



Letters to the Editor.

Notes, Queries, &c.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—You said a little while ago you would be glad for anyone to send you an account as to how Christmas had been spent in Hospital. Mine is only a small provincial Hospital, and the way we spent our day may not be any guide to a large London one, but the patients were greatly amused and made very happy at a very little cost.

On Christmas Eve, when the patients are all asleep, I went round the Wards and placed a parcel containing books and a Christmas card on each bed, so that the first awakening might be to some pleasure. Dinner was served at 1 p.m. on a long T-shaped table in the largest male Ward, and all patients who could be moved at all were carried in and enjoyed the fun together. At 3 p.m. I appeared as Father Christmas in a long red robe made of turkey twill (price 2½d. per yard, and made by myself), a red cowl of same material covered with "Jack Frost" (sixpence per box), and a mask with a long white beard. I brought with me a snow-cart which was simply a pretty mail cart covered with frosted cotton wool and heavily laden with toys and presents of all descriptions. Resting on the shafts of the cart was a monster snow ball, which I got the carpenter to make of wicker work with a hinge and latch, and I covered that with lint to look like snow, that was also filled with presents; that formed altogether a pretty little procession, was much less expensive than a Christmas tree, and every patient could enjoy it, as I went twice through all the Wards distributing the gifts on my way. Our next amusement was a Punch and Judy show—the carpenter made the framework, I covered it with a bit of cheap chintz and bought the figures in London, price 2s., the greatest piece of extravagance of the day. The figures were worked by one of my young Probationers, quite as well as I have ever seen it done by a professional, and I acted as showman with a borrowed drum nearly as big as myself.

I think the evening entertainment was the chief feature of the day, because it was very pretty and cost so little. We made a stage of two very large tables, the background was formed of the ward screens which are covered with very pretty green cretonne, draped with lace curtains, and tied up with yellow

muslin that had draped my bazaar stalls, then the house surgeon, Nurses and I turned ourselves into living waxworks. We made all our costumes in less than a week in the Nurses' off duty time, and they were composed chiefly of art muslin, 1½d. per yard, and the velvet that had covered my china stall at our recent bazaar. The best costume was a clown's, of white calico with blue, red, green and yellow paper cut into half moons, stars, &c., and pasted all over with "stickphast" and finished at the neck, waist and wrists with pink ruffles of glazed calico. I was the "Queen of hearts who made some tarts" and had a black velvet train with gold paper hearts stitched all over, and a tinsel robe 4½d. per yard. The other figures represented were—"The Babes in the Wood," "Gipsy Fortune Teller," "Chinese Mandarin," "Vanity," and "Little Miss Muffett." We were placed on the stage four at a time, and covered with sheets, the house surgeon exhibiting the first four, winding them up with a penny rattle, of course kept out of sight but making plenty of noise. I exhibited the second four, and then we all formed a grand tableau, lighted up with 1s. 6d. worth of red and blue fire placed on tins, much the shape of a dutch oven, our footlights were the Ward lamps with a long piece of bright tin (price 8d.) at the back. At the foot of the stage we placed the Ward stools at different heights covered with red blankets, and on these formed a bed of plants reaching to the floor. I tell you all this because the expense was next to nothing, we had no outside help, and the effect was very pretty. I changed my costume eight times on Christmas Day and managed to disguise myself so well that my relations did not know either myself or voice. I daresay you will not have patience to read all this nonsense, but if you do and it will give anyone else an idea how to do things inexpensively, I shall be glad.

Yours faithfully,

A COUNTRY MATRON.

[We feel sure a *very* merry Christmas was spent in this particular Hospital, and congratulate the Matron on her ingenuity and energy.—ED.]

THE WILY MICROBE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—In your description of the new theatre at St. George's Hospital, I notice that, though in many ways this theatre seems a triumph of skill and ingenuity, one vital principle in modern surgery is unobserved, as there is no provision for the sterilisation of dressings. It seems, therefore, as if all the elaborate precautions taken in other ways were useless. The authorities of St. George's Hospital must have more implicit confidence in the blue and brown papers in which surgical dressings are usually supplied, as an effective check to the entrance of the "wily microbe," than we Nurses in other Institutions have, who fetch these packages from the dispensary, and see them, often with torn covers, lying on the dusty counter in close proximity to the *omnium gatherum* of out-patients.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

THEATRE NURSE.

DELICIOUS	MAZAWATTEE	TEA
DELICIOUS	MAZAWATTEE	TEA
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