

that the midnight Mass is accomplished, and that the Christ Child dwells once again with the sons of men.

Private 15682 ceased to laugh when he heard the bell, and a wondering look came over his face.

"Little 'un," he whispered, "are you Wypers? I *knew* I'd be home for Christmas."

And so he was.

Because neither time nor space matters at all to the Divine Child, and because His little Heart is so compassionate He had come to say that He had fetched Wypers to spend Christmas with his daddy and mummy.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

January 6th.—Nurses' Annual Re-union, Kensington Infirmary, 3 p.m. Guests are invited to stay all the evening.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

THE SOCIETY SUPER-MATRON.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have read with interest all you have written on the Endsleigh Palace Hospital case. It is very extraordinary from many points of view. The claim is that because certain rich people subscribe to military hospitals they should govern them absolutely and all the unfortunate people who staff them. But do subscribers of voluntary hospitals not subsidised by the State make this claim? Perhaps in a certain sense they do, but not to the extravagant extent claimed by the Society woman. Imagine the wife of the Chairman of a hospital—the London, say, or Thomas's, for instance—demanding an office next door to that of the Matron, proceeding to take precedence in a professional sense of the "senior nursing officer," engaging the nursing and domestic staff, visiting the wards at all hours, instructing the nurses in the management of the wards, receiving visitors and taking them round the wards at will; how long would it be possible for a Matron to maintain discipline under these conditions? The system is absolutely impossible, and that the Army Medical Department at the War Office has instituted or permitted such a system in auxiliary military hospitals is an insult to the whole nursing profession. I do not wonder there has at last been a "nurses' strike." It was high time. I fear, however, our moral cowardice as a whole may be responsible to some degree for the undignified position in which we now find ourselves.

Yours truly,

A MEMBER OF MATRONS' COUNCIL.

WAR TEMPER.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM.—During the past year we have heard much of "War Nursing," as if nursing the sick and wounded is fundamentally different from nursing any other sick body. *We*—that is, we professional nurses, know that nursing in war must be founded on exactly the same scientific principles as nursing in peace, and having said that, all the nonsense written about women "qualifying" in a few weeks for "War Nursing" is so much dangerous quackery.

But how about "War Tempers"? May we justifiably recognise such an excuse for lack of serenity in hospitals during the unusual disorganization consequent upon the War? I merely ask because the War has, on more than one occasion, been put forward in the hospital in which I am on duty, as an excuse for loss of temper. For instance, labour of all kinds is scarce, with the exception of nursing help—of that there is an abundant sufficiency. But of domestic labour our hospitals are short; domestics for the Home, ward-maids, even scrubbers, are now almost impossible to procure, with the result that we are reverting somewhat to the old order of things, when probationers and staff nurses did much of the ward cleaning, and, indeed, in my day the Sister herself often gloried in a good "scrub up and polish."

Now, the fact that a ward is left minus a ward-maid appears to result in a general collapse, so far as equanimity upon the part of Sister and Nursing staff is concerned. The work is not done—the Sister "goes for" the Staff nurse, the "Staff" worries the Pro.—the "dust flies," but not attached to the duster. Matron remonstrates and is told "It's only a bit of War temper," which apparently she stirs to boiling point by suggesting that "all grades should take a hand with the cleaning and get it done." She, wobbling on her peace-time pedestal, is restored to the perpendicular upon the burst of laughter which greets the remark of a "war worker" from the North, who exclaims, "I see nowt agin it."

This special Matron does not approve of the taste she has had of "War Temper."

Is there an antidote?

Yours,

ALWAYS AN INTERESTED READER.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Miss F. E. H. (London).—Write to Miss Pearse, Superintendent of the L.C.C. School Nurses, Education Department, L.C.C., 2, Savoy Hill, W.C.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

January 1st.—State generally the symptoms of gastric ulcer and the dangers arising therefrom. How would you feed a patient suffering from this disease?

January 8th.—Describe what you consider the most sanitary and practical form of bed-pan cover, and how best to cleanse spittoons for ward use.

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