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Editorial.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Christmas in hospital! Although duty may call, and there may be a natural desire on the part of many patients to spend the festive season in their own homes, the Merry Christmas spent in hospital has now become proverbial. The old hospital bird chuckles softly as he observes from his cosy corner the exodus of convalescents. His ambition is to stay in his comfortable quarters, eat a good Christmas dinner, smoke the pipe of peace allowed on Christmas Day, and share in all the festivities which, from previous experience, he knows will take place.

There are few festivals kept in hospital so this is probably the reason why the whole staff, doctors and nurses together, throw their whole energy into giving the patients a real good time. Ward decorations on an elaborate scale are a thing of the past, the dirt and dust which they brought in their train are no longer permissible, but plants and fresh-cut flowers, and gleaming holly and mistletoe in vases, with fairy lamps on the tables as the day wears on, make an always well-appointed ward unusually gay. Of course every bed is spotless, and each patient snug and resplendent in a new flannel jacket, the children have new ribbons in their hair, and those who are well enough to be up are arrayed in the smartest of pinafores. The day begins early with old-time carols, and the morning hours flash by in excitement and anticipation. Midday brings the dinner-hour. An excellent dinner of roast beef and plum pudding is provided for all who are allowed to partake of it, followed by oranges and other delicacies, while chicken and lighter diet is the portion of the

few. The afternoon is sacred to the patients' visitors, and then comes tea time when the wards are thrown open, tea on a bountiful scale is spread, not only for the patients but for all comers. The evening is a time of entertainment; no one thinks of going out, and the one aim throughout the hospital is to give the patients the merriest Christmas they have ever had. A substantial article on the bill of fare is generally a bran pie, or a big snowball, which, rolled round the ward to the bedside of each patient by Father Christmas and his attendants, is found to contain gifts the need of which must certainly have been communicated to the benign old man by the fairies hovering round the ward. How else should he know just who needs the warm scarves shirts, vests, or petticoats contained in the bulky parcels which he dispenses. The children's ward is transformed by a great Christmas tree, laden with everything a child's heart can desire, into an enchanted land, and nowhere is the reward of hard work greater than here, where babies, scarcely able to articulate, shout their delight over the treasures which surround them. Too soon the evening comes to an end, and the page of a red-letter day is turned. Then the tired nurses may perhaps find time to examine their own Christmas parcels.

The workers on this journal should indeed spend a happy time if all the good wishes conveyed to them from friends in the majority of our colonies and the United States, to say nothing of those nearer home, are fulfilled. With these good wishes comes the assurance of the place the journal holds in the estimation of its readers.

To one and all, in every land, we heartily wish a very happy Christmas.

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