

equally good intentions and attentions would fail to assuage their infant woes. She was an ideal nurse. Had Mrs. Weakling known her good fortune, she would not have welcomed her so coldly; however she found it out too late, as you will presently hear.

The house was of the jerry-built suburban type—a well-known variety in the art of house-building—loose doors and windows, bells that don't ring, cupboards and conveniences which are made conspicuous by their absence!

The trained eye of Nurse Dale took in the situation at a glance. A slipshod household, order, and neatness were unknown quantities.

A slatternly maid opened the door and invited her to enter. The floor of the hall was strewn with children of all sizes of infancy; nimbly stepping over, and around them, she made her way to the room allotted to her for temporary use.

One of the larger of the small things followed her in, and with eyes full of wonder at the unusual sight, asked, "Are you a trained nurse?"

"Yes, and what is your name?"

"Milly; have you come because mother's bad?"

"I have come to look after her while she is in bed, but I must go now and see her."

The patient's room looked cheery and comfortable; she was sitting in an easy chair near the fire; baby clothes were airing on a high fender; it was evident that the arrival was imminent.

"How do you do, Nurse; Mrs. Little, I am sorry to say, can't come to me for another week; do you think you can manage till she comes?"

Nurse Dale thought she could; and proceeded to make all the necessary arrangements, the patient watching her the while, surprised and not a little suspicious; to her many of the arrangements were unnecessary, and never made by Mrs. Little, who took things so quietly and never fussed!

At 10.30 that night the baby came—a fine, healthy, strong child weighing 8 lbs.

Oh, the comfort of everything; the clean, warm bed—the hot water bottle, not put into the bed without a cover—the nightgown so folded that it could not get disarranged—the cup of warm milk given just at the right moment when everything was over.

Then—in so short a time it seemed—the baby was lying in her cot beside her mother—a dear little pink and white atom.

"Now, I just want to take your temperature."

"Why—am I *very* ill?"

Nurse Dale laughed at the look of alarm in her patient's face.

"Certainly not, you are very well, but it is always done, as the surest way of showing that you are going on all right."

"Mrs. Little never does it."

Nurse Dale discreetly pretended not to hear. "Now you must go to sleep," she said.

The comfort Mrs. Weakling was feeling induced sleep, and she slept two hours.

Nurse Dale quietly made up the fire wearing a pair of gloves, which was another surprise, took a book, and sat down by the fire with her face towards the bed.

She did not at first open the book; she squeezed her hands together; her outward expression of inward enjoyment, and smiled softly to herself.

"I believe she is a *real* 'Sairy,'" she murmured. "I'm in for some fun."

Nurse Dale was an Irishwoman, and was amply endowed with native wit, and an appreciation of the "light side of Nature," and had Mrs. Weakling's eyes been open she would have seen the humorous face twitching with merriment at the prospect of the coming "fun." When she awoke, she appeared surprised to find the Nurse in the room.

"Oh, Nurse, I forget to tell you, your room is at the top of the house; if you make up the fire you can go to bed; I shan't want anything."

"Go to bed, and leave you and the baby!"

"Yes, the baby will sleep all night."

"That is possible for the first night, but you at any rate will require attention."

"If you put something by the bedside it will be all right. Mrs. Little always does that."

"What! goes to bed at the top of the house, and leaves you all night!" in a tone of unconcealed surprise. "Oh, no, Mrs. Weakling, I shall not leave you."

Mrs. Weakling did not reply; she could not be disloyal to her old friend; nevertheless, it was with an air of great relief that she again closed her eyes; it *was* nice to think the Nurse would be at hand; for although she never admitted it to anyone but herself, she had suffered much discomfort and nervousness by being left alone at night during previous confinements. When she discovered that Nurse Dale had made up the bed in the ante-room, and intended to sleep there on the following nights, with the communicating door open, and that before retiring she had so thoughtfully placed a little hand bell within reach, by which she could be summoned at any moment, she began to draw comparisons; she could not help it, the disloyal thoughts would come!

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