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Untidy Nellie.

"Nellie, put your things away before you go out."

Oh, how often those words were repeated! You would have thought that Nellie Foster would have been tired of hearing them. But she was not.

"Yes, mother," she would reply, and she would really *mean* to go straight away to tidy up; but she would get hold of a book, or see something else that amused her, and the thing she was told to do would be forgotten.

"If that child does not learn to be tidy, she will have to go to boarding-school," said Mr. Foster. He was a busy clergyman, and was often delayed by Nellie's trick of putting her books and toys or clothes down anywhere. "There's a meeting at the squire's at three, and I have been looking for my hat for ten minutes."

"I'll fetch it, father," said Nellie, running down from her bedroom. "I put it on just to go to see the new chickens, and I suppose I left it in the loft."

You may imagine the state of dust the vicar's wide-awake was in after ly-

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ing on the straw for two or three hours; but Nellie was so penitent, and promised so earnestly that she would never touch her father's hat again, that she was forgiven once more. But if it wasn't one thing it was another; she was always getting into needless trouble through her untidy ways.

One day Mr. and Mrs. Foster had to go out for some hours.

"You will be good, dear, won't you?" said Mrs. Foster, as they were leaving. "Remember that you are quite a big girl now, and you must help nurse take care of baby-brother."

"Oh yes, mother dear, I will, I promise you. I won't touch a book all the afternoon, and I'll put everything away when I have done with it."

"Don't be too sure, Nellie," said the vicar. "I would rather hear you say, 'I will try to be good.'"

Nellie tossed her head a little. "You know, father, you said I was really getting better," she said. "You see how good I will be to-day!"

"My little girl must not forget that there is only one way of being good, and that is with God's help. Ask Him for that, Nellie, and then you will be all right."

But Nellie had said her prayers once that day, and did not see that there was any need to say another; besides, she did really feel so very anxious to do right that she was sure she would do it.

Oh, Nellie! poor little Nellie! She had to learn somehow that we cannot do anything in our own strength, and she learnt it that day.

"I'm just going down to hang out these socks of baby's," said nurse. "You will take care of him, dear, won't you?"

Little Eddie was asleep, unfortunately, or all might have been well. As it was, Nellie watched by his cradle for a few minutes, then began to fit a new dress on her pet doll, Miss Maroo. Then she remembered that she had not fed the squirrel that day. She threw down the doll and went out of the nursery, leaving the door wide open.

Now there happened to be a young fox-terrier puppy in the house, who spent his time, when he could escape the cook's eyes, in tearing to pieces everything he could get hold of. Gyp had been trotting about the stairs, probably wishing people would not shut their bedroom doors and leave nothing but the stair carpets and rods to sharpen his teeth on.

Seeing the nursery door open, of course in he popped, and finding Miss Maroo on the floor, he began to worry her at once. Strange to say, the bassinette was empty, and the nursery kitten, who did not dare approach it when Eddie was there, had promptly jumped into the warm little nest directly the baby had left it.

No one ever knew how it happened, but it was supposed that Gyp had dragged the doll about till it came to pieces, and then shaking it, a piece had fallen into the fire. Nellie had moved the high guard away to warm her feet and forgotten to replace it, or this could not have happened.

Anyway, the doll must have caught fire, and then something hanging on the guard caught, till when Nellie came running down from the loft after playing with her squirrel, she saw the bassinette in flames.

"Fire! fire!" she shrieked. "Oh, baby! baby!" Untidy as she was, Nellie was brave, and at the risk of getting burnt she was rushing to the cradle when nurse caught her with one hand and flung a pail of water with the other.

"Baby's safe in the night nursery. He was awake and alone when I came up from the garden. Run away, and ask cook to come and help me put the fire out!"

Poor penitent Nellie! How astonished Eddie looked when she threw herself on the bed beside him and nearly smothered him with kisses and tears! It was a sharp lesson, but it was a lasting one; and Nellie became in time her mother's right hand, and was as humble as she was good.

Counsels for Children.

Remember always to live in peace. Hate all strife. It is a dreadful thing to be at war with those around us. Be kind to everybody. If you cannot live quietly with any one of your companions, withdraw from him. It is

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a sad sight to see boys and girls engaged in disputes or quarrels. The Lord Jesus never quarrelled with anybody, though He was oftentimes cruelly treated.

Be very kind to the weak and poor and the unfortunate around you. God long ago said, "Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child." He also said, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind." It is both mean and wicked to take advantage of the infirmities and misfortunes of those around us.

Use your best efforts to become wise. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. If you do not know a thing ask others. This is scriptural. God said to the Jews: "When your children shall say to you, What mean ye by this service? ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover." We should think before we speak, and not thoughtlessly ask silly questions.