

publicans, it is to be hoped, have supplied him with drink at first hand; but his method of proceeding was to step inside the doors of the gin-palaces, when full of company, and sing, play tricks, or otherwise fascinate the unscrupulous frequenters of the place, who were drinking round the bar, and one and another would give him a sip, he becoming more excited and amusing the more he got, till his little head, very easily affected, would bear no more, and he would lie down in a corner, and would go off in the dead sleep of intoxication, I am afraid, alas! to the great amusement of some of the depraved minds around him. Willie wandered away sometimes long distances from home, always in search of drink, and was therefore well known to many of the different police-stations. We made an effort to get him taken into some home, or institution, where he would be guarded; but he was too young, and his father was not out of work or willing to part with the child. His step-mother also—a loud-spoken, but not unkindly woman—always kept promising to keep a sharper eye over his proceedings—no easy matter for a person fond of gossiping up and down the street, and encumbered with babies of her own.

The little fellow hurt his hand, which led to my making his acquaintance, and he used to come every day to the Hospital to have it dressed; and very amusing he was, seated on the table, kicking his little legs about, and talking twenty to the dozen of nonsense and fun. I took care to reward him for each visit with some small toy, or picture, hoping to secure his constant attendance; but unfortunately his hand healed too quickly, and Willie disappeared. A long afternoon was spent searching for him, through divers small streets and courts—streets where people talk to you from the top windows, or the bottom of the area, or take a long and careful examination of your appearance through a crack before they venture to open the door—but I never found him. His people had moved away to some distant quarter, and left no address.

"I is such a tiny mite," said another of my small friends, as he arranged his crooked little brown limbs in the bath, ready to be galvanised; "and my knickerbockers is such tiny mites, you couldn't never wear 'em, Sister!" And "Tiny Mite" he was called for some time, till the word got corrupted into "Dynamite," by which name he went ever after, singularly inappropriate to the gentle, brown-eyed little fellow, though it seemed. His real name I have long forgotten; but I remember his chatter and his love of property very well. He accepted any amount of broken toys to take away with him. As he visited the Hospital twice a week, he had every opportunity of

amassing a colossal fortune in old scrapbooks, carts minus wheels, bodies of dolls, and decapitated heads, grinning in awesome resurrection—all the lumber that is so willingly swept out of Ward toy-cupboards. He possessed, also, an enormous and valuable collection of old Christmas cards, as a visit to the tiny rooms of the model buildings convinced me. His perambulator was wonderfully elastic, and held everything and anything that anyone would give him; but flowers were the real joy of Dynamite's heart. A bunch of those lovely daffodils or Lent lilies, which seem to have absorbed so much yellow sunlight, and which kind friends send in such quantities into the Hospitals in spring time, would keep him happy for days. Indeed, I often used to wish our country friends could realise what a pleasure bunches of flowers to give away are, in the outpatient rooms especially, and could see the little hands stretched out, all up and down the rows of bunches, and hear the comments of the mothers. Great efforts are made to carry away a big bunch, even with a baby under each arm and little toddlers clinging to the skirts.

"But, surely, these are hardly worth taking; they have been packed in the hampers all night."

"Oh, they'll freshen up when I get home, and my old man, he's rare fond of 'em."

A gift of flowers softens the long hours of waiting, and brings a smile to the weary, half-discontented face, when nothing else will. "Dynamite" was fond of relating the one occasion in his life when he had showed valour of quite an explosive kind. He had, according to his own account, attacked and beaten off his grandfather's big cochin-china cock, about as tall as himself, "which were walkin' right in at the door. He were a comin' into the parlour, but I hitted him such a whack;" then added, repentingly, "he weren't a werry bad cock; he laid the beautifullest heggs! and I'll bring you one next time I comes, Sister." And so he did, and a very satisfactory egg it appeared to be.

Passing along one of the narrow streets that lead into Goswell Road, one afternoon late, I felt my cloak pulled, and a sharp little voice from almost beneath my feet, said, indignantly, "Hullo, Sister, don't yer see me?" At first sight, indeed, it was not easy to recognise "Hump-backed Georgie." He was sitting in the gutter, on a mud pie, which he had just finished constructing, having bedaubed himself and his clothes all over, till he was perfectly black. I had last seen him in the Ward, fair and white as his sheets, and apparently dying, while his father—a chimney-sweep, hastily summoned from work—was bending over him, and inky streams of tears were trickling down the clean pillow-case, as the

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