

## The Brighter Side of Hospital Life.

By Miss MARY C. FAIR.

There are, not by any means a few, people who opine that a hospital is *all* groans and weariness, *all* pain and sickness, *all* sadness and no smiles. Well, it is true that we in our capacity as nurses come across many scenes and sights of well-nigh heart-rending misery and pain, but the predominant note of hospital life is brightness; patients and nurses seize on the small amusements, and these small amusements and little jests often go a long way towards helping them through the weary tediousness of convalescence. A nurse who carries a long face, no matter how skilful she may be, is hardly ever popular with either patients or colleagues, and it is not to be wondered at.

accommodation of our infants unable to walk. Excitement grows on Monday morning when the invitation is telephoned down. "Nurse," says wee Bobbie, the pet of the children's ward, "will yer go an' ling the bell for a 'vitation?" and every time the telephone is heard to ring an eager group waylays you to know "Ain't Mrs. M—— telephoned yet, nuss?" Great is the glee when Mrs. M—— at last does ring with her usual "May the patients come to-day, please, Matron?" and great are the preparations. Pinafores are ironed, faces are washed, while in the men's lavatories moustaches are curled, hair soaped to make it lie flat, white collars are unearthed, and best ties are donned. Perhaps the most extensive adornment is effected by Daddy A——, a stalwart white-haired Yorkshire hodger, who borrows from the wardmaid the blacking



GOING OUT TO TEA FROM THE KENDAL HOSPITAL.

It does not take much to amuse the average hospital patient. I think if the outside world realised more the dulness of the life itself more would be done for the entertainment of those patients strong enough to stand a little quiet and health-giving amusement. Here, in our little country hospital, we are occasionally thought of. There is one kind friend, possessed of a beautiful shady garden where wide-spreading trees, trim lawns, and resplendent flower-beds offer a startling contrast to our ill-kept plot of grass where the babies' washes are dried, who, on every Monday during the summer when the weather is fit, extends her hospitality to such of the patients as can walk or be carried to that same garden, even lending a capacious mail-cart for the ac-

and brushes to polish to resplendence his boots and gaiters, an occupation which takes him exactly two hours.

At last, however, all are ready, clean and spruce. One child lies on a stretcher; as many as can are wheeled in the mailcart by one of the men; other non-pedestrians are carried, and the rest walk. Rugs, deck chairs and couches await them in the shady garden, and "such a tea I'se nigh bustin' mesel," boy Edward confides on his return. If they wish they gather flowers, and they all return at six o'clock vastly refreshed in mind and body for their outing.

One summer day there came a great excitement: the ambulance brigade organised a grand cyclists' carnival, and special invitations were sent to Matron, nurses,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)