

would be just coming up from tea, and most likely taking the temperatures and tidying up the children and the wards before going off duty."

"Was it like Christmas in the Hospital, Nurse?"

"Very much like Christmas, childie. Why, we had been preparing our grand decorations, and trying to keep our ideas and plans a secret from the other wards and Nurses; then I was anxious to get off duty, I remember, and go out to buy a few presents, and to return to put up the lovely things we had designed the last thing at night, in order that they might 'astonish the natives' next morning—the Christmas morning. How well I remember it all! What a business it seemed then to find spare moments, and keeping all the things out of sight from the Doctors and Nurses; you see we wanted to be very smart, and unlike the others, for we thought a lot of ourselves in our Ward. In Hospital life it seems to me that each Ward thinks itself *the* Ward of the Hospital; and so it was with us—we thought ourselves the cream of that Institution; so much so, that when a present of baby clothes was sent to the Matron, we felt quite hurt if she did not allow us to pick out all the prettiest things for our pet babies. We always expected to get the best of everything for our children, and looking back from this distance, I think we succeeded pretty well, although at the time we were never quite satisfied. However, I feel sure the Nurse who came to pick for her pet child, after I had been through the bundle, never found much to go into raptures over.

"How we used to dress our babies up! We always had a baby, and the next Ward generally had one too (an opposition baby, you know). Of course ours was the best. We had two just this time last year, and they only had one in the next Ward; at least they had three, really; but one had flabby legs—I used to think it rather like a jelly-fish—and another had only one eye. So of course we didn't count these two. Now our babies were fine children—one was convalescent from bronchitis, and the other only had a bent-up sort of toe (but that didn't show with a sock on). So our babies really were the best all-round. They used to look so pretty when dressed up, and they seemed to keep cleaner and more tidy than the next Ward children; and it was always our baby who did the funny things; besides, the visitors praised our babies most.

"We christened our Christmas babies 'Savoie' and 'Piedmont' respectively, although one was a boy and the other a girl. Oh, how I like thinking over it all!"

"Well, Nurse, what did you do for your decorations?"

"What did we do? Oh, all sorts of things. We had a large Prince of Wales' feathers made of white tissue paper on a red ground, with 'Ich Dien' in silver letters at the bottom, and a lovely border of cotton wool, or, as little Frankie used to call it, 'cobbie lool.' Then we had monograms in silver, and beautiful texts in leaves, and lovely holly, and mottoes, and flowers, with heaps of other nice things. It is delightful to think of it all again! How happy we were!"

"Why then should the tears come into your eyes, Nurse, when you have happy thoughts?"

"Ah, childie, I was thinking too of little Joe."

"Who was little Joe, Nurse? Do tell me about him! How big was he?"

"He was nearly your size, dear, and about ten years old. He was my boy, my special care. I used to feed him, wash him, read to him, and tell him little tales. He was such a nice boy—one of my favourite patients. We were all fond of little Joey. The Doctors used to spoil him; but it is difficult not to spoil children like Joe. He had neither father nor mother, and he was a little newsboy. We were to have a nice Christmas-tree in our Ward on Christmas Day, and Joey had helped to tie up the little presents to be placed on it (he was very ill and could only do a little at a time). I returned from my little shopping expedition, and found Joey talking to the Doctor, telling him what was the matter with himself, and what he ought to have prescribed for him. This sort of thing always amused the Doctors. At last I finished my decorating, and I felt almost as tired as little Joe, who was asleep, with the little presents still on his bed, and some of them not tied up. (Joey had a weakness for going to sleep in the middle of his labours.) So I sat down by his cot to finish them for him, and feeling glad it was so near my own bed-time. I looked at my Joe as I carefully took the ball of string out of his hand. So pale and wasted and weary he looked. He had been with us for three months; but the day after the Christmas-tree he was to go into another Ward (one facing the south), and I felt very sorry at the thought of his leaving me. I sat tying up the presents, and all was so quiet. The children were all asleep, and I thought Joey was asleep too—his eyes were shut and he was very still. But presently he opened his eyes and looked at me steadily for a moment or two; then he said, 'Nurse, don't you think our Doctor beautiful?' 'Well, Joe,' I said, 'I don't know that I ever thought of it. What put that into your mind, boy?' 'I don't know, Nurse; only I like him such a lot when he was sitting on my bed to-night, telling all about the Christmas-tree, and all about the presents being hung on it, and the candles being

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