TEDDY'S CHRISTMAS

By William Reginald Mackrill.

Clang - clang - clang -a-lang-a-lang-a-lang! Down the broad, brilliantly lighted avenue swept a heavy fire truck, its five dappled horses united in a mad gallop. Ten-year-old Teddy O'Neill, Western Union messenger boy, cut suddenly into the avenue from a side street and circled on his wheel like an eagle. His eyes followed the truck with longing. It was a struggle 'twixt duty and pleasure. Then an engine dashed into sight. It was drawn by three magnificent blacks, and in the darkness it gleamed like a demon, spitting fire and smoke. Teddy gave a howl of enthusiasm and followed in its wake.

For block after block he trailed the wheel of the engine, bending low over his handle bars. Something of the spirit of the fire-fighters of old was in his blood, and though his little heart was pounding with sudden stress he held the pace, his short legs dancing mechanically with the pedals.

At the cross street a trolley car blocked the way. A collision seemed inevitable. The driver rose in his seat, jammed the brake down, and drew with all his strength on the lines. The blacks came down on their haunches and with stiffened forelegs slid on the smooth pavement. Just in time the heavy engine came to a stop.

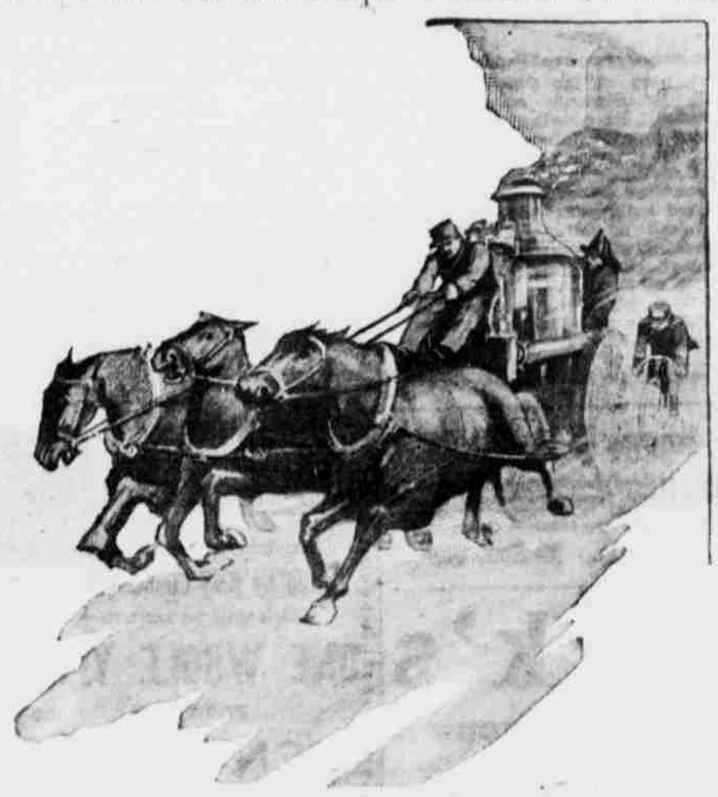
But Teddy, pedaling as though for a record, with his eyes to the ground, knew not of the obstruction.

Suddenly the shining engine loomed before him. He threw up his arms and with a little cry dashed into the heavy steel-shod wheels.

A crowd gathered quickly. Gentle hands bore the limp and mangled body to a nearby hospital.

When Teddy awoke he lay in a white iron bed, in a long room, with many other beds on each side of him. He tried hard to remember. What did it all mean? And what made the pain in his head, his chest, his legs? He gave a little groan.

A woman came to the bed and leaned over him. Years afterward he recalled that vision—the sweet, serious face, the white uniform, the pretty cap resting on waves of brown hair. She smoothed his hot brow and gave him cool water. Then delirium seized him, and for weeks he hovered between life and death, while Amy Norton, the head nurse, watched him as though he were her very own.



THE SPIRIT OF THE FIRE FIGHTERS OF OLD WAS IN HIS BLOOD.

In those endless days and nights of physical anguish, when he could comprehend only two conditions—pain and the absence of pain—Amy seemed to him a brooding Spirit of Deliverance. Always there, when he needed her, divining the cause of his discomfort and quick with measures of relief, she became in the highest sense a mother to this motherless waif.

So the days passed, and gradually Teddy responded to the care of nurse and doctor and awoke to consciousness of things about him. His twisted arm was almost restored to use; his crushed leg, though in a heavy plaster cast, was mending rapidly; but he complained of pain in his chest, where the engine wheels had broken the ribs. It hurt him to breathe, he said. Now and then a spell of coughing shook his little frame and left him panting for breath. Then, recovering, he would watch Amy at her work, his eyes following her up and down the room. He was disinclined to eat, and daily his face became whiter and thinner, and his eyes bigger and blacker.

It was Dr. Stone's custom to meet Amy in the operating room several times a week for consultation. One evening they talked of Teddy. The doctor shook his head gravely. He was a handsome, young man, with close-cut, dark beard. In their common purpose—the rescue of this dying orphan child—their hearts beat together. "Can you not stimulate him somehow?" he asked. "He is very low. Any little complication—a fever, even a cold—might end it all. He is too passive. He does not care. He seems to be merely awaiting the end. We cannot get results under such conditions. It is not now a case for medicine. There is nothing in all the pharmacopoeia that I can think of to awaken him."

For some minutes they sat in silence. All the mother love in Amy's heart was stirred. Poor little waif—no parents, no home, and Christmas close at hand. A great light dawned within her. Christmas—the day of days for children all over the world! She turned her deep, thoughtful eyes upon the doctor. "Let me take the case," she said gently. "As you say," he needs something beyond drugs."

So they separated, and the doctor went to his room to study. But his mind was not content with books. It dwelt upon Amy, as she appeared but a short time before. It occurred to him that he had thought of her many times in the past few weeks. But then it was purely professional—their common interest in the medical aspect of their work. She was a very competent nurse and very attractive. Her eyes and her mouth and that little wisp of hair that always curled over her ear stood before him. But pshaw, it meant nothing. Thus he tried to trick his conscience, deceiving himself and saying it was not so, when, in some deeper sub-consciousness he knew that it was so and really could not be otherwise, and that he was hopelessly in the toils. This is love's alchemy.

In the dimly lighted ward Amy was at Teddy's bedside. The boy was wakeful and restless. He wanted company. Though her duty was over she stayed with him, talking in a whisper.

Bit by bit she drew from him the story of his brief, hard life. He had no memory of father or mother. He had lived with an aunt, who beat him; so he ran away and finally graduated from newsboy to telegraph messenger. He was a doubter. Even Santa Claus, that patron saint of the children, was to him a myth—"only for rich folks' kids," he said.

But when she told him how Santa Claus would come to all children, rich and poor, if he only knew where they lived, his eyes grew big with interest.

"Teddy," she said, "if Santa Claus will come here on Christmas day and bring you lots of presents and a Christmas tree will you try to get well?"

Teddy thought hard. "Guess that might be worth gettin' well for," he said with a sigh. "But he won't come. I hung up my stockin' onct, an' they wasn't nothin' in it." It must have been a bitter disappointment, for the light faded from his eyes and the old look of despair crept into his face.

"Yes he will, Teddy. I'll send him word. I know he'll come Teddy, if you'll only get well. You know the doctor and I are trying so hard to make you strong, but you must help. Medicine won't do it all. You must think about getting better, and try to eat and laugh and be happy. And the first thing you know all the pain will go away and you will be just as well as I am."

It was a large idea, and his little mind could not take it in easily.

"How can you tell him where I am?" He was suspicious.

"Why, I'll send him a letter."

"Couldn't you send him a telegram? It'd get there lots quicker. An' tell him to answer paid." He was on familiar ground now.

She thought it over a little before she replied. "All right, Teddy, I'll send him a telegram. And if he says he'll come will you try real hard, dearie?" Tears of hope stood in her eyes.

"Yes," he said finally. "If he says he'll bring me a tree with lots of red an' blue an' green an' yellow things on it, an' some candy, an'—an'—a locomotive ingyne what'll run all by itself."

She drew the covers around his neck and tucked him in snugly. "I'll tell him, dearie," she said. "And I just know he'll bring the 'ingyne'. Now go to sleep and you'll wake up in the morning lots better." She stroked the little head gently. Slowly his eyes closed and he slept.

Amy went to her room. At her desk she wrote a note to the manager of the telegraph company, and taking it to the front door dropped it in the letter box with a little prayer.

Teddy's first words the next morning were full of anticipation. "Got that wire yet?" Amy smiled reassuringly. "Oh, it's too early. Wait till this afternoon."

He ate his breakfast with relish, and there was a new note in his voice when the doctor came in. But it was a part of their plan that the doctor should not know, and though Teddy was on the peak of expectancy he kept the secret.

At three o'clock a messenger brought Amy a yellow envelope, and she took it straight to Teddy's bed. He reached for it eagerly, tore it open, and with shining eyes read the message:

Will stop by some time Christmas morning. Too busy to see you, but will leave a few reminders. Hang up stocking. Santa Claus.

He looked up into her face with an expression of rapture. "That's straight goods," he said. "It's the real thing even to the press copy." Then his thoughts took a long jump. "How long before Christmas?" he asked.

During the next three weeks Amy was very busy. She had to calculate closely for the money. Her salary was small, and there was her widowed mother to care for. But her anxiety was unnecessary. One day a note came from the manager of the telegraph company. The boys in the office had taken us a little collection for Teddy's Christmas, he said, and it was his pleasure to send her the cash—ten dollars and eighty-seven cents. What a God-send! Teddy should have a royal Christmas—even to the "ingyne" that would go by itself.

There was now no doubt that Teddy was improving. Day by day the thin face filled out. His color returned. He was eating regularly, sleeping soundly, and the spells of coughing were less frequent. The doctor spoke of the change, but Amy was uncommunicative.

"Some new influence is at work," he said to her one day. It was just a week before Christmas. "The gain is most remarkable. Tell me, Miss Norton, what wonderful elixir have you given him? I may need it myself before long. I, too, have a malady that defies drugs."

She looked at him in sudden fear—then flushed before his strong, tender gaze. "I cannot tell you now." Her eyes were turned away. Her face was bright with pleasure.

"But can't I know soon?" he asked, with an almost boyish pleading in his voice. "Name a day when I may ask and be answered."

She turned to him with a new light in her eyes. Something told her that his interest was not in Teddy alone. "Ask me Christmas morning," she whispered, "and I will tell you; not a day before." And try as he might he could get no more from her.

Christmas eve arrived, with wind and snow and bitter cold. Teddy feared the weather would keep Santa Claus away. But Amy reassured him. "Oh, Santa Claus likes the snow. He rides in a big sleigh with a long team of reindeers. He's sure to get here some time in the night. We'll hang up your stocking right here on the bedpost. And then you must go to sleep early."

At eight o'clock she went off duty. Teddy didn't get to sleep as directed, for excitement, but finally he fell into a deep slumber. His telegram in his hand, and his long black stocking hung in plain sight on the bedpost. All over the city, fathers and mothers were commencing their work of love, and Amy, tired though she was, began her own.

In a private room stood the tree. The floor was strewn with packages. She had no assistance, but she worked on, with strings of popcorn and cranberries, fancy bags of candy, brilliant glass balls, and showers of tinsel. Near midnight four strong men came from the lower ward, and Teddy's little iron bed, with Teddy sound asleep, was carried gently into the private room. Then she slipped away to her rest.

It seemed to Amy that but a few minutes had elapsed when she was awakened by the alarm clock on her bureau. She arose, made a light, and bathed her face again and again in the cold water until she felt able to keep her eyes open. It was five o'clock—still dark.

She entered Teddy's room and turned on the electric light. He was sleeping quietly. There was a step in the hall and the door opened. It was the doctor—his face a study. She held up a warning finger, then turned to the bed and reaching down took the boy in her arms and kissed him. "Teddy," she cried, a little sob in her voice. "Teddy, Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Teddy."

Teddy woke suddenly and sat bolt upright. He gave a shout of joy. "Oh-h-h," he cried, in a long, echoing gasp. "Oh, Jimminy Whillikins, ain't that great." Then words failed him, and he could only look and look, his eyes feasting on wonders that his tongue could not describe.

They put a warm bathrobe around him and placed him on the floor, for he was not yet able to walk. By his side Amy laid the stocking, now bulging with treasures. In front of him stood the "ingyne" and many other things dear to boyish hearts. He handled them one after another in silent awe. Then he took the stocking and with delicious deliberation poured from it a wealth of treasures. He was dazed by his sudden accumulation of riches. He looked up at them with a smile. "That's a bully Santa Claus," he said. "He done his part nobly. I'm goin' to get well all right."

After a while they put him back to bed, with his gifts spread around him, and together left the room. The dawn was breaking. The busy world was waking. From without came the tooting of horns. Bells were ringing all over the great city. It was Christmas morning.

The doctor went with her to her door. Even in the dim light of the hall he could see the drawn lines about her mouth and eyes, her tremulous lips. "You must go back to bed," he said anxiously. "I will see that you are not disturbed until noon. You are tired out."

She did not try to speak, fearing that she would cry instead.

"You have won a great victory over death," he said. "The injuries are nothing now; he will recover. It is the desire to live that you have implanted in him—that is the triumph." Then, on sudden impulse, he put his arms about her. "Oh, Amy, Amy," he said brokenly. "You have saved his life; will you not save mine, dear? Will you say yes? I cannot live without you."

Then he was gone, and on her trembling lips his kiss burned like sweet fire. Half fainting, her heart going like a trip-hammer, she closed the door and sank upon the bed. Gradually peace came to her, and slumber. In her dreams she heard him calling: "Amy, Amy, I cannot live without you." And suddenly she awoke, in the broad sunlight, smiling, and whisper ing to herself: "Herbert, Herbert, yes, with all my soul."

CLEVER WOMAN DETECTIVE.

MISS ADELAIDE C. RUSSELL AMONG MOST SUCCESSFUL OF MODERN SLEUTHS.

Assumes Many Peculiar Disguises and Visits Little Known Sections—Is Talented Musician and Accomplished Linguist.

Equipped with a personality as charming as it is distinctive Miss Adelaide C. Russell has joined the army of women workers, but in such a unique way that her accomplishments cannot fail to interest other women throughout the entire country.

Miss Russell is a detective, but the many disagreeable attributes which are commonly supposed to go hand in hand with this profession are wanting in the case of this interesting young woman who follows it rather from a love of its adventures than for the results which it brings about.

Six years' service in connection with the New York Pinkerton forces and on private work have given to Miss Russell a fund of interesting experiences

MISS ADELAIDE C. RUSSELL

which have made her life a succession of incidents well calculated to weave themselves into a score of melodramas if she would only relate them.

Miss Russell is still in her twenties but during the six years she has been a detective; she has been all around the world and has adopted many different disguises. She never works through her own personality, but adopts the various disguises as the occasion warrants. Further than this she has the remarkable record of never having known failure. Of the hundreds of cases on which she has worked she has obtained the results for which she started and to-day her record is one of continual successes.

Has Figured in Famous Cases.

If one were given a thousand chances to name Miss Russell's profession, that of detective would never figure on the list. One might take her for a singer, probably for an actress, maybe for a newspaper woman, but never class her as a clever sleuth who has figured in some of the most famous cases in this country and Europe.

During the Paris Exposition Miss Russell worked on several forgery cases which had their locale in Paris. In order to gain knowledge to be used as evidence in these cases Miss Russell, who is a talented musician and plays the harp skillfully, dressed as a street musician, again as a newsboy and still again as a hotel waiter.

One of the most celebrated divorce cases this country has ever known was brought to a climax through evidence secured by Miss Russell. The husband was the offender and went to Mexico. Miss Russell followed him there, hired herself as a maid and traveled with the people all over Europe. She was gone eight months and when the case finally came to trial and the man found that he had been paying the expenses of a detective for nearly a year he attempted to kill Miss Russell. Her ready use of a small pistol which she always carried saved her life. Miss Russell admits that for once her heart was in her mouth, although the fright was only momentary.

Disguised as a Newsboy.

In New York Miss Russell has sold dozens of newspapers among the crowd of "newsies" about Wall street.

She acknowledges that in nearly all the divorce cases which fall to her share her sympathy is with the wife. Recently she had such a case to follow up and having located her people in the outskirts of a certain large city Miss Russell visited the house nearly every day, but always in a different disguise. First she went as a man, wearing a little light mustache; again she went as a little old German woman selling herbs. Her accent was so broken that she could hardly be understood and she put up such a story of hard luck that she was invited to come again, which of course, she did.

The lady has a particularly charming personality. Her voice is soft and cultivated, but can be made to change almost instantly. She is handsome and has a most striking individuality. She speaks a half dozen languages fluently, is a gifted musician, and has a keen sense of a clue which would do honor to the best men detectives in the business.

On one occasion when she was on the scent of a forger in New York, she was obliged to follow him from the house in which they were both stopping to a railroad station. He took the train for Philadelphia, and although Miss Russell had not time to put on her hat and coat she, too jumped on the train. Her badge carried her, but when she got to Philadelphia she gave the tip to a depot detective to watch the man while she hurried into the ladies' waiting room and paid the maid two dollars for the latter's hat. Miss Russell declares it was not the most modish hat she ever known, but it covered her head and gave her an opportunity to continue "shadowing" her man, whom she finally ran to cover, and made her case.

Free Training of Nurses.

An excellent work has been undertaken by the Philadelphia School for Nurses, which is providing free training in nursing, for a number of young women in every county in Pennsylvania.

The young women will be provided with room, board, uniforms, and all the conveniences of a well-appointed Christian home. The course is two years of training, in nursing the sick poor of the city, under skilled leaders.

In addition to regular nursing, the young women are taught how to preserve their own health; how to recognize, avoid, and destroy contagion; and how to establish and maintain perfect sanitary conditions about the home.

An Appeal.

My hand is lonely for your clasping, dear,
My ear is tired, waiting for your call;
I want your strength to help, your smile to cheer;
Heart, soul and senses, need you, one and all.
I droop without your full, frank sympathy,
We ought to be together, you and I.
We want each other so to comprehend
The dream, the hope, thing planned or seen or wrought,
Companion, comforter, and guide and friend,
As much as love asks love, does thought need thought;
Life is so short, so fast the love hours fly,
We ought to be together, you and I.

Cut It Out.

The late Senator Hoar was informed that a very dear friend was seriously ill with appendicitis.

He had hardly finished his note of sympathy when he was informed that it was an attack of acute indigestion instead, and so he sent the following: "Dear A—I am sorry to hear that you are ill, but rejoiced to learn that the trouble is with the table of contents rather than with the appendix."