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Incurables & Humour

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INCURABLES



&

HUMOUR

RHN/FU/2/3/26

INCURABLES
& HUMOUR

CHRISTMAS, 1920



SOME THINGS ARE OF THAT NATURE AS TO MAKE ONE'S FANCY CHUCKLE
WHILE HIS HEART DOTH ACHE.

Bunyan.

WHAT IS HUMOUR ?



HUMOUR has justly been regarded as the finest perfection of poetic genius. He who lacks it, be his other gifts what they may, has only half a mind; an eye for what is above him, not for what is about him or below him.

Carlyle

HUMOUR is the sort of inverse sublimity, exalting, as it were, into our affections what is below us, while sublimity draws down into our affections what is above us.

Carlyle

HUMOUR is consistent with pathos, while wit is not.

Coleridge

HUMOUR is of a genial quality and is closely allied to pity.

Henry Giles

HUMOUR is the mistress of tears.

HUMOUR is wit and love.

Thackeray

HUMOUR, warm and all-embracing as the sunshine, bathes its objects in a genial and abiding light.

Whipple

HUMOUR is the harmony of the heart.

Douglas Jerrold

SOME things are of that nature as to make one's fancy chuckle while his heart doth ache.

Bunyan

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In Memoriam.

RATHER THAN SPEND MONEY ON THE ERECTION OF MEMORIAL STONES OR WINDOWS, WHY NOT COMMEMORATE THE PRECIOUS MEMORY OF THOSE DEAR TO YOU BY GIVING MONEY FOR NAMING IN PERPETUITY A BED OR A WARD AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY, A MEANS WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY BE A LASTING TRIBUTE TO THE DEPARTED, BUT ALSO PROVIDE THE ADDITIONAL MERIT OF AFFORDING RELIEF TO THOSE WHO ARE WORTHY OBJECTS FOR SUCH PRACTICAL SYMPATHY. A BED WILL BE NAMED IN PERPETUITY FOR THE SUM OF £1,000. A PENSION FOR AN INCURABLE WILL BE NAMED IN PERPETUITY FOR THE SUM OF £500.

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I bequeath to THE ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY, the sum of £ , free of duty, to be paid, together with the duty thereon, out of such part of my estate as can be lawfully bequeathed for charitable purposes, and to be applicable to the general purposes of such Institution, and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer or other proper officer for the time being of such Institution shall be a sufficient discharge for the same.

N.B.—By virtue of the "Mortmain and Charitable Uses Act, 1891," land may now be devised to a Charity, but it is liable to be sold within one year from the death of the Testator.

INCURABLES & HUMOUR

"Occasionally, when Sister thinks I am looking so happy that I must be hysterical, she induces a touch of morbidity by giving me a hospital periodical to read."

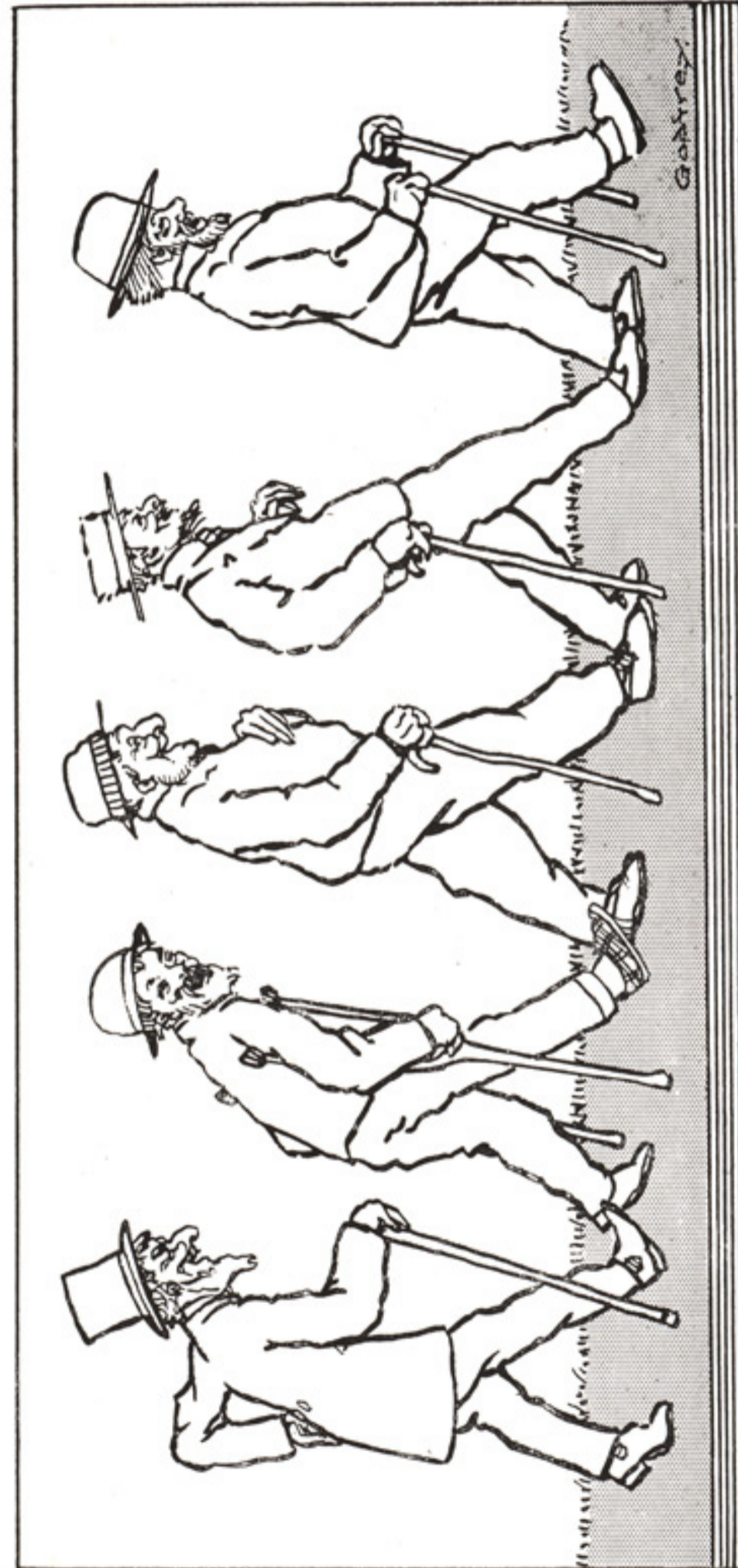
YOU have heard the tale of the cruel man who caught two squirrels and put them into a rusty parrot cage. One of the squirrels lost all self-control and knocked itself about so much that a speedy and painful death resulted, caused by its frantic efforts to escape, and its refusal to eat, while the other assumed a resigned air and ate the food supplied, seeming so tame that the cruel man opened the cage door and allowed the occupant in and about the garden, whence it very naturally took its departure without any trouble.

The moral of this little tale (there is always a tiresome moral) is that we should endeavour to make the best of things, for therein lies the secret of freedom and happiness. In this spirit we get glimpses of the brighter side of life and can accept the association of Incurability and Humour without any suspicion of mockery.

Yet to some sensitive readers the title of this little book may appear quite a ghastly joke. "INCURABLES AND HUMOUR"! What can be the connection?

Still, to those who can appreciate it, humour is to be found even in the most desperate conditions. For instance, we have had ample evidence of humour in the awful conditions of our men in the trenches. "Ole Bill" and his "Better 'Ole" have become classic. It requires a really Incurable Mark Tapley to see humour and the brighter side in perpetual adversity.

Supposing that Mark Tapley had become afflicted with an incurable disease; say that on his sojourn in swamps of the New World he had contracted Rheumatoid Arthritis, as he very probably did, and, after cheerfully struggling through the disappointments of four or five elections, he at last found himself a patient in the then Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables. What an ideal patient he would have made!



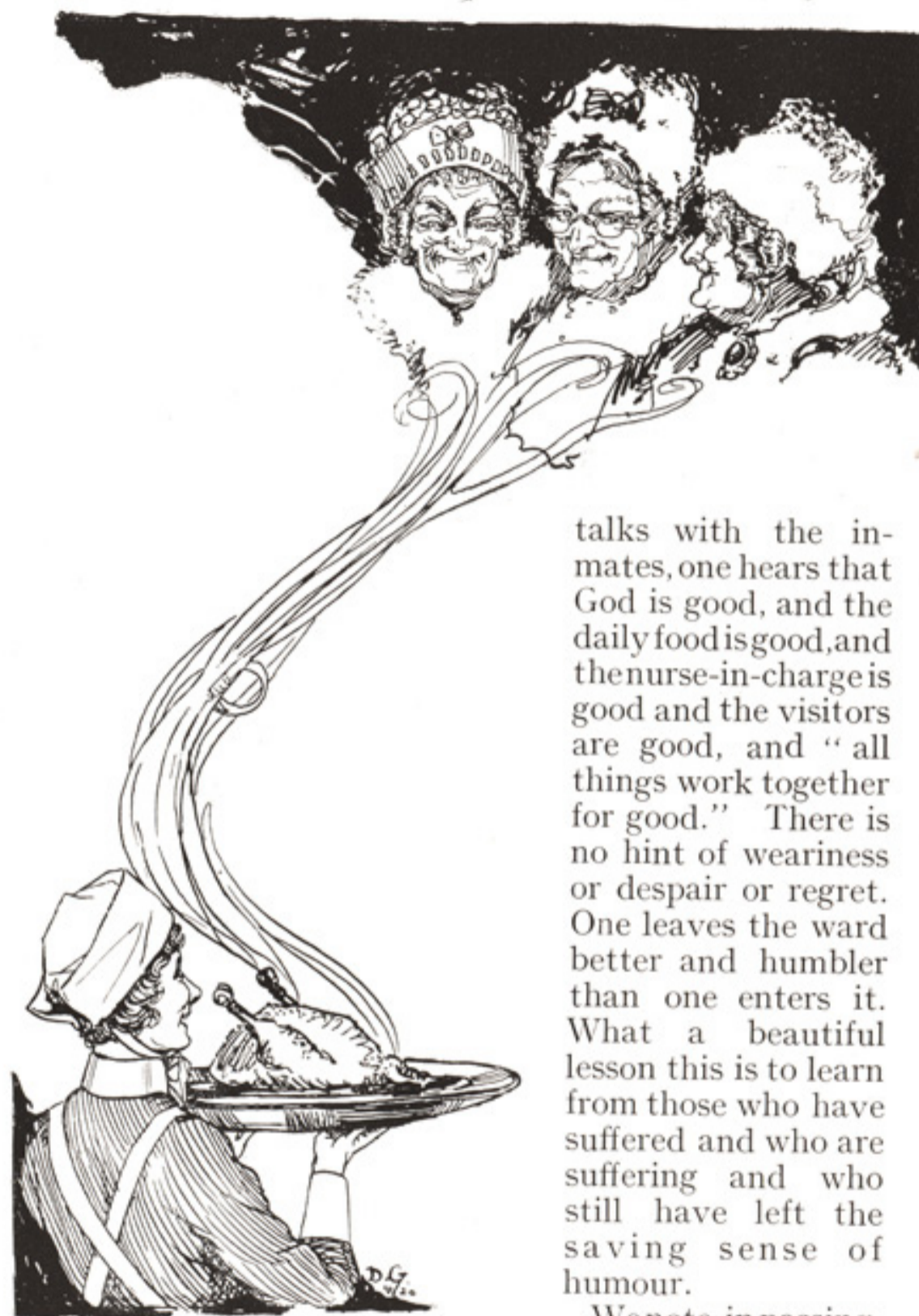
THERE IS A CONTINUOUS SUCCESSION OF MARK TAPLEYS HEREDITARY IN THE INSTITUTION.

We have had, and have, Mark Tapleys as patients ; and their good humour, and readiness and determination to see the humour in the inevitable, leave the good seed behind them, good, which might, without this great quality of humour, have been interred with their bones.

We believe that there is a continuous succession of Mark Tapleys, hereditary in the Institution, rewarding those who seek to help them with a cheerful appreciation and a real gratitude which are evident in their bearing, constituting an outstanding feature of the best of our patients at Putney.

We ask readers who are connoisseurs in humorous matters not to expect too much from these simple jottings. So long as George Meredith's lecture, delivered at the London Institution on 1st February, 1877, "On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit," is available, there can be no credit in this quarter in attempting vainly to improve upon it. These pages are only intended for those who care for mild fun, and who are not uninterested in learning something about the side issues that are bound up with, and inseparable from, a big Hospital and Home for Incurables.

Some of the wards (there are over sixty) at the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables have been christened with an unofficial name. For instance, the name printed over the door may be "Victoria," or "Elizabeth," but the character of those who occupy the beds therein has become famous among the other patients and the nursing staff, and a special name, descriptive of the tone of "humour" of the ward, has been bestowed upon it. There is one ward that is known as "Sunshine Trap" because the bright side of things is always enlarged upon by the happy and contented souls who lie there year in and year out, bearing bravely and serenely all the physical ills that are their lot in this life. If one enters "Sunshine Trap" and



THE DAILY FOOD IS GOOD.

talks with the inmates, one hears that God is good, and the daily food is good, and the nurse-in-charge is good and the visitors are good, and "all things work together for good." There is no hint of weariness or despair or regret. One leaves the ward better and humbler than one enters it. What a beautiful lesson this is to learn from those who have suffered and who are suffering and who still have left the saving sense of humour.

We note, in passing, one of the many requests we receive, such as this —

"Could you let me have a copy of the Rules and Regulations for Ladies wishing to enter your Home by return of post."

That is a word for word (and comma for comma)

copy of a note sent by a lady who lives in a big house in a well-known West-end square. It is but a specimen of hundreds.



LADIES WISHING TO ENTER YOUR HOME BY RETURN OF POST.

We need hardly for the decoration of these few pages go through the bulky Complaint Book for the year

1870, in which we might find many entries such as the following :—

“ Complaint from five or six of the male patients as to over-heating of the sitting-rooms and not regulating the weather by the thermometer.”

One of the first paragraphs in a recent Annual Report, published by this Institution, was the following :—

“ Any letters this morning ? ” said a husband at the breakfast table. “ Only some circulars and a dreary report from a Hospital,” answered his wife. . . . Such, perhaps, is the average reception of the average hospital report, but the Board of Management of the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, claim that this, the sixty-fourth Annual Report, faulty, as it may be, is not ‘ dreary.’ An Annual Report is only necessary to inform interested friends, and because men forget while books remember. The Board realise that the public is quickly bored by the report of mere facts and figures, and that there is nowhere a genuine enthusiasm for the commonplace.”

This harmless but perhaps boastful statement (for we think it may be boastful to claim that one’s work is not “ dreary ”) brought from a fine old English gentleman, who is also a fine old friend, a long letter in which he declared : “ The aim of an Annual Report should be instruction, not recreation.”

Our reply was to the effect that one would like to think anything worthy of existence as worthy also of being treated pleasantly ; that the magic of transformation is not always done in a frivolous mood ; that we have not discovered the secret of perfection ; that the temperament of the reader of an annual report is something beyond our control, and, finally, that everything written criticises itself.

With the November voting-papers last year a leaflet

bearing this message was sent :—

“ For the sake of illustration, let us suppose that you are seated alone in a railway compartment. Your train is just drawing out from the outskirts of a busy town in the Midlands. You have the prospect of a two-hour non-stop run to London. On glancing through the carriage window you see on a deserted canal bank an ill-dressed woman, carrying an infant. Suddenly she stops and flings the helpless little child into the grimy water. You witness the tragedy with horror. What can you do? The child is there in the water, eight feet from the bank, and the woman is running away. What are your feelings? . . . Yet there are in England some Incurables who are just as helpless as that poor infant struggling in the murky canal. The Incurables' end may be more distant, but they are in grave danger, and have been flung upon the tender mercy of others. Will you not think about them and help them? Pull the communication cord by sending a cheque to the ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY.”

The response to this was about £1,500, sent to our grateful Treasurer on a specially printed remittance form appended to the message. When this successful result of an apparently artless plea reached the ears of an interested and kindly critic, he wrote :—

“ I shall not be surprised if the Board decide to erect a handsome tombstone over the grave of the unhappy infant who was flung in the murky canal, and to arrange for the ill-dressed mother of the ch-e-e-ld to enter a Home for two years preparatory to going to Putney as a member of the domestic staff.”

Our friend in this instance was solemnly reminded that there was no discoverable record of the infant's death, and that quite possibly a rescuer arrived in time and obtained admission to a suitable orphanage for the poor little mite, who will perhaps live and prosper and set a good example to all by becoming a liberal benefactor to this National Charity.

At every half-yearly Election it is necessary for the office staff to work early and late. The rush of addressing the thousands upon thousands of voting-papers, of carefully checking every one before it is posted, of classifying them when they are returned, of answering scores of letters daily, of seeing callers, of keeping abreast with the ordinary clerical work, and of avoiding anything in the shape of muddle, is not an easy matter. But some of our subscribers are not always thoughtful or helpful.

The telephone bell rings on the morning of Election day, just as the clerks are about to go over in a body to the Cannon Street Hotel, where the election is held.

LADY'S VOICE : Are you there ?

OFFICE : Yes.

LADY : Is that the Incurables ?

OFFICE : Yes.

LADY : Did you get my voting-paper ?

OFFICE : What name, please ?

LADY : Miss Notjohn.

OFFICE : I suppose your voting-paper has come, if you posted it.

LADY : Well, that's the point. I am not sure if I did, or whether I mislaid it.

OFFICE : Then, what can we do ?

LADY : What do you suggest ?

OFFICE : I am afraid we can do nothing.

LADY : Cannot you go through the papers you have received ?

OFFICE : It would take our staff some hours to do that.

LADY : Well, don't you remember getting it ?

OFFICE : I am afraid not. About eight thousand voting-papers are here already.

LADY : How tiresome.

OFFICE : Very sorry—goodbye !

Another election incident is not without its humorous side. It took place in the Great Hall of the Cannon Street Hotel. Part of the Board of Management—about ten of them—were sitting behind a long table on the extreme side of the Hall. Suddenly, a burly gentleman, somewhat out of breath, manages

to elbow his way to the table:—

GENTLEMAN (angrily): Is the Secretary here?

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD: Yes.

SECRETARY (timidly and perhaps fearing something terrible): Now, Sir, can I do anything for you?

GENTLEMAN: I'll see that you do something for me.

SECRETARY: That seems clear enough.

GENTLEMAN (flourishing some papers): What do you mean by returning this voting-paper to me with a rude letter?

SECRETARY: Was my letter rude?

GENTLEMAN: Rude, Sir, it was abominably rude: it was ignorant and vulgar into the bargain.

SECRETARY: May I look at the letter?

GENTLEMAN (still feverishly flourishing papers): Look at it. You ought to be ashamed of it. I want to vote for the case of Downsome, and you tell me—

SECRETARY (taking papers): You are in the wrong room, Sir. The election you want is going on in the Pillar Hall upstairs.

Fifty years ago, the wife of a member of the House Committee visited the Hospital with her husband and little rosy-faced boy. On reaching the main Entrance Hall, the child begged his father to allow him to accompany him to the committee-room as he did not want to go to any of the wards with his mother. In spite of opposition, the boy had his way. All went well for a time, and then a friendly argument arose between the boy's father and another member of the committee, who tapped the table and raised his voice in his earnest and emphatic conviction as to his views being beyond doubt the only right ones. Whereupon the small boy exclaimed in a piping voice: "What a naughty man! Smack him, Daddy."

I don't know (writes a male patient) quite why it should be so, but everybody in the Hospital seems to



WHAT A NAUGHTY MAN! SMACK HIM, DADDY.

confide in me from time to time. Perhaps, it is because I am such an old chronic that I seem to have



POSSIBLY MY WHISKERS GIVE ME A MISLEADING AIR OF BENEVOLENCE.

become part and parcel of the Institution ; or possibly my whiskers give me a misleading air of benevolence.

The other day a member of the House Committee stopped at my bed and solemnly advised me to get my traps packed, as he had no doubt all the patients would shortly be discharged, the whole income of the Home being now required to pay the nursing staff. He added, with an outburst of cynical mirth, that the Home is now being run by the College of Nursing.

Light was thrown on his attitude by a conversation I had subsequently with two of the nurses, who, when they were making my bed, told me with refreshing candour that they had had another increase of salary. They laughingly explained how it was achieved. "Matron gets hold of the Chairman," they said, with sparkling eyes, "and tells him how she can't get nurses because the Hospital doesn't pay as much as the College of Nursing thinks it ought to. She shows him a pamphlet which lays down a scale of salaries according to the number of beds in the Hospital. The poor gentleman is flabbergasted, and makes but a feeble resistance." I nodded. "Is it the statistics or the feminine influence that overcomes him?" I asked. "Both," they replied, "and the consequence is," they went on, "that first Matron gets a rise, and then, presently, the sisters get a rise, and later on the staff nurses get a rise, and, finally, *we* get a rise. Then by that time the College of Nursing has raised the scale, and the process begins over again."

We can only say by way of comment on this nurse's remarks that her version of the subject will not bear strict investigation.

At the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables there are four invalids who in nearly all weathers sit out on a verandah in their wheel-chairs because their disabled bodies are more comfortable when in the open air. Their sufferings do not vanish entirely in the open air, but they are less severe. The other patients have named their four courageous sisters "The Four Dreadnoughts." As a rule, those who have earned nicknames are allowed to sprinkle their remarks with audacity and humour ; they are known to be humorists and are recognised as such, and much is forgiven them.



THE POOR GENTLEMAN WAS FLABBERGASTED.

We receive hundreds of letters during the year from strangers who become friends and who are desirous of helping candidates. We once had nine communications in five days from a lady, who was most impatiently desirous of doing things quickly. Her first communication was a telegram asking if a certain candidate could be "admitted to the Hospital to-morrow!" We had to point out that that was not possible. The lady's letters became angrier and angrier for five days, but at last we managed to make the position clear to her, and she wrote a gracefully apologetic note, saying that she had not been very well and trusted that we would overlook her impetuosity. We replied by saying that everything had now been cleared up satisfactorily, and expressing regret for her illness and a sincere hope that her attack on us had relieved the tedium of her convalescence!

A young clergyman visited the City Offices on the morning after one of our half-yearly elections. He seemed impatient and inclined to be "injured." (It is inexcusable for young people to seem "injured.")

CLERK: Good morning, Sir.

CLERGYMAN: Is the Secretary in?

CLERK: Not at the moment.

CLERGYMAN (looking at his watch): Is it too early for him—eleven o'clock?

CLERK (smiling): Have you an appointment with him?

CLERGYMAN: No; why should I?

CLERK: I beg your pardon, I thought you wanted to see the Secretary?

CLERGYMAN: So I do. Why isn't he here?

CLERK: He happens to be somewhere else.

CLERGYMAN: How provoking! I've come all the way from Enfield on purpose to talk to him. Will he be here later on?

CLERK: He's not far away.

CLERGYMAN: Then I will go to him, if you will direct me.

CLERK: He is at the Mansion House, but you could not see him if you go there.

CLERGYMAN (crestfallen): Why did you not say so at first?

CLERK : Well, if I may presume to say so, you are scarcely entitled to such information, unless the Secretary breaks a duly-made appointment. Other people have some claim on his time.

CLERGYMAN : Perhaps you can tell me what I want to know ?

CLERK : I will try.

CLERGYMAN : Miss Emily Mathtay was one of the successful candidates for admission at yesterday's election, was she not ?

CLERK : Yes.

CLERGYMAN : Then why did she not receive an official communication from you this morning ?

CLERK : We do not post official communications on Election days. The names of the successful Candidates are advertised in the daily papers.

CLERGYMAN : How do you expect poor Incurable Invalids to read the newspapers ? Some of them cannot even see to read.

CLERK : We hope that their friends will inform them of the result.

CLERGYMAN : And if they do not ?

CLERK : We tell all Candidates that we will send them a Result of the Poll, but we cannot do it on the very day of the Election. We are this morning addressing hundreds of Result Sheets to Candidates and their friends. The Result Sheets were only printed during the night and delivered here this morning.

CLERGYMAN : Well, what I really want to know is when Miss Emily Mathtay can be received at Putney ?

CLERK : The Board of Management will decide that in due course.

CLERGYMAN : But I want to know now ; that is the object of my journey to London.

CLERK : I am sorry, but we cannot name the exact day yet.

CLERGYMAN : Do you mean to tell me that you cannot say which day Miss Mathtay can be admitted to the Hospital ?

CLERK : I do.

CLERGYMAN : I call it scandalous.

CLERK : Here is a printed result of yesterday's

polling, you will see that the poll was declared, subject to a scrutiny, if demanded from the Secretary, in writing, within seven days.



MR. BLANK MAKES MOST BEAUTIFUL STRAW HATS.

CLERGYMAN : What has that got to do with it ?

CLERK : It means that the Board will not take

any definite action with regard to dates for admission to the Hospital until the seven days have elapsed.

CLERGYMAN : Why ?

CLERK : Because it is possible, but not probable, that some Candidates, or those who have worked



SPORTS ARE ARRANGED BY THE CHAPLAIN AND THE STEWARD.

on their behalf, may think that there has been a miscount and that their Candidate should have been successful.

CLERGYMAN : I think I see the position. Good-morning.

One visitor to the Home, not so very long ago, wrote and explained that she had an excellent idea with regard to one of the patients. The idea was that as Mr. Blank made such beautiful straw hats and mats, etc., the House Committee ought to provide a small glass case containing specimens of Mr. Blank's workmanship for exhibition in the main entrance hall. The writer of the letter conveying this great idea went on to say that she had mentioned it to many of her friends, who all cordially endorsed her suggestion.

Our reply was to the effect that if the Committee provided one glass case for exhibition purposes, we should have to provide nearly two hundred glass cases, for at least one hundred and ninety among the patients do some handiwork or other. And, after all, the main responsibility of the Board of Management is to raise £50,000 a year with which to maintain the Institution, anxious and willing as they are to help the patients in earning a little pocket-money.

Garden parties are held during the summer months in the grounds of the Hospital, and sometimes Sports are arranged by the Chaplain and the Steward. Naturally, the Incurables themselves cannot take part, but they much enjoy seeing the members of the nursing staff and the male attendants and porters competing. On one of these occasions, at a tug-of-war between nurses and male attendants, the rope (quite an expensive one too) snapped suddenly. An onlooker (a patient) remarked that when in business she had often heard of the year's *turnover*—"but I'm sure it never equalled this one."

DEAR SIR,

I am not a subscriber to the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, but I have heard about its good work and it has occurred to me that some of the patients would like to have my little French bull-dog as a pet. He is rather old and feeble, and the veterinary surgeon says he ought to be

destroyed, as he suffers a good deal from bronchitis. But I cannot bear to think of him being destroyed, and it makes me sad to see him suffer so much. Could you not take him into your nice warm building? He would not cost much to keep, as his appetite is very poor. He was given to me by a famous French general who knew my mother, and I do so want to have an easy conscience



SUFFERS A GOOD DEAL FROM BRONCHITIS.

about him now that he is so poorly. I would gladly take him down to Putney, and I would have his little basket re-lined and leave it there.

Awaiting your early and kind reply,

Yours, etc.,

DEAR MADAM,

I regret to say that this Institution cannot accept your pet dog. May I suggest that you ring up "Victoria 3695."*

Yours, etc.,

* Dogs' Home.

On the 9th May, 1919, we received the following :—

" I would like to make you a sporting offer. My sister and self want to rent a small unfurnished house with three bedrooms and sanitation indoors, if you can get us one anywhere in a nice neighbourhood. My sister would give £1,000 towards the Incurables. We should be more than thankful if you could help us."

We immediately acknowledged this message, and with a view to securing the £1,000 we sent a brief paragraph to all the newspapers, informing the public of the offer made. Within a few days about nine hundred letters on the subject of the paragraph reached our City offices. In the meantime, however, the lady (who was living in Devonshire) wrote to us saying that she meant £10 os. od.—not £1,000!

At the City offices two or three lady shorthand-typists are employed. One day there was a tap at the door of the Secretary's private room, which is located behind the general office (sometimes he would get torn to pieces if too exposed), and one of the typists, a newcomer, announced :—

" If you please, there is a lady who wishes to see you. She is wearing an afternoon toilette of midnight blue duvetyn, trimmed with up-standing bands of aluminium tissue, and she has a toque of white fur with a black osprey."

The Secretary looked up with astonishment. He could hardly believe his ears. Though accustomed to many surprises, he was utterly unable to guess why the typist had described the caller's apparel. He said :—

" Really, Miss, I do not wish to know what a caller is wearing ; if you will please ascertain the lady's name and the nature of her business, that will be all that is necessary."

Subsequent enquiries elicited the fact that the new typist had previously worked in the office of a West-end costumier, and when he saw anybody himself (which



MOST HUMOROUS OF ALL—COMPILING THIS BOOK.

was seldom, because he stammered when talking to strangers) his first demand was for a brief description of his caller's attire.

Incurables themselves seem to have a humour of their own; their sadly crippled condition in no way dims their love of a funny tale that hangs upon their inability to walk, or failure to use arms or hands. One day at Putney a male patient was conducting a group of visitors round the grounds and was pointing out the different features of the extensive buildings, as he sat in his wheel-chair. Some structural alterations happened to be in progress, and, as the visitors noticed this and remarked upon the fact, the patient said with great solemnity: "Yes, the Board have at last consented to carry out a long-felt want."

The visitors looked at the unfinished walls of the new building job, and one said:—

"What is it going to be?"

"Ah, you'll never guess."

"A Chapel?"

"No."

"A Lecture Hall?"

"No."

"A Laboratory?"

"No."

"Well, what?"

"A Swimming Bath!"

Of course, a swimming bath for Incurables would be about as useful as a gymnasium. The new building was nothing more than an addition to a dining-room.

Some years ago the Board published a Christmas Appeal, entitled "A Chorus of Celebrities." One of the contributions was written by a patient named (Miss) Sarah Jones, now deceased, who lived to a great age and who was at Putney for fifty-one years. There was a touch of fancy and humour about her words which were as follows:—

" This is the first time that I have tried to write anything for a book and I hardly know what to say. Perhaps if I just tell you that I have been most kindly treated by everybody since I came to this Hospital in the year 1857, it is as good a testimonial as one can give.

" This Christmas appeal is, if you will allow me, at my time of life, a little poetic licence, the Board of Management's *stocking* which they are trustingly hanging up for Santa Claus to fill! You, the public with charitable instincts, are Santa Claus, and I beseech you to fill it to overflowing.

" Before I came to my present quarters, I was *turned away* from several London hospitals as incurable, but here I am tenderly cared for and life is made as sweet for me as is possible.

" SARAH JONES."

Our Incurables are, as a class, a brave and resigned body of fellow creatures, whose long, unalterable and pathetic condition tends to lean upon cheery and sympathetic outside influence. They have more than enough time for sad and sombre reflection, for self-analysis and gloomy introspection. They desire change and spiritual optimism. Perhaps they look for emotional rather than intellectual friendship, but not for comradeship that is any less honest because it is lighthearted.

Many entertainments are held in our large Assembly Hall, and it is always the funny man who is begged again and again to repeat his dose of banter. To have a heavy body and a light heart is, after all, only what might be termed a leaning towards the law of average.

Here are some "Thoughts of an Incurable," published as a Christmas Appeal in the year 1912. Nobody will deny that the "thoughts" contain a certain glimmer of humour:—

Dealing with some folk is not unlike using too short a bit of sealing-wax: one will probably burn one's fingers.

Gossip in a Hospital is like sand in an egg-boiler: it runs so quickly from one department to another.

God made the country, and man made the town, and the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, stands between the two.

Visitors' eyes are all different: some eyes speak of sympathy and others only of curiosity.

A mischievous thought came to me to-day: even we Incurables have our blessings, for example, nobody dreams of borrowing money from us.

Groans and tears are not wanted. Hospital visitors prefer to be cheered up.

Bits of gossip. How swift and how magic they are: we feel guilty, and yet we cannot help it.

Some of my friends say to me: "Be steadfast, never waver." Possibly they think I am an iron railing.

I have nothing to say about the woman who judges all her sisters, except that she is conducting a very big business.

It was an Incurable, who, when asked for an example of reflex action, said: "In smelling an unpleasant odour the brain sends a message to the legs to walk away quickly."

If this little collection of stories associating Incurables with humour has left behind it any trace of "odour" of hurt, or offence, please forgive it. If, on the other hand, it has only gone to prove how cheery, life-loving and courageous are our confirmed invalids, please help the Board of Management in their great and responsible task of raising £50,000 a year from voluntary sources.

Visit the Hospital and Home, at Putney, and see

and hear for yourselves what is being done and how it is being done.

This is what Alderman Sir Charles Hanson, Bart., M.P. (Lord Mayor of London, 1917—1918), said after a visit he paid to the Institution during his year of high office :—

“ONE IS HEARTBROKEN TO THINK THAT THERE CAN BE IN THIS COUNTRY SUCH A MASS OF HUMAN SUFFERING, SUCH A MASS OF IRREMIEDIABLE DISTRESS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WHEN YOU THINK OF THE ANGELIC ADMINISTRATIONS, OF THE HELPFUL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL TREATMENT, OF THE CAREFUL NURSING, OF THE GENERAL MANIFESTATIONS OF SYMPATHY WHICH YOU SEE AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY, ONE REALLY REJOICES THAT, AFTER ALL, THIS IS NOT A DECADENT AGE, BUT THAT WE ARE ANIMATED BY CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY AND BY A LOFTY CONCEPTION OF INDIVIDUAL AND PUBLIC OBLIGATIONS.”

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

An Annual Subscriber has One Vote for Half-a-Guinea, and an additional Vote for every additional Half-a-Guinea. A Life Subscriber has One Vote for Life for Five Guineas, and an additional Vote for Life for every additional Five Guineas.

Subscriptions received at the Office, Bond Court House, Walbrook, E.C. 4, by the Secretary, to whom all Orders should be made payable; by the Treasurer; by Messrs. Glyn, Mills & Co., 67 Lombard Street, E.C. 3; and Messrs. Coutts & Co., 440 Strand, W.C. 2.

It may surprise some readers to learn that the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, is denied a share in the annual distribution from the King Edward's Hospital Fund and the Saturday and Sunday Collections for the Hospitals. Not one penny from these Funds ever finds its way to this Charity. The main reason for this is that the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables does not cure patients, a task which it would naturally not pretend to undertake since it only accepts cases which have already been rejected as incurable by other hospitals, or by unattached members of the medical profession. Surely the fact that this hospital is denied a share in the distribution of these Funds lends added claim upon the generosity of the public.

The Hospital is not quite a mile from East Putney Railway Station (District Railway), where cabs are obtainable. Putney Station (L. & S. W. Railway), is rather more than a mile distant. Motor omnibuses (Services Nos. 70 and 85) run from Putney Bridge Station (District Railway) to the top of Putney Hill, which is within three minutes' walk of the Hospital.

Remittance Form

To SIR HENRY LOPES, BART., *Treasurer*, Date _____ 1920.
ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY,
BOND COURT HOUSE, WALBROOK, E.C. 4.

From* _____

Address _____

Sir, Enclosed you will find a _____ for £ _____

which _____ send you as†

}	an Annual Subscription	in aid of the funds of the
	a Donation	
	a Life Subscription	

ROYAL HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR INCURABLES, PUTNEY.

(Signed) _____

AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIBER has one Vote at each Election for each Half-Guinea.
A DONATION entitles to Votes at the next ensuing Election, Four Votes being given for each Guinea contributed.
A LIFE SUBSCRIBER has One Vote for Life for Five Guineas, and an additional Vote for Life for every additional Five Guineas.

* Please write name as it should be printed in the List of Governors and Donors.

† Kindly strike out the words not applicable.

CHEQUES SHOULD BE CROSSED "Messrs. GLYN, MILLS, CURRIE & CO."

Inquiries are invited from intending Subscribers.

BANKERS' ORDER.

19

Messrs. _____

Please pay now and annually to the A/c of the Royal
Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, at Messrs.

Glyn, Mills, Currie & Co., the sum of _____Guineas.

£ : : _____

