

to hold the flowers so often brought by kind friends, boxes of note paper, books, &c., while the men get neck-ties, socks, underwear, penknives, games of various kinds, mouth organs, and other useful or amusing things.

Half-past seven is the hour for the programme to begin, but long before this the ward orderlies are busy carrying the patients who can be allowed to leave their beds. Stretchers and couches are brought in until the floor space is entirely covered, and in this way all who are unable to sit up are made comfortable. Others occupy the elevated seats or chairs, while the little ones are carried in by the Nurses.

On one seat are ten happy little ones wearing new white aprons, and bright-coloured silk caps. These children are not ill, but simply suffering from ring-worm, consequently the gay caps they wear.

All is now ready, and many voices join heartily in singing "Hark the Herald Angels, &c.," then a short prayer and address from a clergyman, who tells of God's great gifts to man, and why the angels sang songs of praise, and why we give gifts at Christmas time. An amusing recitation and song then follow, which is much appreciated by the blind, as well as the others; but the event of the evening is the appearance of a real live Santa Claus.

One member of the resident staff usually dons a white fur coat, a snow-white beard and wig, and bounds into the amphitheatre carrying a pair of snowshoes in one hand, while with the other he holds a pack which is slung over his shoulder, containing jumping-jacks, dolls, &c., in infinite variety.

It is pleasant to watch the faces of the children when Santa Claus appears—they hardly know whether to laugh or cry, but his kindly voice soon reassures them, and they listen breathlessly while he tells them he has been asleep in a log all the winter, but had wakened just in time, hitched up his reindeers, and come down the chimney of the Hospital to see what he could do for the children who are sick and not able to hang up their stockings for him to fill, as they have always done before. He tells them he is a little late, but the Hospital chimney is rather old-fashioned, and he did not understand it very well—in fact, he found it hard work to get down, but he is here at last, and has brought a present for everybody. Excitement runs high when he begins distributing his gifts, for with every present is given an orange and a bag of candy. Little Edna, a black-eyed little girl of five, who has expressed a wish for several things, stands with overflowing arms and exclaims—"Everything I wanted." And Norma as she receives her dolly's "tadle," stands boldly and says, "Sank you, Santa Taus, you are very kind."

The various members of the Board of Trust, House Staff and others, are not forgotten, but are presented with candy canes, toy watches, &c., in order to add to the merriment and enjoyment of the evening.

Present after present is taken off this wonderful tree, until every patient of the two hundred and eighty in the Hospital has been called by name; but soon the tree is stripped of its fruit, and nine o'clock draws near. The President of the Board speaks a few kind parting words, and all join heartily in singing the National Anthem.

The stretchers are again brought in, the patients carefully lifted upon them and borne back to the wards, the lame limp by, and the blind are led up the stairway. Then follow the long line of men and

women all laughing and chatting quietly over their evening. The night Nurses are waiting to receive them, and soon all are in bed, the lights turned down, and they dream of the happy hours, and Christmas on the morrow.

On Christmas Day all is stir and bustle again, for there is service in the Chapel, and visitors are allowed in all the wards.

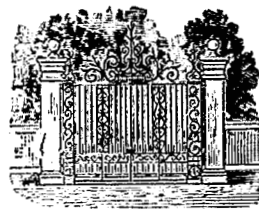
Christmas dinner is served to all who can partake of it, and consists of roast turkey, plum pudding, nuts, raisins, figs, grapes, and oranges.

"Jack Frost," a poor, but kind young man, comes every year bringing a small bouquet of cut flowers for each patient; others bring pretty Christmas cards, fruit or flowers.

Surely every one is happy! but no, there is Johnny, an English emigrant boy of 15, in tears. "What, crying, Johnny, on Christmas Day! Have you not had a happy time?" "Oh, yes, very happy," he replies; "but I am thinking of mother, for I know she has not been happy—she is very poor, and goes out washing, and my father is a drunkard. I thought I would come out to Canada and buy a farm, and then I could send for mother and the children, and we should all be so happy together." Poor Johnny, his dream was never realised, and while I talked with him I reflected that on Christmas, as on all other days, smiles and tears mingle, and thus it will ever be until the "morning without clouds shall dawn."

## Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.



THE QUEEN has promised to open the Sheffield new Town Hall, which is being erected at a cost of nearly £200,000.

The Queen of Portugal for some time has shown a keen interest in medical subjects, and has just successfully passed the examination for second year's students before the faculty of Lisbon. This example will no doubt have the effect of causing medicine to become a most popular study amongst women. It would be interesting to know if a royal road to the intricacies of anatomy, histology, and physiology has been found, or whether the distinguished pupil has to accept the inevitable drudgery of the average medical student.

On Saturday afternoon, the great bazaar organized for the benefit of a home for convalescents and invalids, was formally opened by the Emperor and the Empress Alexandra of Russia, in the new rooms of the Hermitage adjoining the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg. There were 28 stalls, representing the various countries of Europe and Asia, at which their respective Ambassadors and Diplomatic representatives of all ranks presided. Their Imperial Majesties, attended by most of the other members of the Imperial family, inspected all the stalls and made a number of pur-

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