

Harriet Emma Fiske, No. 26719; Elizabeth Mary Plimsoll, No. 26260; Emma Anita Mary Walters, No. 8078; Harriet Williams, No. 15020; Alice Mary Tanner, No. 4754.

The Financial Statement showed a balance in hand of £928 9s. 3d. on December 15th, and cheques required amounting to £459 10s. 4d.

Mr. Parker Young then moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mrs. Latter and carried unanimously.

"That the Privy Council be requested to sanction an amendment of the Rules enabling the Board at its discretion, until October 1st, 1910, to enrol any woman who, though qualified under Section 2 of the Act, failed to claim the Board's certificate before April 1st, 1905."

Mr. Parker Young said that certain cases of hardship had occurred in which midwives through no fault of their own had failed to gain admission to the Roll during the period of grace. For instance, in one case the applications of midwives were placed in the hands of a gentleman who subsequently became insane.

Some discussion ensued, in the course of which the Chairman said that he was not there to consider the question from the point of view of relief to the midwives—he was sorry for them—but what the Board had to consider was whether the recognition of some midwives who would otherwise be debarred from practising in 1910 would not be a relief to lying-in women.

The date of the next meeting was fixed for January 27th, 1910, and the meeting then terminated.

## Christmas in a Maternity Home.

"With light in her looks she entered the chamber of sickness. . . . Many a languid head . . . turned on its pillow to gaze while she passed, for her presence fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison."

When the "lights are low" is the recognised time in hospital life for accomplishing works of supererogation, and the Charge Nurse of the Maternity Ward in a Poor-Law Infirmary was on this occasion making the most of it in completing her Christmas preparations. Asepsis has somewhat curtailed her energies in this direction, but as she remarks to herself (there being no one else to remark it to): "We must look a bit Christmassy, anyhow," with quick, light footfall she passes up and down the now silent ward, adjusting a Japanese fan here, hanging a fairy light there, giving a more rakish set to Father Christmas's hood, till she succeeds in making "Poor Law" a little less in evidence, and creates an atmosphere all her own among those long rows of orderly white beds, each with its little cot beside it.

She herself is a charming picture, a worthy descendant of the "Lady with the Lamp," her slender figure, in its snowy dress and scarlet belt, her gracious face, crowned with bright hair, sparkling here and there from contact with the frosting on the Tree.

"I don't think it will look at all bad," she muses,

considering how little decoration we are allowed, especially when the tables are set out with the flowers and plants we struggled home with from Covent Garden this morning. What fun it was, but such a scramble to get back for duty, and though it was tiring it is really worth any trouble to give these poor dears something of sweetness and light for once in their lives."

She gives a little sigh as her eyes wander over her sleeping charges (the flotsam and jetsam of life, harboured for a brief space from the storm of temptation), and as they rest upon the childish face of the mother of a six-hour-old baby they flash with indignation.

"What a shame!" she mutters. "What a cruel, wicked shame! She is nothing more than a baby herself; and to think that on Christmas Eve she should have tried to drown herself—and he scot free! I wish I had a voice in the making of the law. Anyhow, I must do 'Ye nexte thynge,' which is to make up my parcels. Now, let me see. A warm petticoat for Mrs. G., it will be a change for her to have something for herself. This pretty blouse will do for poor Nellie. I shall love to see her great, gloomy eyes smile when she gets it."

And so on, and so forth, till thirty bundles are neatly tied up, a Christmas card on each, "With Nurse's love."

Only just finished in time, for the insistent ringing of an electric bell announces an urgent case, and a few minutes later nurse and doctor together wrestle with the King of Terrors, and finally overcome.

Outside in the vestibule the friends await the issue with a curious mixture of anxiety and importance depicted on their faces. The husband, half fuddled as becomes Christmas Eve, is listening unmoved to the candid utterances of the "lidy next door."

"You will excuse me, young man, I don't wish to be personal, but if one 'as to go the Lord would 'a done much better to 'ave taken you. Sometimes I can't think what the Almighty's a-thinking about, I reelly can't; and she the mother of seven dear children."

At the first moment possible nurse pops her head through the door, and says in that nice polite way of hers:—

"She is all right now, and Doctor thinks she will do nicely. A little boy for a Christmas box, Mr. Jones!"

Papa Jones was understood to remark that he "Didn't think," and that he would prefer the price of a half pint. Whereupon his candid friend called him "An onnatural brute, who didn't oughter have a dear biby"; and she was further of opinion that "Nuss was a reel lidy, and oughter to look 'igher than to wait on paupers, when she might have a nice young gentleman."

Curiously enough these were the sentiments expressed by the "Gentlemen of the Board" on her appointment.

However that might be, the unanimous verdict passed upon her on Christmas Day by her less fortunate sisters, amongst whom it was her privilege and delight to work, was, "Nurse is a dee-ar, Ain't she?"

H. H.