

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

## THE SNOW-STORM.

The old Earth, lying bare and cold  
Beneath the winter sky,  
Beheld the storm-king marshal forth  
His battle force on high.  
"Ah! soon," she said, "beneath the snow  
Full warmly I shall lie

The wind unfurled his banners  
And rushed into the fray,  
The round moon hid her jolly face  
Within a cloud of gray,  
And not one single star peeped out  
To drive the gloom away.

The snow, encamped behind a cloud,  
Sent flying here and there  
Its white-winged heralds to proclaim  
Its presence in the air;  
Until, at last, the fairy host  
Burst from its cloudy lair.

The snowflakes rushing downward,  
Each in a whirling dance,  
Before the winds are driven  
Like armies by the lance;  
But still upon the waiting Earth  
The shining hosts advance.

The wild wind, shrieking as he goes,  
Flies fiercely to and fro,  
And strives, with all his mighty force,  
To sweep away the snow;  
But bravely still the soft flakes fall  
Upon the Earth below.

All white and swift it settles down,  
Though Boreas howl and storm,  
Till soft as Summer's green the robe  
It folds about her form;  
No drapery of leaf and flower  
Could make the Earth so warm.

It charges with no battle-cry;  
But pure, and soft, and still,  
It falls upon the waiting Earth,  
Its promise to fulfil;  
And foils the angry shrieking wind  
By force of gentle will.

The foe has furled his banners,  
And hastened from the fray;  
The round moon peeps with jolly face  
From out the cloud of gray;  
And all the stars come twinkling out  
To see who gained the day.

There all the earth lay shining,  
In garments pure and white;  
The snow fulfilled its mission,  
And conquering in the fight,  
Had warmed the old Earth to the heart,  
Beneath its mantle white.

—January St. Nicholas.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

## CHRISTMAS.

AT THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN, TORONTO.

Christmas, and Santa Claus are inseparably connected, in the minds of most children, whether sick or well. And it is almost needless to say, that the thirty-two patients at the Hospital for Sick Children, were no exception to the general rule. For weeks, kind friends had been preparing pleasant surprises for the children, and though the Christmas tree still held, suspended from its evergreen branches, its precious fruitage, until the Thursday following, Christmas day itself was one of unmitigated pleasure and satisfaction. As soon as it was light in the wards, when the bright eyes of convalescents, and the heavy languid ones of ailing children, were unclosed, they rested on a mysterious parcel, lying upon the pillow of each little cot, which when opened was found to contain a pretty Christmas card, a small stocking of "goodies," and a real Christmas letter, the gift of the ladies of the Flower Mission. Parents and relatives were allowed the pleasure of placing in the care of the Matron their gifts, who put them

under the pillows of the loved ones, when asleep, and for those who were friendless, loving hands had prepared special gifts, so, that no little heart would be disappointed on the birthday of Jesus, our Saviour.

One band of Sabbath school children in M—— and another in O—— had sent toys and books from their own treasured store, and these materially helped the Committee in arranging something for each one.

The Christmas dinner was an event. It was contributed, prepared, and served by Miss B——, and a few of her young lady friends. Three times, now, Miss B—— has visited the hospital on Christmas day for the purpose of preparing and giving to the children a Christmas dinner. The well boys and girls who read the PRESBYTERIAN will be glad to know that many of the patients were able to sit down at the tables which were spread in the wards, and but few were sufficiently ill to be denied the pleasure of partaking, at least sparingly, of the good cheer so kindly provided for them.

The afternoon was enlivened with games and sports intermingled with many earnest little talks about the Babe born so many hundred years ago in Bethlehem, who came to save us from sin, and who, when He grew to be a man, loved children, saying to them so tenderly: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

But, though Christmas had been so pleasant, much anxiety was expressed about the quick arrival of Thursday, there were many nods and whisperings in quiet corners, and wee hearts were full almost to bursting with anticipations concerning the mysterious tree, and its heavily laden branches. At last the long expected Thursday afternoon came, and all the preparations were complete. A little daughter of Mr. H—— personated the fairy sprite, whose pleasing duty it was to dispense the gifts, and as with fleet step (greatly assisted by a pair of silver wings which sprung from her shoulders) she flew from bed to bed, untying with nimble fingers very suggestive looking parcels, little shrieks of surprise and delight filled the wards, and the onlooker of mature years was reminded of days long since gone. The Hospital Christmas tree was a wonderful one. Old St. Nicholas (in the person of Miss M——, the ever kind friend of the children) had evidently been in a generous frame of mind when he drew rein at the hospital door, perhaps he thought that he must in some way compensate the sufferers inside for days and nights of sleeplessness and pain, or perhaps the graceful fairy, with silver wings, who distributed the gifts, possessed the power of transforming, with her wondrous wand, evergreen twigs into books, dolls, horses, balls, etc. At anyrate, it seemed as though the tree would never be stripped, and each child received, not one, but many presents.

Generous boys and girls will be glad to know that several of these sick children have already given to poor brothers and sisters at home, who through poverty, or the vice of parents, were without a Christmas gift, one or more from their full store.

The writer passed through the wards about an hour after the tree had been dismantled, and the tour was at once, amusing and saddening. One convalescent boy was spinning three tops, all going at once, for three bed-ridden chaps; while a little girl of weak intellect was hugging tightly in her arms, and cooing softly to it, a big blue eyed dolly. Young B——, a stirring lad, had dexterously taken apart his "jumping jack," that he might "find the jump," and in an adjoining bed, another chap was preparing to follow his example, and dissect his kaleidoscope, in order to "see the see."

As we looked in at the door of the small girls' ward, we were surprised to find all dear little Maggie's presents untouched on the table, and the child lying quietly, with her face turned to the wall; stooping over her with questioning look, the dark eyes were upturned for an instant, and to our mute appeal, the quiet patient answer came—"only anuzzer abscess." As we turned to go out, we met the good Matron, Miss F——, with a huge basket on her arm, gathering up the bags of candy, which were to be placed in the care of the nurses, and dispensed, daily, with a view to the physical state of each patient.

Little Janey, about whom some of you have heard, still lives, but, is gradually growing weaker and weaker, she is at home now with her parents. Sometimes death comes to the Hospital for Sick Children, a few weeks ago little Etta, was taken, but she was quite ready and willing to go, and we know that she is keeping a long, long, happy Christmas in the heavenly land, and that she will ever be with Jesus.

But we must not forget to mention the gift which a sweet young girl in Nova Scotia sent to the hospital before she died. She had read about the Hospital for Sick Children, in a Sunday school paper, and when dying, desired her mother to give part of her little fortune, the sum of fifty dollars, to this institution. The ladies who manage the hospital have decided to take some poor neglected sick child, and care for it with this precious gift, as this amount will keep a cot, for at least six months.

And now we must close this little history, wishing all our readers a merry Christmas and a bright New Year; and hoping that they may always have hearts full of sympathy and tenderness, for those who are sick and afflicted. "I was sick and ye visited Me."—L. J. H.

## WHAT RELIGION DID FOR A LITTLE GIRL.

Religion helps children to study better and to do more faithful work. A little girl of twelve was telling, in a simple way, the evidence that she was a Christian. "I did not like to study, but to play. I was idle at school, and often missed my lessons. Now I try to learn every lesson well to please God. I was mischievous at school when the teachers were not looking at me, making fun for the children to laugh at. Now I wish to please God by behaving well and keeping the school laws. I was selfish at home; didn't like to run errands, and was sulky when mother called me from play to help her in work. Now it is a real joy to me to help mother in any way, and to show that I love her."

Such a religion is essential to the best interest and moral growth of youth, and will make life sunny and cheerful.