

Adela's white hands laid her gently on the brown thin, bony arms extended towards them, and Angelo, suddenly waking, sat up, and watched from his corner what was going on with blue surprised eyes.

The gipsy looked steadily down on baby's fair rosy face for one moment of time, and the next, darting swiftly away, was, almost before any one knew it, lost to sight in the shrubberies.

Vanished—gone—with baby in her arms!

It was as if a thunderbolt had fallen in the room. The two girls stood, amazed and confounded,

(To be continued.)

staring after her, not believing their eyes, their presence of mind lost in the sudden shock, helpless and appalled.

Angelo, scarcely yet awake, somehow took in more instantly what had happened, and, with an affrighted scream, impulsively sprang forward through the window.

Poor little fellow! his legs had no power, unassisted by crutches, to bear him up. He vainly struggled to support himself, but before help could come to him he fell forward through the window, and lay on the ground outside, still and silent.

A PEEP INTO A DOLLS' HOSPITAL.



AT the first mention of it there appears to be something exceedingly odd in the idea of a Dolls' Hospital; but if we reflect for a moment on the ups and downs of doll-life, we shall conclude that such an institution must be a real necessity. The doll is the favourite plaything with most little girls, and in that capacity has to undergo a large amount of usage, which, in the course of time, tells seriously on its appearance. Then it must be borne in mind that the usage in many cases is very rough, and that even where this is not so there is a constant liability to accidents, which may have very serious results.

Injuries to a doll's dress may be repaired at home; but when the face is disfigured or a limb is broken, the case is beyond the scope of home treatment, and dolly must be entrusted to the care of some person skilled in the art of dealing with such injuries as she is liable to. The consequence is that all makers of wax dolls have a special department for repairs, and this department is known as the Dolls' Hospital.

A peep into one of these places at once convinces us of the appropriateness of the designation. Here, laid out on tables and duly ticketed for

identification, are dolls of various sizes, and in all degrees of dilapidation. Before being brought to the hospital most of the dolls have been stripped of their clothing, and their injuries are thus made painfully apparent. The persons in charge of the hospital examine and classify the patients as they are brought in, and determine upon the course of treatment. No case is put down as hopeless, for the doll-doctors set no limit to their powers of healing.

It does not matter how little of the original doll is given to them to operate upon, they will supply all deficiencies, and give the patient a new lease of existence.

But in order to get a full knowledge of their capabilities, we must watch their operations for a little time. The injury of the first patient taken in hand is comparatively trivial, and she has been sent to the hospital fully dressed. Part of one of her feet has been broken off right across the instep. The detached part has been preserved, and all that is necessary is to warm the edges at the point of severance, apply a little fresh melted wax to them, and then press them together for a moment. The wax soon consolidates, and when it has cooled the joint is smoothed over with a burnishing-tool.

The next case is a more serious one, for the patient has had one of her arms completely crushed, through being trodden upon, while left on the floor by her careless owner. To the doll-doctor, however, the injury presents no difficulty. In cases about the room are arms and legs of various sizes, ready to be fitted to patients, who may have the misfortune to require them. Finding a limb of suitable size, it is speedily stitched on to the calico muscle, with which the doll's shoulder is furnished. Only one arm has to be supplied in this case, but it is

not uncommon to have patients sent in with both arms gone; ay, and with worse injuries, as we shall see as we proceed in our observations.

Crushed legs are provided for and treated in a similar way to crushed arms, and it is only when a patient appears on the scene who wants a limb of a size different from any in stock that difficulty occurs. Then the modeller may have to be called in, and entrusted with the making of a limb to match the uninjured one. We say may have to be called in, for sometimes, though an arm or leg may not be in stock that will match, it is possible to find a pair that will suit the doll, in which case the sound limb which she brought into hospital is quietly amputated, and she is furnished with a brand new pair. This is a startling system of surgery, but its beneficence will be readily admitted.

If it should be necessary to call in the aid of the modeller he will proceed to work in this way:— Taking a piece of clay of suitable size, he will work it by means of his fingers and a few simple tools into the desired form, using the uninjured limb as a pattern. Over this clay model he will pour some plaster of Paris, and thus obtain a mould of it. The plaster of Paris is put on in two portions, so that the mould consists of two pieces, which may be taken apart. The clay having been removed from the mould, the two parts are placed together, and melted wax is poured into the cavity, which, it will be understood, corresponds in form to the clay model, and so to the limb which it is desired to make. On coming into contact with the cold mould the wax begins to solidify, and in a minute or two a coating, fully an eighth of an inch in thickness, will have formed all round. The mould is then turned upside down, when the unsolidified portion of the wax flows out, leaving the cast hollow. On opening the mould now a complete reproduction in wax of the clay model will be found, which after a little touching up has merely to be fixed to the patient.

Bad as injuries to the limbs may be, however, they are not of so much account as those which befall the head or the face. The attractiveness of a doll depends on her sweetness of expression, the colour of her eyes, cheeks, and hair, and the freedom of those features from scars and dishevelment. Many dolls may be without a limb, or it may be two, and it never occurs to their owners to take them to the hospital; but when any serious injury befalls the head of a doll it is considered necessary to ascertain what can be done to repair the damage. A considerable proportion of the dolls in the hospital we are describing had evidently become patients on account of various injuries to the head.

One big beauty had been made hideous by having one of her eyes knocked out, or rather in, for when a doll's eye disappears, it drops into the cavity of the head. In order to make good this serious injury, the head had to be detached, the fugitive orb turned out, cleaned, and reinserted in its socket. By slightly warming the eye, which, by the way, consists of a hollow sphere of glass with the eyeball painted on one of its sides—it is made to fix itself in the socket, sufficiently firmly to allow of some fresh melted wax being poured over it to attach it permanently. After the superfluous wax has been removed the cure is complete, and the head is once more set upon and secured to the shoulders.

Noses, not less than eyes, are liable to injury, and on the hospital tables are seen some sad proofs of the fact. By special treatment, however, noses may be restored as well as eyes, and, seeing that, we again marvel at the skill of the doll-doctors.

We have not yet completed the tale of doleful disasters to which dolls are exposed. One of the patients which came under our notice, and which evidently belonged to the aristocracy of the doll world, presented a bare scalp, her beautiful flaxen locks having been torn off by a pet terrier, to whose care she had been entrusted during the temporary absence of her owner. The hair was actually torn out by the roots, and the somewhat tedious process of planting a fresh crop was rendered necessary. The new hair was inserted in the manner described in the account of our visit to a doll-factory (see page 75).

The grandest achievement of the doll-doctors is the supplying of a new head; but after what we have already said, the reader will hardly be surprised to hear that they undertake such desperate cases. Heads are kept in stock just as legs and arms are, and frequently it is found easier and cheaper to provide a doll with a new head than to repair a damaged one.

Owing to their not being so much exposed to contact with external objects, and to their being made of material hardly likely to get out of repair, the bodies of dolls require little attention at the hands of the surgeon. Now and again a seam will burst, and bran or other stuffing escape, but injuries of this kind are easily managed, and it is rarely that a doll is sent to hospital for treatment in such cases. We might enumerate other examples of injury to which dolls are liable, and for which they require treatment at the hospital, but we have said enough to prove the assertion with which we started—namely, that a Dolls' Hospital is a necessary institution, since it increases the delights of the young by restoring to them their mutilated darlings in a condition equal to new.