

ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS.

From far and near come reports of delightful Christmas festivities, and year by year the Nursing Staffs of our hospitals become more and more versatile in their celebrations; if only we could spare more time for gaiety, none of these delightful invitations would be refused, but alas! the fun of the Fair is now to the young.

The following description of Christmas, 1933, at Croydon General Hospital, will prove how our nurses devote their talents to the happiness of the patients, and the wonder is so many permit their dramatic instincts to lie hidden under cap and apron—to peep out just once a year for the pleasure of others, as it is very evident they do so enjoy make-believe. "I love being a flower—or a singing bird, or a cave-man—such a change from dull old me!"

CROYDON GENERAL HOSPITAL.

As usual, the staff of the Hospital worked very hard to make Christmas as bright and cheerful as possible for the patients who were unfortunately forced to spend the holiday in an atmosphere of illness.

Each ward was very brightly decorated, and was the outcome of much thought and many hours of strenuous preparation.

"Mark" Ward was transformed into an Orange Grove, orange trees growing beside the beds and in the entrance.

"Edridge" Ward, looking very spick and span after being reopened, was changed into the home of "Alice in Wonderland."

"Mary" Ward became a Rose Garden, with a Bird Bath and Lily Pond and a Rustic Archway over the entrance. Bowls of roses were placed about the ward, and garlands hung from the walls.

The Children's Ward staged a scene from the "Babes in the Wood." The "Babes" were seen sleeping under a carpet of fallen leaves whilst gnomes danced about; and, of course, there was a huge Christmas tree very prettily decorated and laden with toys, which were distributed on Boxing Day by Father Christmas, who was impersonated by Mr. Stephens (Resident Medical Officer), and he was assisted by Mr. Locke (House Surgeon).

A nautical air was provided in "Roper" Ward, the patients being dressed in sailors' suits (which were all made by the Sister), and a model of a battleship stood in the centre. The ward, for the occasion, being renamed "H.M.S. Recovery."

"Farley" Ward represented a hunting scene, with models of huntsmen riding to hounds.

On Christmas Eve members of the Nursing Staff toured the wards singing carols.

The Salvation Army Band played in the grounds on Christmas morning, and at noon the patients had their Christmas dinner. Members of the Board of Management and the Honorary Medical and Surgical Staff acted as carvers. In the afternoon each patient was allowed two visitors, who were entertained to tea, during which time the Nurses' Concert Party toured the wards and gave several delightful turns.

On Boxing Day the Nurses visited their friends and the Annual Prize Giving took place, the prizes being presented by Mrs. Genge, wife of the Senior Physician of the Hospital. The following were the prizewinners:—The "Heath Clark" Gold Medal, for efficiency and kindness to patients, which is awarded by vote—Nurse Alice Powis; 3rd Year Nurses' Prize—Nurse Joan Miller; 2nd Year Nurses' Prize—Nurse Bessie Taylor (who won the 1st Year Nurses' Prize last year); 1st Year Nurses' Prize—Nurse Emmie Miller; Dr.

Preston's Prize for highest number of marks gained in Medical Nursing Examination—Nurse Joan Miller.

In the evening the nurses had a fancy dress dance, and many original costumes were seen.

During the festivities many friends and supporters visited the Hospital.

We congratulate the Matron, Miss C. L. Keys-Wells, on the perfect organization of all the arrangements.

ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

NURSES' MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY.

The Governors' Hall at St. Thomas's Hospital is a beautiful and dignified place which lends itself to pageantry, and the Nurses' Musical and Dramatic Society of the Nightingale Home are to be congratulated on having permission to present their delightful Programme on January 18th and 19th in such appropriate surroundings.

The hall was crowded on each occasion by a most appreciative audience.

Part I.—Arranged and produced by Nurse Montgomery in five scenes, opened 400 B.C., and carried us through the centuries to the present day. The cave-men as we were in the opening scene found us hirsute, swung about with skins, snatching bones from a central pot, swilling mead, full of brute force and hilarity. Through succeeding centuries, with the aid of soapsuds, perfumes, razors, bedezined in satin and jewels, our animal spirits subdued by milk and tobacco, we no longer in 1934 tolerate primitive and strenuous conditions, but enjoy the antics of our cave-men in cabaret, much to the disgust of our maiden aunts. Just a hint to our Bright Young People that there may be at no distant date a reversion to type!

The five episodes, historic in theme, were charmingly presented. Love, valour and convention, each playing their heroic part in life's short span of time.

Part II was presented by the Staff Nurses, miraculously uniform in appearance, who as "The Singers," sang exquisitely for our pleasure greatly to the credit of their Conductor. The dramatic sketches which followed were very amusing. In "The Family Group" the efforts of a family to be photographed together, never materialized owing to the perversity of "Gran'ma," the characters were very well cast. Nurse Stebbing as "Ede" invited a good skelping in Scottish vernacular; but "Gran'ma," Nurse S. M. Turner, has a future in comedy. Later in the programme "Grensal Green, A Drammer," discovered the dramatic genius of the evening. Nurse Leachman as Anthony, may seriously consider the footlights in competition with Nursing as a career. She was *petit-maitre* to the marrow of her bones, and the leap through the window to eternity was faultless in its vanishing grace!

A pianoforte solo (*Etude in E. major*), by Moszkowsky, by Nurse Hartley, brought an uproarious encore, to which she kindly responded.

Nurse Theobald's topical recitation of course brought the house down; we all so love personalities.

"The Singers" gave us more items of song most harmoniously rendered.

Then, after "God Save the King," the Producer was sent for, and deservedly applauded.

The Treasurer, the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, the Matron, Tutors, Sisters and all concerned with the Nightingale Training School have cause for sincere satisfaction when publicly associated with so talented a body of women as compose the Musical and Dramatic Society of the Nursing Staff at St. Thomas's Hospital.

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