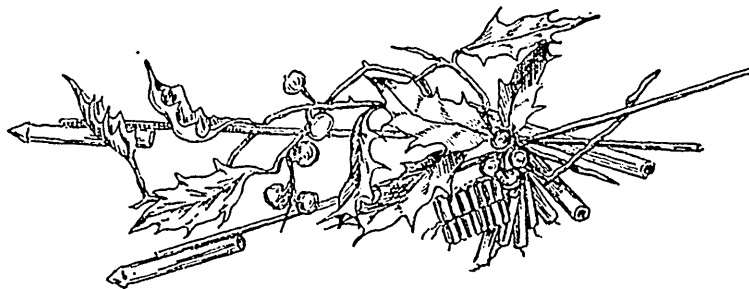


In many a household throughout the land joy reigned supreme that morning, but it is to be questioned whether one could have found anywhere a happier group than that which gathered about Aunt Italy's pine table for breakfast. The fragrant steam of strong coffee diffused throughout the apartment a long-absent aroma that mingled amicably with the smell of crisp bacon, done to a turn; while a smoking pile of yellow yams, roasted in the ashes, acceptably balanced a great platter of pone bread, wholesome and brown.



"Dar now, whut I done tole you?" demanded Patsy triumphantly, after having furtively inspected this unusual plenty during Unker Primus' solemn and somewhat lengthy grace. "Cain't nobody 'spute now dat if you put yo' 'pennunce on de Lawd, he ain' gwine back on you—Chris'mus ner no other time."

"De Gawd's trouf, chile!" affirmed Aunt Italy reverently. "En like de blessing en fullness of dis Chris'mus, good Lawd, sen' all de turrs!"

D. M. B.

## A BIRTHDAY CHARITY.

"Dora, what makes you look so sober?" inquired Mattie as she seated herself in her friend's parlor.

"Well, Mattie, I was induced to visit one of our hospitals this morning, and I have not been able to think of anything else since."

"Aren't you sorry you went, dear?" asked Mattie sympathetically.

"Sorry? No, indeed! I am ashamed to think how utterly indifferent I have always been to such matters, when there are so many friendless ones who are sick or wounded, and so many noble souls who give their lives to the care and relief of such sufferers."

"I suppose I shall soon hear that you have turned nurse," answered Mattie with a little laugh.

"No," said Dora. "I fear Nature never intended me for a nurse. But seriously, Mattie, there are some charity patients at the hospital whose cases are so pitiful. Of course, they receive good care, but there are so many things they need to make them entirely comfortable, and one really requires constant attendance, but naturally cannot have the full attention of any of the hospital nurses; and I have been wondering how I could raise enough money to be of any sort of use to them. Have you any suggestions to make?"

At this point Dora's sister, Mary, entered the room.

"Oh, Dora," she exclaimed, after greeting Mattie, "we opened our birthday box to-day, and we had three dollars!"

"And what is the birthday box, pray tell?" asked Mattie.

"Why, don't you know?" answered Mary. "Every time one of us girls in the sewing class has a birthday, she puts in as many cents as she is years old, and once a year we open the box and use the money for some good object."

"Ah, I see," said Mattie.

"There," exclaimed Dora, "that gives me an idea; just wait till I have developed it a little, and you shall hear more about it."

Dora's idea proved so full of promise that she determined to carry it out upon a grand scale. She went with it to her aunt, whose elegant home was a source of delight to all who visited it; and together they decided upon the details of the plan.

"A Birthday Charity" was announced in the local newspapers

to be given at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Blank on a certain evening. Every one would be welcomed to the house and spacious grounds; and to as many as possible bags would be sent, in each of which the recipient was requested to place as many cents as the

birthdays which he or she had already passed. Any one who failed to receive a bag would be equally welcome; and would such persons kindly donate twenty-five cents on passing through the gate of the grounds? All money received from these sources to be used for the benefit of inmates of the Hospital. This notice was printed free of expense in all the papers.

Next came the making, marking and delivering of the bags, for which work there was a large force of volunteers. The bags were made of all sorts of materials and in a variety of shapes and sizes, but all were tastefully designed and neatly constructed. Upon each was pinned a paper which read as follows:

"Please place within as many cents as you have had birthdays, for the benefit of the inmates of ——— Hospital."

A pleasant programme was planned for the evening, many prominent artists offering their services gratuitously; so that the entertainment was really worth more than the small sum requested for admission.

The day after Mattie called upon Dora to talk over the affair, which she had been tireless in helping to make a success.

"Wasn't it splendid!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, it was a success from every point of view," Dora responded; "and, of course, you want to know how much money we raised."

"I should say so," said Mattie emphatically.

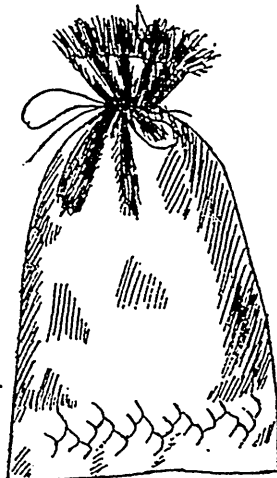
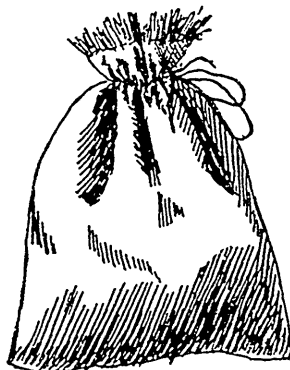
"Well, we have three hundred dollars!"

"Good!" replied Mattie. "I am so glad."

"Yes," said Dora, "I am all impatience to see it used for those three sufferers who need it so much, and I expect auntie every moment now; she is going with me to the hospital this morning."

Dora's idea was taken up by others, as all successes are, and was made profitable on a less extensive scale by more than one church and society.

J. D. C.



SOME OF THE BAGS.