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**Editorial.**

**CHRISTMAS.**

Once more the Christmas season has come round, bringing with it its message of peace and goodwill, bidding us hear, if we will listen to them, the harmonious music of its joybells ringing above the discordant sounds of earth.

Nowhere more than in our hospitals is the Christmas spirit supreme. To the patients and their friends, indeed it seems hard that they should have to spend this season on a sick bed, instead of enjoying it as is their wont. But the nurses smile, for they hold the secret of Christmas, and are confident of their power to make Christmas Day a red-letter day to all concerned. So they plan, and work, and shop, they pity the misguided patients who beg for, and succeed in obtaining, their "discharge" before Christmas Day, and set to with a will, to make the day one to be remembered by such patients as remain.

As regards the seriously ill there is, of course, no question, but, for the convalescents also, there can be no doubt that it is wise for them to remain in hospital over Christmas. The mother of a family, just recovering from a serious illness, during which she has had every care, is ill-equipped to return to her home, often only one room, to wrestle with such domestic problems as the provision of Christmas fare out of a scanty exchequer, the meagre supply of coal, the replenishing of the children's clothing, which has inevitably become delapidated during her absence, and the ever-pressing question of boots and shoes, never more acute than at the Christmas season, when leaky footgear means

broken chilblains and other ills attendant in the train of poverty.

In the case of the bread-winner it is not inspiring to return to the home inevitably impoverished by his absence; therefore in both these cases it is wise that both these hard workers should remain in hospital, where for once they have to take no thought what they shall eat, what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed, and as regards those dependent upon them, surely the prevailing "good will" of the season will cause those possessed of this world's goods to ensure that at least a Christmas dinner shall not be lacking to those who are in need.

And for the children, what happier place can there be than a children's ward at Christmas? It is a veritable fairyland. And the children know it. Have they not had playmates who have told them of the bygone glories of other Christmases? Of the gifts which Santa Claus has crammed into their stockings, of the fairy-like tree, and the wonderful Father Christmas who dispenses its entrancing fruit? The nurses also drop mysterious hints, and the excitement reaches its pitch on Christmas Eve so that it is late before the last curly head has nestled down upon its pillow, the last sleepy eyes have closed, and the nurses can summon Santa Claus to begin his good work.

What about the nurses and their Christmas? They find it in the happiness of the patients, and few who have spent a Christmas in hospital would desire, in spite of its hard work, to spend it, for choice, elsewhere.

To each and all of our readers at home and abroad, we wish the very happiest Christmas they have ever spent.

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