing them would be. Then the kitchen had to be visited, for the single Mayburn domestic did not watch the clock as closely as she should, and if breakfast was not ready promptly at eight o'clock, papa could not get to his office by nine. So mamma hurriedly dressed herself, while papa yawned and remarked:

"What a dreadful row that baby kept up this morning!"

"Yes," said mamma.

"Oh," said papa, "did you hear her, too?"

Mamma did not answer a word; she only looked at papa, who looked at her, and saw how tired her eyes seemed for so early in the morning, so he told her that he was a forgetful brute, and that he wished he could afford a nurse; then he kissed mamma's eyes, which seemed to help them a great deal, for they looked brighter a moment or two later as papa sauntered down to the dining-room to read the morning paper, while mamma gave 'The Jefful a crust to busy her lips and quiet her tongue, and hurried into the next chamber to see that Fred and Bertha were awake, and to dress her three-year-old—her "beeboy," as she called him, this name being the diminutive of baby boy. She found Bertha fast asleep, while her twin brother, Fred, with one stocking on, and his trowsers in his lap, was reading Wolf's "Wild Animals," and shivering most industriously.

"My dear boy," said mamma, at the same time shaking Bertha to rouse her, "put down that book this instant, and dress yourself. How can you sit there undressed, and reading, when it is so cold?"

"Why, you see, mamma," said Fred, "I had an awful dream about a bear, and I thought I'd look in the book and see what kind of one it was. I'll know all about it in a minute, and then I'll dress."

As for Bertha, she was wide awake in an instant, after mamma had touched her, and then mamma went to her three-year-old's crib, and saw two big brown eyes, which were looking very solemn, but which grew merry enough when they saw who was looking into them.

"How is mamma's beeboy this morning?" asked mamma, as she put her hands on his cheeks, and kissed him.

"Bobboker aw wighty," said the beeboy in return. He had never read his own name from the family record in the big Bible, and he had scarcely ever heard it addressed to him, so he could not be blamed for naming himself, and although Bobboker is not as melodious a name as some, and is longer than others, and no one knew what it meant, and its owner himself declined to tell where he got it, he never called himself anything else, and generally spoke of himself in the third person.

"What shall mamma do for her beeboy?" asked mamma.

"Kay me—vay Bobboker," was the answer, and so mamma took, or "kay"-ed Bobboker in her arms, and prepared to dress him, when she saw that Bertha, still in her night-dress, was reading.