

Nurse Edith's Christmas Eve.

It was 2.15 a.m. Nurse Edith had given the finishing touches to the decorations, and surveyed her work complacently in the uncertain light thrown by the flickering fires and shaded lamp. The doctor had been his night round, the medicines administered, the temperatures taken—it was too early to prepare the breakfast, and she felt herself entitled to a little rest, at least. Well, daddy was wakeful and restless, and the doctor had just now said that the end couldn't be far off, but that didn't mean to-night, and one couldn't sit by his bedside indefinitely. Fourteen didn't look so over comfortable, his pillows had a sort of erectness about them which rather worried her, but really she had altered them so often, and Baby Bob must learn he could not have everything he whimpered for, he was getting quite spoilt by the "day people."

The armchair by the fire looked cosy and inviting, and Nurse Edith had been on the "go," she told herself, ever since she came on duty. Her brother had sent her the last new novel for a Xmas present, and was not to-night Xmas Eve, and a blessed holiday from mending sheets and padding splints?

And so she sat herself down and turned a deaf ear to daddy's lonely sigh and baby's whimper, and opened her book with satisfaction. By-and-bye the warmth and comfort began to exert a drowsy influence over her—she wasn't going to sleep. Oh, dear no! But she would just close her eyes for a *moment* to relieve the oppression that had stolen over them.

"Yes, I hear daddy perfectly; that is 10's cough I hear quite"—Nurse Edith is asleep. Daddy's feeble voice comes down the ward for water. Baby is frightened, and cries aloud for nurse, but she hears them not. Soon, however, she becomes conscious of something unusual happening, and opens her eyes.

The ward door uncloses slowly and gently and admits a flood of radiant light, within the circle of which stood the Figure of a Little Child, clad in a white gown of spotless purity, which fell in folds to His little bare feet.

He fixed His wondering gaze on her for a moment, and then His eyes wandered round the ward.

"These are My Father's children," He sighed, and I must do His work."

He passed softly till he came to Baby Bob, sobbing in his cot, looked on him wistfully for a moment, then clambered up beside him and took the mite into His sweet arms, cuddled him, close to His Baby Heart, and prattling to him,

lulled him to sleep and laid him back among his pillows.

Once more over the cold floor the little feet travelled till they halted beside old Daddy.

The sweat of death stood on the old man's brow and his wandering fingers plucked at the bed clothes. Tip-toe stood the child and strove to wipe his face with the corner of His little gown, and failing to reach it, lifted up His voice and wept, and as those precious tears fell down upon the old man's hand, he passed, absolved and washed by them, beyond the veil. "Clean every whit."

At His cry Nurse Edith started from her chair, the light faded as suddenly as it had appeared, the figure of the child vanished, and the ward bore its usual aspect.

With trembling limbs and beating heart she approached Daddy's bed, she hardly dares to look, but thank God! O thank God! he is living, breathing, and with a look of peace and happiness upon his dear old face, that she has never seen there before.

Baby Bob is lying cosily tucked up, with a new rubber doll, clasped in his thin arms.

She looks at the clock, dazed and bewildered it is 2.25, *exactly five minutes since she sat down*. Daddy died at dawn, his hand clasped in hers.

Was the vision she had seen a dream?

How then had Baby Bob come by that rubber doll out of his stocking?

Somewhere she had read: "God gives His Angels charge of them that sleep, but He Himself watches with those that wake!"

Had the Christ Child indeed visited them that Xmas night? Then indeed His sweet goodwill towards all men had included even her, and saved her from a life-long remorse.

H. H.

The British Red Cross Society, as newly constituted under the patronage of His Majesty the King and the presidency of Her Majesty Queen Alexandra, has made considerable progress in its organisation, and is now prepared, should war break out, to take immediate action and to commence operations at a few days' notice.

British Journal of Tuberculosis.

A new monthly journal which will appear in January, and which promises to be a great success, is the *British Journal of Tuberculosis*, edited by Dr. T. N. Kelynack, and published by Messrs. Balliere, Tindall and Cox, 8, Henrietta Street, W.C. The price is: Single copies, 1s. 6d.; Annual Subscription, 5s. post free. Amongst the contributors to the first number are Professor Clifford Allbutt, Professor Osler and Sir Samuel Wilks.

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