

leaves and pearls, passed down the wards, wheeling a snow-cart filled with useful gifts for each patient—to the women packets of tea and useful flannel under-garments and night-dresses; to the men flannel shirts, socks, and ties. We learned that this ethereal snow-maiden, who seemed to float around in the rosy light, was a convalescent patient, and owed her complete recovery to the skilled treatment and Nursing in the London Homœopathic Hospital. In the Children's ward great was the excitement. Round a wee table the little ones were gathered taking tea and making it for themselves out of Lilliputian pots and cups, and at the foot of each cot hung a beautiful full-sized new white stocking, attached by alternate bows of pink and blue gauze. Cannot one imagine the shrill shouts of delight when each little child awoke on Christmas morning and untied those precious garments! They were very capacious, and we learned that cards, crackers, toys, sweets, books, all found space therein, and that the little snowy beds were heaped up with lovely gifts very, very early in the morning, some time before it was light.

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And we must not forget Gipsy, the pet fox-terrier of the Hospital—a snowy, black-faced, bright-eyed doggie, who trotted everywhere with visitors, in and out of lifts and wards, and danced proudly on highly-polished floors, yapping quite plainly “There is but one Hospital, and Gipsy is its doggie—see, I too have a stocking!” and there, hanging on an empty cot, we found it, and learned that, in *that* stocking, indeed, on the morrow, would be found many joys dear to canine tastes—fluffy rabbits, india-rubber balls, and toothsome tit-bits; Nurses and patients vying with one another in cramming that stocking to bursting point, so that when old Santa Claus paid his invisible visit at early dawn, he would find no room for any more gifts.

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THE following true and touching episode of “goodwill to men,” has been sent us by L. W. and E. B. :—

“It was Christmas Eve. I was returning to the Hospital after a weary round of shopping. The weather was not conducive to comfort. Rain and sleet were each fighting for mastery. The elements seemed quite determined to hinder my progress. My way led through a lane, without the cheery glimmer of an occasional gas lamp. I was slowly making my way through the darkness, splashing through mud puddles, my mood certainly not in harmony with the approaching festive season. Whilst trudging along I was accosted by the sound of a small piping voice, saying, ‘It’s a terrible dirty night, mum.’

I turned, but the darkness was so intense I could not distinguish the speaker. Presently two little figures emerged out of the darkness and trotted on

either side of me. I looked curiously down at my companions, and discovered two ragged little urchins. From what I could observe in the darkness, they appeared to be a pair of happy-go-lucky little fellows, probably about five and six years of age. Peering up at me they remarked, ‘Please, mum, are yer from the ‘Ospital?’

‘Yes,’ I replied. The younger with a gleam of mischief lighting up a roguish little face, exclaimed, ‘Oh my, ain’t yer out late!’

‘I am afraid I am,’ I answered. ‘Have you ever seen a Christmas tree?’ I inquired of them.

‘A Christmas tree!’ they ejaculated breathlessly; ‘oh my, I should just think we haven’t.’

After a brief moment to regain their breath they resumed:

‘Our Mary Ellen seed one in the ‘Ospital last Christmas Day, and she said as how it was proper nice.’

They then executed a little impromptu dance round me in their glee. Sobering down again they continued:

‘And Susie said a angel with wings all shiny white flew off the top of the Christmas tree in the night, and filled everybody’s stockings with oranges and toys.’

The little urchin’s eyes glistened with the remembrance of Mary Ellen’s description. As an afterthought the elder remarked:

‘The Nurses said as how the angel was called Sany Claus.’ This was delivered with a wise little shake of the head.

I then proceeded to give a description of our Christmas tree, my narrative being continually interrupted with excited exclamations from my hearers. By this time the Hospital gates were reached. I reminded them I must now say good-bye. My little escorts gravely said:

‘We do hope all the little girls and little chaps will have a real good time.’

We exchanged wishes for a happy Christmas. As they turned to go, I suddenly remembered two bright sixpences in my purse, and calling them back, gave one to each. Their faces lighted up with pleasure as they gazed upon their riches. One of the little fellows, looking up with a face expressive of joy and amazement, exclaimed:

‘I do hope you’ll have a real merry Christmas,’ his comrade chiming in with eager pathos, ‘And I do hope you’ll keep well.’

Then off they scampered at full speed down the lane, all brightness and happiness, despite their ragged and forlorn condition.”

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THE following are curious delusions of the insane: one patient, a kleptomaniac, who has had to be put in an Asylum, follows out her instincts whenever she has the opportunity, and can evade the watchfulness of the attendants. She made a bag out of certain parts of her underclothing by tying a string about the bottom, and had filled it with scraps purloined from the waste-box whenever she was able to elude the watchfulness of the attendants. When the contents were taken from her she became very violent, believing that she had been robbed,

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