A BABY WHO LIVES IN A NEST IN THE TREE-TOPS: BY HELEN B. SCHOONHOVEN

"PUNKIN" came to live with his parents more than a year ago and a joyous little member of society he proved to be, demanding for himself all the thought, love and spare moments of a devoted artist father and a loving, musical mother. Life in a studio close under the eaves of Carnegie Hall in winter and under the overshadowing cliffs of the Palisades in summer presented problems to the parents of "Punkin," who dreamed with the vividness of their artistic souls of a perfection of babyhood, mental and physical, to blossom forth in the little human flower of childhood brought within their home.

Ingenious and mechanical as well as an artist whose canvases show a vision of the great themes of human experience, the father gave to the question of "Punkin's" environment much thought and finally devised a sleeping cupboard unique among outdoor sleeping devices, and a playhouse that has been the admiration and delight of all visitors to this baby's shrine. "Cupboard" is just the word to describe the outdoor sleeping device of this fortunate little one. It is like a box fitted on the window-sill and projecting right out of doors. The face of the box next the street is open halfway down so that the fresh air pours over the little sleeper, but does not blow as a direct draught upon him. In case of storm the father made slides to fit in the opening, but slanting outward to deflect the raindrops as an inclined roof would do. Two small doors with glass panes open into the room and a dark curtain drops over these to shut out the light. The mother lifts the curtain and peers through the glass at her safe and sleeping baby without disturbing him in his sheltered nest. "Punkin's" rosy cheeks, bright eyes and ever jolly composure attest the success of this outdoor sleeping as a safeguard against restless nights and fretful days so common among shut-in city babies.

The blossoms of the May time called the artist and his family to the bungalow on one of the main travelled roads on the Palisades. "Punkin" loved the gay color
of the spring awakening and he longed with all his baby soul to be nearer to the big trees with their rustling, waving branches. His little sleeping-box in the window was too confined for the increased activity of his daytime hours. He needed a playhouse, and outdoors it must be and safe from the drifting traffic and lure of the road. Again the artist father turned from his cliff studies of great storms and clashing forces of nature and considered “Punkin’s” needs. High in the tree-tops, on the very ridge-pole of the studio, he built a playhouse for the boy. Safe from all intrusion, here the happy younger plays and dreams and learns his lessons as all good babies must, and all the time the sweet, pure air is imparting health and strength. Here, on a summer day, you will find him and his woolly lamb tumbling about in loving comradeship. The hum of the city by day faintly reaches the shore beneath him where the Hudson washes the feet of the great steep cliffs. At night the twinkling lights of Manhattan send their beams across to the majestic rock piles.
High in the sweet security of his tree-top-home, "Punkin" and woolly lamb care naught for the greed and struggles, the sorrow and pain of that big city across the way. But some day among the days that are to be, his soul reflecting the health of his body, "Punkin" will perhaps walk among the generations of men and take his message of light and joy, learned and nurtured in his playhouse in the tree-tops.

A PRAIRIE SOD HOUSE AND THE KANSAS TRAVELING LIBRARY: BY JESSIE WRIGHT WHITCOMB

TWO men were motoring across Western Kansas on a section road that barely scratched the prairie—the prairie that met the horizon on every side without let or hindrance. For hours they had been the center of this horizon circle. The brilliant sunlight, pouring now straight down, was wearying in its intensity. The only wind was made by the purring car.

"I believe that’s it now."

"Where?"
The driver pointed to a dot on the horizon straight ahead.

"And what might you call yon speck?"

"I think it’s a sod house. They’re scarce these days."

"A sod house?"

"Yes. Very good houses, too. But their day is done."

"In Scotland," remarked the other man musingly, "a wide stretch of country would be having its bits of houses here and yon. And living in them, men and women with keen minds and wide interests. And in every clud o’ tow-headed bairns, one at least set apart for the college. You’ll not be having the like of that on these lands!"

John Blunt shrugged his shoulders.

"We’ve raised men on these Kansas prairies, short a time as we’ve been at it, men that we’ve no call to be ashamed of."

"Aye, but look at the Scotch breed from houses no bigger than yon”—the sod house could be plainly seen—"the Moffats, the Livingstones, the Mackays and all their ilk—braw men! Here it’s all culture of the soil—not of the mind. All money, money—with a dearn o’ thoughts."

"We’ll stop here, anyway," said Blunt. "You’ll like to see a sod house."

As the machine slowed up, three little fellows in blue overalls ran around the corner of the house.

"They’re tow-headed enough!" laughed Blunt.

"Oo, aye: it minds me o’ Scotland—the wee hoosie!"

Bits of grass and even flowers had struggled through in spots on the sod roof. The sod walls were straight, solid and substantial. The windows shone and the general care-for appearance made a good introduction for the young woman who smilingly opened the door.

Her blue cotton gown was clean and fresh; her blue check apron gave a homely, capable air; her round arms, bare to the elbow, wore the same ruddy tan as her face and neck; and her cheerful smile glowed a welcome.

"Come in. do!" she urged. "We’re just