

larks singing away, even in February, and draws up at West Kirby Station, close to an imposing building with red-tiled roof, and perhaps a group of merry little children, in red hoods and blue cloaks, in the grounds, looking cosy and warm in spite of its not yet being spring.

Facing the west and the Welsh hills, and getting many a glorious sunset, as fine as those which people will travel as far as Switzerland to see (and the sunrises are glorious too), no place could be more suited to convalescing children. A dry, sandy soil, and always a fresh sea breeze, it escapes much of the damp of Liverpool and Birkenhead. its near neighbours.

Touching an electric bell, we are admitted at once to the hall, and to the Matron's pretty little room, who is always ready, in season and out of season, with untiring feet, to show visitors over her spacious domains, and to let them see her children, who always call her "Sister," and are very happy with her, and the two nice Nurses in their white caps and pretty pink prints, so fresh and cheerful in their colouring.

One charming Ward, "Rest," for the elder girls, is beautifully fitted up by the kindness of a lady. The pretty, chocolate-coloured walls, hung with many old friends, chromos of Millais', Briton Rivière's, &c., "Cinderella," "Old Mother Hubbard," "The Order of the Bath," &c., with twelve brass bedsteads, with snowy coverlets, beautiful blankets, and good linen; a little chair at the foot of each bed, curtains to the windows, a Turkey rug, and washstand—everything, indeed, in the room meets with universal admiration.

The names of the rooms and Wards are Joy, Plenty, Help, Comfort, Mercy, Charity, Rest, Hope, Patience, The Fold, Courage, Peace.

One of the Wards downstairs, "Joy," is for the comparatively well children; and "Comfort" for the more ailing and delicate ones, who are not equal to much noise or stir. The large, airy, well-lighted rooms, with pretty inlaid wooden floors, and comfortable couches and chairs, for the little invalid or lame ones, commend themselves to all comers.

The dining-room, decorated with six pretty plants and palms, given by a kind-hearted Medical student, who called to see the children, must not be forgotten, though one grudges the time which keeps us from the children. And here we must divide the children into two classes, not of boys (taken up to the age of twelve) and girls (taken up to the age of sixteen), but of those who will go home strengthened for the battle of life, and perhaps feeling, when they return to their former life, as if they had had a peep of Heaven, never to be forgotten; and those to us the most interesting, the little sufferers—through no fault of theirs,

poor little souls and poor little bodies—who will certainly only be strong and well when they go to even a Brighter Home than this one.

One little girl, who was sent from the Sheltering Home in Liverpool, and improved very much during several weeks spent here, was the funniest little object. "Dot" was apparently only two years old, a wizened, starved-looking morsel of a child, yet received much attention from visitors and her fellow-children, for she could sing "Once in Royal David's City," and added to her stock of hymns while in the Home. "Dot" really was six years old, only no one could credit it who saw her. Her mother is blind and sings in the streets of Liverpool, and her father plays the flute. Poor "Dot"! When she got well, and plump and rosy, she had to go, and we fear is by no means in so comfortable a case now as when she toddled about in the Home. Another girl, Alice, was also sent from the Sheltering Home; she was partially paralysed, and was like a shadow when she came. She had been picked up in the Liverpool streets for begging late at night, and told sad tales of drunken parents and ill-usage. She improved much in health, and then, alas! had to go home. What a mockery the name of home seems when you think of the fireless rooms, with only dry bread and weak tea, such as some of these children tell of. But many have happy homes, no doubt, to which they return after three or more weeks' recruiting, though often very unwilling to go away from where they have had such a happy holiday, and so much love and care, and warmth, and good food. To-day two boys begged to be allowed to stay instead of going home, if they only might pawn their shirts or anything, so that they might stay. One boy, "Willie," a pretty little fellow in blue jacket and brass buttons, with large clear eyes, has only one leg, the other gone from hip disease. He has improved wonderfully in the few weeks he was here. His father, when he came to see him on Sunday—when fathers are allowed to visit—was very delighted to see such an improvement. The other boy, "Herbert," who always seemed to have a crown on his head, it was so enveloped in linen, had his neck in a dreadful condition from abscesses when he came, and the change when he left to-day was marvellous. He was very fond of music, and delighted when he could get anyone to play on the piano for him, so that he could sing his favourite hymn, "O Paradise, O Paradise." By the way, the children are well off for music. One kind gentleman gave them a delightful musical box. There is also a harmonium; and about a fortnight ago a lady arrived with a piano, which she had kindly collected money for among her friends. Another lady had a working party for children, and when the articles were sold there was a nice little sum of

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