

Nursing Echoes.

* * * *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



Gwendoline Astor, who died this autumn.

Christmas parties are the order of the day in the hospitals this week, and splendid gifts in kind have been received for the patients. The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, has been greatly in luck's way, as Mr. W. W. Astor has given £50,000 as a fund for the building of a new out-patient department, to be dedicated to the memory of his little daughter,

The very inefficient condition through want of accommodation of the present out-patients' department in the basement of the hospital has caused much anxiety to the Committee, and Mr. Astor's most generous gift will enable them to put the department into a thoroughly efficient condition.

The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, never looked more charming than on Monday afternoon, on the occasion of its Christmas entertainment. Each ward was decorated in distinctive colours, the scheme of colour in one being carried out in pink and green, in chrysanthemums and roses, with trails of smilax. The screen covers were in a delightful shade of green linen, and the patients and nurses wore favours of the colours of the ward. In the forefront, as one entered, was a big toy goat, which bore a noble bow and streamers of pink satin ribbon, while from the roof depended innumerable festoons of fairy lights. The floral decorations of another ward were carried out in white lilies and ponzetia, the screens in this instance being covered with scarlet twill; yet another ward favoured red, white, and blue, and here a fairy, bearing the Anchor of Hope, attracted much attention, as her feet trod lightly a snowy ground covered with spangled hoar frost.

In each of the wards was a magnificent Christmas tree bearing every kind of toy that the heart of child could desire, and the children, bright, eager, and on the friendliest terms with the visitors who trooped round the wards, awaited their unstripping with keen anticipation, and one tiny tot proclaimed a treat already enjoyed from the visit of choir boys singing Christmas carols. The Matron, Miss Gertrude Payne, and the Sisters and nurses, as well as the energetic Secretary, Mr. Adrian

Hope, were all busy in seeing that everyone had a good time, and their labours were manifestly crowned with conspicuous success.

An excellent entertainment was provided for the patients at the Hospital for Women, Soho Square, on Monday afternoon, and the applause and bursts of laughter which greeted the songs, recitations, and musical sketches proved that it was keenly appreciated by the audience. Very charming were the coon songs of the Misses Sinclair, and a description of a "bus drive" from Victoria to King's Cross brought down the house. Tea and coffee were served to the visitors in the Matron's room. The decoration of the table was charmingly done in yellow, chrysanthemums, marguerites, and daffodils being the flowers employed.

Miss Norman, who for so many years was Lady Superintendent of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, has resigned her position owing to overwork, and gone for a time to Teneriffe, where we hope that sunny clime will soon restore her to health. Miss Norman has had a long and honourable career in the Army Nursing Service, and greatly felt the strain of the South African War after twenty years' service, which she devoted to the relief of the sick and wounded in our Army. She holds the Royal Red Cross, having been awarded the Order when it was a greater mark of distinction than it can be in the future, since it has been so lavishly awarded to society dames.

We have had several letters, not for publication, most strongly approving of our suggestion that the devoted work of the medical officers and nurses who, with so much courage and devotion, worked quietly in the small-pox ships and hospitals during last year's epidemic in London, should receive some form of encouragement and recognition for their heroic labours. We feel sure these "lovely people," as Miss Dock would call them, seek no honours, but for all that they deserve some.

We were chatting on this matter recently with one of these "lovely" persons, when she remarked, quite good-humouredly, "Oh, it is an accepted principle that the British pack ass cannot carry corn. Our privilege is to do the nation's work—and we do it well—on thistles; the beans go to the spanking high-stepper."

It was ever thus!

The *Times*, *Daily Mail* and *Telegraph* have, during the past week, inserted letters on the working hours and food of hospital nurses—one and all complain of overwork and indifferent food. The whole economic condition and educational system of nursing requires readjustment, and this cannot be done until the matter has received judicious consideration. A Parliamentary inquiry into the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)