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the young parents grew heavy with fear.

It was impossible to get a doctor. One was ill with pneumonia and the other doctor was out of town. Silas was unable to obtain any help and he returned home in low spirits.

"We got to depend on our own resources for a few hours, Mandy," he said. "You tell me what you think I ought to do for the baby, and I'll do my best."

"But diphtheria, Silas! I don't know what to do for that," Mrs. Hooper sobbed.

"S'pose I burn some sulphur. I remember hearing Jim Johnson, the blacksmith say that was good."

This Mr. Hooper did, nearly asphyxiating his family.

The hapless couple tried to read up on the terrible disease. His mother's old doctor-book was brought from the attic. No diphtheria was in it.

Meanwhile the night settled down—a dreary, drizzling, autumnal night with a wind that shrieked and moaned.

And little Si grew worse. His fever ran high, his breathing was distressful to hear.

Mrs. Hooper lay, white-faced, with wide eyes staring helplessly as her husband walked the floor, carrying the moaning child in his arms.

Suddenly his wife, in spite of her lamed shoulder, sat upright and pushed back her streaming hair.

"Silas! I heard a noise out in the kitchen. Let me hold the baby while you go and shut—" She paused abruptly, for just then the door leading from the kitchen was opened gently and in came a fat, little old woman with apple-red cheeks and shining eyes.

Without a word she took off her gray bonnet and big shawl. Then she turned to young Mr. Hooper, and, holding out her arms, said briskly, "Let me take that little feller, and do you go out into the other room an' get the basket your pa's brought; it's got goose-ile, cotton batten, ipecac an' some lobelia in it. Humph!"—placing her rosy cheek down close to the baby's chest—"it's jest as I thought. Croop—but it ain't so bad. I've tackled worse cases an' come out ahead." Before the half-dazed young man could obey her commands, Mr. Hooper, the elder, entered the room, the basket in his hands and suppressed excitement in his manner.

"Geed-evenin', Silas—good-evenin', Mandy," he said timidly. "We heard the little feller was sick, an' Mis' Wig—my wife—she was possessed to come right over an' help ye. I thought I'd come, too, an'—an'—"

"We're glad you both came," the younger Hoopers exclaimed in joyful unison, while Mandy added with a sigh of relief, "I declare! I believe that child looks better since—since ma's come!"

"Sure!" said the elder Mrs. Hooper composedly. "And now fur the goose-ile, Silas, an' them other things."



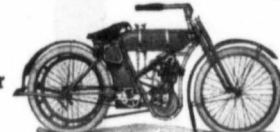
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