

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

CHRISTMAS AT HEADQUARTERS.

Christmas time at the club was characterised by all the hilarity and the observance of customs, old and new, which we have learnt to associate with the festive season. As is their way, a number of our country members elected to come up "to spend Christmas with their Association," a decision which always gives to us great pleasure; it was pleasant also to find that many of the private nurses could make it possible to come in and partake of our Christmas cheer.

But Christmas commences early at the R.B.N.A. Club, and for at least a week before it is due, the postman becomes a sort of perpetual Father Christmas, and there is many a merry party round the hall fire to help in the work of "sorting out" what he unloads. One thing which contributed to make this Christmas a particularly merry one was the presence at the Club of Mrs. Temple, who has always shown so much wonderful kindness to the nurses at Queen's Gate, and who came up this year for the sole purpose of giving them a really good time. During the week quantities of mistletoe, holly with its bright red berries, evergreens of all sorts, and great bunches of pink chrysanthemums began to make their appearance straight from Covent Garden. Soon dining room, hall, and drawing-room were transformed and the former looked particularly beautiful and Christmas-like with its wreath of glistening holly on the top of the high panelling; gay old Father Christmases, with the wind in their white beards, looked benevolently down from the arch between the dining room and Council Chamber, and, from the opposite arch, hung suspended the beautiful banner of the Association. Occasional brightly coloured balloons gave an acceptable variation in the scheme of decoration.

Our dinner table has to be an elastic one always at Christmas, for it is impossible to tell, until the last moment, how many guests there will be; this year it had to be stretched into the Council Chamber, and very attractive indeed it looked with its pink chrysanthemums, its tall candles of deep pink, and little fairies among the holly and mistletoe that trailed down the centre of the table; the pink Chinese lanterns over the electric lights added to the warmth of colouring.

We were indebted to Mrs. Harte and Mrs. Donaldson for two excellent turkeys, and Mrs. Temple, with her other gifts, provided a supply of fine champagne and old Madeira from her own cellar. Suddenly, while dinner was in progress, all the lights were put out, except the candles, and the Christmas pudding appeared in its dancing purple flame, carried triumphantly by its creator, Miss Kathleen Morrissey; this was the signal for a hearty cheer and there was much laughter as, here and there, some hidden treasure was unearthed. Again, thanks to Mrs. Temple, quantities of fine crackers were to be found, and, as the reports from these began to go off, the company quite

suddenly appeared in fancy dress; never surely was such variety of elegant head-dress, and one lady shouted with joy as she unfolded a glengarry, remarking that it was a most appropriate prize as she was really Scotch. Her companions were unkindly incredulous when she set that same glengarry on her head with its ribbons to the front!

All the toasts were duly honoured—the King, H.R.H. the President, Mrs. Temple ("the Fairy Godmother of the Club"), the members of the R.B.N.A., members overseas, and the Australian Branch, the Administrative Staff, the Domestic Staff, and lastly, we drank the health of and gave three hearty cheers for one who, in past years, had spared neither money nor energy to give her colleagues a good time at Christmas—Miss Beatrice Treasure; alas, the limitations incident to nursing an infectious case prevented her from being at our Christmas banquet. After dinner, everyone went to the drawing-room to enjoy coffee and liqueurs, and, while some elected to join a bridge table, or to chat by the fireside, a more energetic majority played the old-fashioned games or acted charades, and generally justified the pronouncement of a recent sojourner among us: "a place of plenty of gaiety, plenty of good will, and your proximity to Peter Pan has, I think, drawn you all into his kingdom of eternal youth." Then, as the Christmas day drew to its close, there was "a very parfait knight," who adopted the rôle of charioteer, and, in his nice new car, drove contingents of our guests to their various destinations. With words of thanks to Mrs. John Temple, who had given to her fellow members such a splendid time, everyone slipped off to duty or to bed, and more than one felt like re-echoing the words of one of our members as she buttoned up her coat preparatory to setting out for a long night vigil: "The sort of Christmas that doesn't in the least end with Christmas, for we remember it, and so it makes the Club seem like a real home to us all the year."

THE NEW YEAR.

We send to all our Members our best wishes for a very happy New Year. We hope that it holds for them and for the whole profession many good things and that it will be a year marked by advancement in many directions; we would offer to our Members our thanks for all their splendid support for the Association and its work throughout the year that has just closed. Perhaps the most important event, from the point of view of the Association itself, has been its purchase of 194, Queen's Gate. It is just a little over seven years since we took over the lease of this mansion in Queen's Gate in a spirit of adventure, perhaps not altogether justified at the time by our finances; but the good will of our Members proved excellent security, and the Club, as a place of residence, was soon widely taken advantage of by them, while the large rooms allowed us to have more numerous meetings of all kinds than had been possible in the limited space that 10, Orchard Street had to offer.

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