

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.

We learn from several hospital Secretaries that the festive entertainments for patients and Staff are all provided out of special funds for the purpose, given by generous friends and supporters of the hospitals; and when we scan the programmes for these happy gatherings, it is evident the cost must be considerable.

One programme is typical of many. Take the Prince of Wales' General Hospital, Tottenham, for which a special appeal in the name of the Heir to the Throne is being made.

Christmas Day.—Every patient a gift on pillow. Carol Services at 10 a.m. in the wards. Patients' Dinners, twelve noon. Turkeys carved in the wards. Christmas pudding and other good things. Two visitors to each patient as guests to sumptuous teas, 3 to 6 p.m. Medical and Nursing Staffs dine together at one o'clock, and take tea with the patients and their guests.

Tuesday, 28th.—Tea, entertainment and Christmas tree for children and in-patients. Wednesday, 29th.—Tea, entertainment and tree, particularly for old people out-patients. Tea, Nurses' League, 6 p.m. Thursday, 30th.—Tea, entertainment and Tree, 3 to 6, Out-patient Children.

One evening Nurses entertain the domestic staff, porters and their wives, scrubbers and their husbands. Another evening the Nurses have a Fancy Dress Dance, and the Nursing staff are at Home one evening to 10 p.m.; and on New Year's Day, 8 to midnight. On New Year's Eve many of the staff attend Watch Night Service at a church in the neighbourhood.

Miss Bickerton, the Matron, takes an active part in all these gatherings of good will.

Santa Claus is apparently kept very busy for days at Christmas time in the hospital world, and one wonders how he manages to be so ubiquitous, as many little folks outside are also the richer for his visits.

AT ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, PADDINGTON.

We had occasion to visit a sick friend on Christmas Day, in Crawshay Ward, St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington. As the lift was not running at that particular time we had the pleasure, while climbing to the top of the building, of observing its exquisite cleanliness, and we all know how difficult it is to keep stairs and corridors speckless!

The ward we visited was decorated with exquisite taste in a scheme of pink and mauve, just delicate garlands of smilax over the beds, and a wealth of pink chrysanthemums and purple iris about the ward. This scheme of colouring was carried out in the electric light shades, most tastefully fashioned of pink paper and mauve tassels. The tea table was lovely—all the sugared cakes tipped with pink and mauve, and lovely little *bon bon* paper baskets, most cunningly fashioned in the same colours. We expect hospital Sisters and Nurses to handle deftly sick people and surgical appliances, but it is wonderful to find them possessed of talents to be envied by a skilled florist, or a professional *confiseur*. The patients all looked very smart in their pretty bed jackets and

ribbons, and were looking forward to an amusing time. It is at such a time one realises the national value of our voluntary hospitals.

Visiting St. Mary's reminded us of a statement made by a friend a few weeks ago. "You know," she said, "one is not always a welcome visitor at a hospital; officials are busy people, but I had occasion to call on the Medical Superintendent of St. Mary's Hospital about a little patient lately to enlist his help. It was quite delightful to be met with such courtesy and kindness. I came away wishing I could give a big donation to the hospital. Anyway, one can sing its praises."

AT THE LONDON TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL.

Christmas Day was observed at the London Temperance Hospital in a manner which will not fade from the memory of the patients who spent it there.

The wards were beautifully decorated with original designs which transformed them into bowers of flowers, with delicate green festoons and shaded electric globes of every hue. At 8 a.m. the Matron (Miss Donaldson), Sisters and Nurses visited each ward and sang exquisite old Christmas carols. At 12 noon a sumptuous dinner of turkey, plum pudding, mince pies, fruit and dessert was served with special delicacies for those who were too ill to enjoy such a repast. At 3 p.m. visitors were admitted and teas served all the afternoon in the Sisters' sitting rooms, and in the wards. During the afternoon the Senior House Surgeon (Mr. Shirley Fawsett), as "Father Christmas," visited the patients and distributed presents; so splendid was his impersonation that no one recognised him, and the shouts of glee with which he was greeted in the Children's Ward were a most refreshing change in these days of pessimism and materialism. The Nursing Staff were not forgotten, and the patients showed as much pleasure in seeing their own nurses receive a parcel as in eagerly catching their own.

At 4 p.m. the Chairman of the Hospital, Major Richard Rigg, O.B.E., M.A., accompanied by the Senior Surgeon, H. J. Paterson, Esq., M.S., C.B.E., and the Matron, visited the wards and shook hands with every patient, speaking a few words of sympathy and cheer to each one.

A huge fir tree, perfect in its symmetry, having been sent all the way from the North of Scotland, was erected in the Children's Ward, and literally groaned under its burden of toys and garments. The children treated in this hospital are drawn from a very poor neighbourhood, and their delight was overwhelming.

By 6.30 p.m. a band of willing helpers, including the Chaplain of the Hospital, had transported (on stretchers and carrying chairs) all patients who could be moved, to the Out-Patients' Hall, where, through the kindness of friends, a first-class concert and living marionettes entertainment was given. The Hall was crowded with friends of the patients and all the nursing and domestic staff. By 9 p.m. every patient was safe back in bed, voting the day "perfect."

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