

## Nan's Story.

TOLD IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

"TELL a story!" says you. Wait a bit.  
Let me see;  
It was Crismiss. The shops was all bright  
With holly and flags, and a gell, dressed in  
rags,  
Who'd been starin' at sight after sight,  
Turn'd to creep home away as the evenin'  
fell grey,  
And the lamps was beginnin' to light.

Nan, they called her. She'd got a good  
mother, like mine,  
Though more pale-like, an' sickly, an'  
sad;  
An' a father, but he warn't as kind as  
might be  
To his wife, and the gell that they had.  
He was given to drink, an' sometimes, as I  
think,  
It druv 'im arf crazy an' mad.

Well, this Nan hurried home to the garret  
she knowed  
Would be fireless an' bitter with cold;  
But no mother was there when she climbed  
the steep stair,  
An' so, feelin' quite weary and old,  
She strayed down just as far as the Pelican  
bar  
That was shinin' with green and with  
gold.

There was plenty of loafers a-standin' outside,  
An' the public was full to the brim;  
Then above all the noise comes the sound of  
a voice  
As she knowed was belongin' to him:  
An' she ketches a sight of a face worn an'  
white,  
With sad eyes, that leag cryin' made dim.

It was mother persuadin' of Dad to come  
'ome.  
"Don't she wish she may get him!" says  
ono:  
"Hullo, mate, hullo! 'Ere's a bit of a row!  
Close in, an' let's look at the sun!"  
But Nan wriggles before, an' gits close the  
door  
As the clucked ones come out with a run.

An' the fust was her Dad, leg'lar orful an'  
mad,  
An' offerin' to mull all the lot;  
An' her mother was there, with torn bonnit  
an' hair  
That was loosed from its trim tidy knot.  
Seems her prayers made him worse, for he  
turned with a curse  
An' struck at her, heavy an' hot!

Then the people cried "Shame!" an' he  
bade 'em come on,  
For to tackle the crowd he was fain;  
Then this Nan feels her heart begin thump-  
in' right smart,  
An' forgittin' her fear in her pain,  
Rushes in, grabs his knees, an' cries "Daddy,  
oh please,  
Don't ye go to hit mother again!"

"For 'tis Crismiss!" she cries, an' looks up  
in his eyes,  
As he clenched his big fist for a blow;  
Then—the lights seemed to whirl and the  
big world to twirl  
As a roundabout spins at a show.  
She was down in the street, midst the  
trampin' feet,  
An' the freeze of the half-melted snow.

Oh, to sleep in the cold, to wake up in the  
warm  
Of a beautiful lily-white bed!  
With a tall gent an' grand to be holdin' your  
hand,  
An' a kind lady bathin' your head!  
'Twas wot happened to Nan. When to  
speak she began,  
"Is this heaven?" was the first thing she  
said.

An' the gentleman smiled at the poor little  
gell:

"No, my child; this ain't heaven," says  
he;

"But a place where they cure the sick  
children wot's poor,  
And everything's gratis and free.  
You've a cut on your head, and your leg's  
broke," he said,  
"But we'll mend it, as quick as may be!"

An' she slept by-an'-by, and there came  
such a dream  
Of an angel in velvets and fur;  
But without any wings, who brought beauti-  
ful things,  
Sweets and playthin's an' pictures to her:  
An' spoke of the love as came down from  
above,  
In a way was like music to yer!

Then she lifted her eyes an' most shrieked  
in surprise  
For mother was standin' just here—  
Lookin' down at her Nan with a smile as  
began  
As a smile, an' left off in a tear.  
O, she never had knowed how the longin'  
had growed  
To see the dear face till 'twas near!

An' she put out her arms, as they hugged  
there a bit,  
Was there ever a meetin' more glad?  
Then says Nan, "Will you take, for your  
little gell's sake,  
Just a bit of a message to Dad?  
He's real sorry, I know, that he hurted me  
so;  
For it's only in drink that he's bad!"

"An' I wot he was here in this beautiful  
place,  
Where all trouble and worrit seems o'er;  
For no more he'd speak rough, or get drunk  
on the stuff  
That the gin-shops sells cheap to the  
poor!"

Then she turns her head round, an' her 'art  
giv' a bound;  
Dad was standin' just inside the door!

An' he draws his sleeve over his face, an'  
comes near,  
An' stoops over the cot where she lies.  
An' he lugs from his coat a new dolly  
dressed out  
In the fashion, with starin' blue eyes!  
"You'll forgive me, my kid, for the wrong  
that I did,  
For I no'er meant to hurt ye!" he cries.

"An' your mother an' me we've made up,  
gal, says he,  
"An' I've promised to wipe out the stain  
Of the black by-gone years, wi' their hunger  
an' tears,  
And I'll strive to with might an' with  
main!"

For the pledge I have took, an' swore hard  
on the Book,  
That I'll never touch liquor again!"

There's the end of the tale, sir. It's long,  
an' I'm tired,  
Though I wasn't when first I began  
The adventures to tell of a poor little gell  
Like myself, to a grand gentleman.  
Here's my doll: see her dress? Laws a me!  
Can't you guess!  
I'm her—that identical Nan!  
—Illustrated London Truth.

THE common puff-ball very strik-  
ingly illustrates the rapidity with  
which fungi may multiply. It is said  
that 300 years would be required for  
a man to count the spores of a single  
ball, if possible to continue counting  
day and night for that time. Yet a  
favourably planted spore will produce  
a plant as large as the double fist in a  
single night.

## THE OLD PLATE.

DID an old plate ever make my  
little reader uncomfortable or afraid?  
"No, of course not," you say; "who  
was ever made uncomfortable or afraid  
by an old plate!" Well, I was once.  
Let me tell you about it.

When I was a little boy, an old  
plate used to hang on the wall, tied  
'p with a piece of string; and often  
when I went into the room in which  
it was placed, and saw it, I would turn  
my eyes away, and look at something  
else; for there were words printed on  
that old plate which at times quite  
frightened me. What could they be?  
Four words only; and little words  
which the youngest of my readers I  
think w'd understand: "Thou God  
Seest Me."

Often I had lost my temper, and  
had spoken words untrue, and had dis-  
obeyed my parents, and I did not like  
to think that the eye of God was ever  
watching me. I was a sinner, and  
though many of my naughty words  
and deed were known to those around  
me, yet many things which I had  
done, and which I knew were wrong,  
had never been found out; but that  
old plate, with its solemn words,  
"Thou, God, seest me," ever reminded  
me that there was One from whom I  
could keep no secret.

My dear little reader, do you know  
that there is not one word, or thought,  
or look, or deed of yours but the holy,  
sin-hating God knows all about it!  
You have never been out of his sight.  
Perhaps when mother or father have  
been out, you have done something or  
other of which you have never told  
them. But God knows all about it.  
He needs no one to tell him, for he  
ever watches you, and he knows how  
sinful you are. And yet I have such  
"good news" for you; for the holy,  
holy, holy God, who sees both you and  
me, and everybody else, has "so loved  
the world that he gave his only be-  
gotten Son, that whosoever believeth  
in him should not perish, but have  
everlasting life." It is a solemn thing  
to know God sees us; but how blessed  
it is to know that he loves us, and  
gave his only Son, whom he loved so  
much, and who had always been with  
him, to come down into this world full  
of sinners, like you and me, and to die  
such an awful death upon the cross,  
so that sinners might be saved, and  
be made fit to be with the Lord Jesus  
in heaven.

I have, since I began to tell you  
about this, been up into the room  
where that old plate now hangs, and  
have looked again at those words,  
"Thou, God, seest me;" and now, in-  
stead of making me feel unhappy,  
those very words bring brightness and  
joy. I am glad now that the eye of  
God is ever upon me; for now I know  
that all my sins have been washed  
away by the precious blood of Jesus  
Christ, and that I shall never perish,  
for I do believe on him; and though  
I remember the sins which I have

done, yet God says he will remember  
them no more. And, more than this,  
I know that he is my Father, and  
loves me so much that I delight to be  
in his sight.

PLAYTHINGS OF THE INDIAN  
CHILDREN.

THE Indian children, living in their  
wigwams in the west of the United  
States and Canada, love playthings as  
well as other children. The boys play  
with bows and arrows, and the girls  
with dolls or substitutes for them.  
The dolls are of rags, with faces  
painted on them, and daubed with  
streaks of red in a style admired by  
them. To these, however, they prefer  
a live plaything, or a "meat baby," as  
the little girl once said; so they make  
pets of ravens, young eagles and pup-  
pies. A young Indian girl is often  
seen with the wise head of one of these  
birds or the fat, round face of a puppy  
sticking out of her blanket behind.  
They also imitate the life of their  
mothers, and rig an arrangement with  
two poles crossed on the back of a dog,  
as the squaws do on the back of a  
horse, on which queer vehicle they  
carry jars of water or anything they  
choose. The babies of the Indians,  
strapped into their cradles, play with  
the dangling strings of beads or other  
articles which are hung before their  
faces to make them squint, that being  
considered a great beauty.

The Esquimaux children have toys  
in plenty, and they are twice as useful  
as our toys, for making them enter-  
tains and occupies the parents, and  
playing with them does the same for  
the children. From ivory they carve  
the animals of their country—bears,  
wolves, foxes, geese, gulls, walruses,  
seals and whales. These are quite  
small—none three inches long, and  
some not more than one inch,—but so  
well carved that the animal is easily  
recognized.

## BOYS OF BULGARIA.

DURING the celebrated defence of  
Shipka Pass by the Bulgarian Legion,  
assailed with the greatest fury by the  
Turkish forces under Suliman Pasha,  
the brave Bulgarians were almost  
entirely surrounded by the Turks.

Water had to be carried to the  
famous defenders of the pass over a  
field which was swept by the enemy's  
rifles. Bulgarian lads volunteered for  
this perilous mission of mercy, carrying  
water to the fighting and the wounded  
men. It is related that when a water-  
jar in the arms of a Bulgarian boy was  
shattered by a rifle-ball, instead of  
rejoicing over his own wonderful escape,  
the child wept for the spilling of the  
cooling water so much needed by the  
suffering soldiers.

Are not such boys worth teaching?  
such souls worth saving?

I, w, while the gaze of the nations  
is drawn toward Bulgaria, let us learn  
about, think about and help her brave  
boys.