

THE NURSERY NURSE.

CHRISTMAS AT THE NORLAND INSTITUTE.

Time and again one has come across a Norland nurse; and the impression left on the mind of a professional woman was ever the same, i.e., "How highly-trained she is as a children's nurse," and one wished to learn of that training. An opportunity came on Thursday, December 14th, in the form of an invitation to the Christmas party at the Norland Institute. It was an auspicious event alike to the children and their guests; and so many happy incidents crowd the mind it is difficult to set them down in order.

As we entered the nursery children were singing Christmas carols, clustered in a happy group, all in their party dresses, in the foreground of the picture. Their dear baby voices thrilled one strangely. Behind them were grown-up carol singers in coats, hats, and cravats, and each carrying the "Waits' Lantern" on a pole; and in an alcove of the hall, farther back, was an augmented choir of happy nurses in their becoming buff uniform and aprons, each wearing the N.I. Badge on the left arm. Such a lot of pretty girls delighted and satisfied eye and mind alike. At the end of a fine programme of song and story, the Christmas-tree appeared, and the gifts were distributed from it. The guests were then invited to tea in the Lecture Hall, and free to wander all over the Institute.

Naturally, we went to the nurseries first, and these were a joy to behold! Large apartments with lofty ceilings and plenty of air-space, divided for day and night use, and provided with every requirement for baby, and the other tiny toddlers. Two or three children in each nursery and a nurse for each child practically. They were having nursery tea—the nurses, like little mothers, in the midst of their family. Bonnie, laughing, healthy babies, and dear little ones clinging to nurse's skirts, shyly showing their Christmas-tree presents, made a pretty picture. Each nursery is specially named—"Sunrise," "Dawn," "Freedom," "Spring," "Forget-me-Not," we read on the doors. On each floor are several of these nurseries, with fully-equipped bathrooms for their tiny occupants.

Then we visited the kindergarten school, where the "tinies" play at lessons. Here, samples of their work were laid out for inspection and methods of instruction demonstrated. The children's church, adjoining the school, with its tiny altar and rows of tiny chairs, bespoke its infant congregation, for "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." On the altar lay offerings of Christmas toys and gifts for the day nurseries and creche at Bethnal Green, which is maintained there by the freewill offerings of the staff and the children, with a fully-trained Norland nurse in charge. Next we visited the nurses' quarters—large apartments divided into cubicles, each complete for the nurse's comfort. The kitchens and laundry deserve notice, where the students are instructed

in cooking, domestic hygiene, laundry work, &c. So ended a happy and instructive tour of the building.

It may interest our readers to append a short account of the Institute and its work. The Norland Institute was founded in 1904 by Mrs. Walter Ward, whom we had the pleasure of seeing at the children's concert, where she delivered a short speech. Its object is "for the training of educated girls as children's nursery nurses." The scheme of training extends over a period of one year, and is divided as follows:—

1. Twelve weeks in the Norland Institute as a probationer.
2. Twelve weeks in a Children's Hospital; three weeks' holiday.
3. Twelve weeks in the Institute as a student for more advanced educational work.
4. Twelve weeks in the practising nurseries.

This scheme of training includes everything theoretical and practical, ethical and religious, a children's nursery nurse should know, and their standard is very high. The special feature of the Norland Nurseries is that each nurse has charge of a model nursery, assisted by a student-in-training acting as under nurse. The ages of the children vary from the month to eight years, and the training includes the instruction of the older children. "Special pains are taken to lead the students to grasp the fact that their daily life in the presence of the children constitutes religious training during the earliest years of child life." "Little children love one another"; "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." Such teaching forms the true basis of nursery religion and has a direct influence on the future character of the child. Consequently, it is of first importance that one who chooses nursery work as her profession should have an innate sense of honour and truth, and be a woman of simple and upright character."

The far-reaching influence of the Norland nurse is, therefore, unique; and, after our visit to the Institute, we ceased to wonder at her influence in the homes of the British public.

A. E. M.

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