

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,185.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1910.

XLV.

Editorial.

COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.

Christmas Day is one of the great landmarks of the year, and long before the actual date we live under its influence. We cannot take up a daily paper without seeing the arrangements which are being made for the convenience of the travelling public; the shops, in festive dress, remind us that we need calendars and cards and Yule Tide gifts for friends at home and abroad. On all sides Christmas comes to meet us, and impresses us with its claims upon our thoughts, our time, and our pockets.

To none does it appeal with greater force than to the nursing staffs of hospitals and infirmaries, and to those whose work takes them into the homes of the poor. The season brings no holiday for them—their work is doubled, and it is a weary staff who go off duty when Christmas Day is at length over. But if Matrons, Sisters and nurses are weary, they are happy, for the day has seen the consummation of the work of weeks of forethought and endeavour, and in sharing the joy of hundreds of patients—joy in the promotion of which they have been the main factors—they themselves have found the peace and contentment which are the outcome of unselfish devotion to others, and it is certain that nowhere for a less expenditure is greater pleasure given than by the Sisters and nurses in the hospitals and infirmaries throughout the kingdom—for if their pockets are light their sympathies are wide, and their fingers nimble, and, given a combination of foresight, skill and earnest desire, it is possible to achieve much on a small expenditure.

Nevertheless, the demands on the slender incomes of nurses who work amongst the

sick poor in institutions and elsewhere, and know their needs, and those of their families, upon whom the sickness of father or mother always presses hardly, are many. If there were a deeper purse to be dipped into much more could be done, and those well-endowed with means could scarcely expend a portion of them to better advantage at this season than in co-operation with the nursing staffs of our hospitals, infirmaries, district nursing homes, or with school nurses, any one of whom could give expert information as to how money can be laid out to the best advantage at this season.

The patients in the wards, and even more the out-patients of our great hospitals, need to have help and brightness brought into their lives on Christmas Day, for in-patients are at least certain of warmth and comfort, and good food; while, if the condition of the homes of many of the out-patients in our hospitals were once realised, surely no one in the wealthy districts of our great cities could eat their Christmas dinner in luxury without doing something to ensure that some of those whose grates are often fireless, whose cupboards are often bare—are sure of warmth and food on this one day of the year.

Neither let us forget the school children, the necessitous among whom are now fed while the schools are open, but during the holidays often feel the pinch of hunger. We hope that every school child will have a Christmas dinner, and that something of the joy and comfort of the season will penetrate to every cheerless home in the kingdom.

If those with means would co-operate with those with knowledge, this end would be speedily achieved, and plenty for one day at least would be brought within reach of all.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)