

THE COSTUMES OF HOSPITAL NURSES.



FIRST PRIZE FOR SET OF THREE—SALCE INFIRMARY.

AN exhibition, as pretty as it was rare and interesting, was held last month in the board room of the Charing Cross Hospital, by the courtesy of the managers.

It dealt with the costumes of the sisters, nurses, and probationers engaged in nursing the sick in the various hospitals and infirmaries throughout the kingdom; and for the display of these costumes, three or four hundred wax dolls were chosen.

Never since the Middle Ages have dolls occupied such an important position, and



FIRST PRIZE FOR SET OF TWO—PUTNEY HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES.

never have they appeared to such advantage. The dolls of former times were models of fashion, while those who were assembled in such numbers in the Charing Cross Hospital last week were models of service and devotion—representatives of the noble work undertaken by the women of the nineteenth century to mitigate suffering and to elevate the poor and the miserable.

These doll guests have been brought together from all parts of the kingdom, to show the costumes worn by the nurses in various hospitals,



SECOND PRIZE FOR SET OF THREE—RADCLIFFE INFIRMARY.

and this has not been brought about by a mere whim, but rather as an answer to many questions addressed to the editor of the *Hospital* on the subject; and that no better method of answering could have been adopted, one had only to look at the dolls, whose dresses were accurate even to the minutest detail of little ornaments, badges, and chatelaines.

To have described these on paper, together with the endless variety of form and colour employed, and the subtle difference between one and another, would have been almost impossible, but the eye takes this in at once. A very pleasing feature about the costumes is



NATIONAL AID SOCIETY—EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

that one and all have been made by the nurses themselves in their rare moments of leisure, and the exquisite work put into the majority of them proves that the nurses are truly womanly women, and as intimate with the art of needlework as were our grandmothers.

We were bewildered with the number of tiny creatures standing on every available space, whether on tables, window-seats, or mantelshelf. They were of all shapes and sizes; dark, fair, and nondescript, tall and short, pretty and plain. All were so alike, and yet so unlike, that it seemed impossible to



WAITING THE ARRIVAL.

get a clear understanding of the scene. One might as well have been cast into the midst of a flock of sheep and desired to describe the difference between the individuals of the flock.

But once fairly started, it was a most fascinating study. Here was a waxen fairy whose attractive face and frizzy hair formed a piquant contrast to her demure and puritanic dress, and would have been ineligible for competition, but that the nurse who sent it explained that she lived so far from a town that she could not obtain a doll with plain hair, so was compelled to take what she could get.

Some of the dainty ones had brought their



CAPS.

own standing room, a piece of forethought for which to be thankful, for, glancing around, we saw that some of their neighbours, in spite of the aid of stiff paper under their dresses, were unable to stand upright, but leaned against each other as if overcome by the heat and the "stares" they had to encounter.

By the time we had seen so much we were sufficiently accustomed to the room to single out certain objects, and quite agreed with many around us that the two representatives of the nurses at the Putney Incurables' Hospital, in their brown and black serges, pretty caps and aprons,



were perfect; the one was armed with a towel and tiny basin, and the other with a minute roll of lint, and deservedly gained a first prize.

The Norfolk and Norwich Hospital costumes are well worthy of the prize they gained, the 4th for the set of three—the monthly nurse in fawn-coloured cotton; the medical nurse in black serge; and the fever nurse in blue zephyr, with becoming and serviceable holland aprons and spotted caps with strings.

The University College Hospital sent a ward with its three nurses, the sister in a nun-



MONSALL HOSPITAL MANCHESTER.

like dress of black serge, "quaintly severe," as though to bear testimony that the wearer had given up the world and its so-called pleasures; the nurse, in blue serge and cap tied under the chin; the probationer in grey gingham; and two little patients in red flannel.

We were very pleased with the nurses' representatives sent from the Royal Albert Hospital, Devonport, although they did



ARMY NURSING SISTERS.

not gain a prize; the black cashmere and muslin cap with long strings, and becoming apron, were very attractive.

The dress of the sisters of the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street is a departure from the general colours, being a dark red serge, with characteristic cap and apron.

The King's College dress is very becoming, and its colour Raphael green.

One of the most attractive objects in the exhibition was an india-rubber doll representing

a patient terribly hurt, and bandaged in a most beautiful and scientific manner by one of Miss Pollock's pupils; it was a perfect study.

To thoughtful people, and those accustomed to hospital work, this exhibition is full of interest. Every dress speaks to us of watchful nights, and days of hard and often repulsive work, undertaken by girls who have willingly given up the pleasures of youth, and undertaken, with God's blessing, the high vocation of nurse and comforter to the sick and the helpless.

It is a mistake to think that girls rush into this work without counting the cost, and as a mere impulse of sentiment. I know, personally, a large number of them, and I can say, certainly, that it has formed the subject of prayer long before the decision was made. As I looked at these girls, in various parts of the room, there was a look of tenderness and strength about them which I thought must commend them to the weak and the suffering among whom their lot was cast.

The object of the exhibition—which was to afford the details of nursing costumes to those who were anxious to avoid infringing on others' rights while securing a costume for their own institution, and also to give a knowledge of the colour and cut of all institutions, so that it would be easy to distinguish by the dress to what hospital a nurse belonged—has been fully realised.

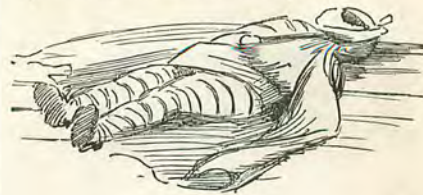
One is glad to think that these doll nurses will not be dispersed, but that, in company one with the other, they are to find a permanent home in a live Nurses' Home, and that visitors may see them on certain days free of charge.

It will be very puzzling for any hospital of the future to decide upon a costume peculiar to itself, for form and colour of every tone seem to have been already utilised. Red, green, and prune are the colours of three individual hospitals; but as a rule they are black, brown, blue, and grey.

It may interest some of the readers to hear how and where the prizes were bestowed.

For sets of three or more dolls.

1. Salop Infirmary—Miss Bromley.
2. Radcliffe Infirmary—Nurse Barnes.
3. Charing Cross in 1879.
4. Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.



BANDAGES.

For two dolls.

1. Putney Hospital for Incurables—Nurse Slaughter.
2. Bradford Infirmary—Nurse Phillips.
3. Sheffield Infirmary—Miss Rickards.
4. Pendlebury Hospital—Miss Plowon.

Single dolls.

1. Swindon Victoria Hospital—Mrs. K. Smith.
2. National and Metropolitan Association—Nurse Prikler.
3. Cardiff Infirmary—Miss Davies.

A FRENCH ROLY-POLY.

WE lived in France at that time. We naturally were all the more fond of English things because we were away from England, and our dear mother sometimes treated us to a purely English dish, which, of course, she had to prepare herself, our French cook professing to be utterly incapable of understanding the directions for carrying out what she, no doubt, looked upon as barbarous *cuisine*.

Some of these preparations were much liked by our French friends; plum pudding and roly-poly were especially appreciated. Now, if there was one toothsome dish above another that my mother prided herself upon, it was a roly-poly. On one memorable occasion, when she had surpassed herself in making this favourite pudding (sometimes irreverently called "jam bolster" by the boys), a young lady, who was staying with us, was so delighted with mother's *chef d'œuvre*, that she begged to have the recipe, declaring that she would never rest until she had, herself, made such a roly-poly as she had partaken of that day.

My mother, much pleased, complied with her request, and gave her the most minute directions, impressing most particularly upon her that her success would depend chiefly upon the lightness of the crust.

Our visitor was a very lively girl, endowed with a good flow of spirits and a keen sense of humour. She entertained us that evening with imaginary descriptions of the comical amazement of her people, the exclamations, the quizzical remarks, when she should set before them the work of her own hands—the triumphant roly-poly!

"But then, my dear," said my mother, with gentle pride, "think of your pleasure when they find it so good."

The next day our friend left us, promising to write and tell us as soon as she had initiated

her family into the delights of her new English dish. We all felt rather doubtful. We could not even think that she had listened properly to the directions. She never did listen. Mother was afraid that she would leave out the most important ingredients. In a few days her worst fears were confirmed, when she received the following letter, written, of course, in French.

"DEAR MADAME S.—Behold in me a being utterly disgraced as a cook! My 'roly-poly' was a disastrous failure. I know not how I managed it—I mean, how I mismanaged it. I thought I remembered exactly all that you told me. I was so anxious that all should be right, that I even went into the kitchen to take it out of the cloth myself. It looked lovely! I carried it into the dining-room proudly, as in olden times the daughter of the house bore aloft the roasted peacock into the banquetting hall.

"Alas! how short was my triumph! How fleeting are our joys! I had claimed the privilege of serving my pudding myself. With just one exultant glance at the family sitting round the table, eyeing the work of my hand critically, I began to cut the first slices. Imagine my dismay when I met with the most horrid resistance. Impossible to get the knife through! A dead silence, and then peals of laughter covered me with confusion. Amid jokes and jeers my mother tried to cut it, my father tried, my sisters and brothers tried, till they were all red in the face.

"But it is made of plaster, thy 'roly-poly!'" said my little brother. Goaded on by their unkind remarks, I made a last desperate attempt. The knife broke! They were all convulsed. I seized the dish, opened the window, and flung the contents into the courtyard below.

"The watch dog barked and whined. 'You shall have it!' I exclaimed, and I ran out and loosed him from the chain. He pounced upon the pudding and attacked it at once, expecting a treat.

"I went to bed. It was late, and I did not wish to hear any more about my culinary fiasco. But I had not done with it yet. Would you believe it? That wretched dog kept me awake all night, clattering and rattling my 'roly-poly' over the stones of the paved yard, in his vain endeavours to get a bite. The next day he still played with it, and rolled it about until it reached the garden, where, in a petrified state, it has become the chief ornament of the rockery!"

We ascertained afterwards, on cross-questioning our friend, that, in deference to the cook who was helping her, and who, with French ideas on the subject, would not admit that pastry made with beef suet or dripping could be "mangeable," she had made the crust with a little butter. She also admitted that finding she had put too much water, she had added flour until the mixture was perhaps just a little too thick. She then kneaded it vigorously for a long time, and then found the rolling out so amusing, that she perhaps continued that process a little too long. Well she was not quite sure that the water was boiling when the pudding was put in the pan, but she certainly made it in good time, quite four hours before it was wanted. In short, she had fulfilled all the conditions to ensure the failure which this lively, but kind-hearted, French girl described in such mock-tragic style, intended, no doubt, to amuse my mother, and to raise a smile instead of a sigh of disappointment as she read.