

AN INSPIRING FUNCTION.

DINNER TO MISS STEUART DONALDSON.

Although at the end of July many Matrons are out of town, a very happy party of friends foregathered at the dinner arranged by the Royal British Nurses' Association at its Club House, 194, Queen's Gate, S.W. 7, on July 28th, in honour of Miss Steuart Donaldson, the newly-appointed Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow.

The chair was taken by Mr. Herbert Paterson, M.C. Cantab., F.R.C.S., C.B.E., Senior Surgeon to the London Temperance Hospital, where for the past eighteen months Miss Donaldson has held the position of Matron, and he was supported by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Mr. Parkinson, a Vice-Chairman of the Board of Management of the Hospital, Mr. McClure, Surgeon to the Hospital, and many past and present Sisters and Nurses of the L.T.H. staff and other friends. It was a great and unexpected pleasure that Professor M. Adelaide Nutting, R.N., of Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, should have been in London and was also present as a Guest of Honour.

The dining tables had been charmingly decorated with beautiful lilies (*lilium auratum*), pink carnations, and trailing sprays of smilax, the gift of R.B.N.A. members resident in the Club.

The toast of the King having been proposed by the Chairman, and loyally honoured, Mr. Paterson said those present had met to do honour to Miss Steuart Donaldson on her appointment as Matron of one of the largest hospitals in the Kingdom, and to wish her all success and *au revoir*. In the year and a-half she had been Matron of the London Temperance Hospital she had gained the admiration and affection of the nursing and—if he might be allowed to say so—of the medical staff. It had made such a difference to the medical staff to have so efficient a Matron as Miss Donaldson. It was a very great loss to the Temperance Hospital; but London's loss was Glasgow's gain. He proposed the health of Miss Donaldson, Guest of Honour. This was responded to with enthusiasm.

MISS STEUART DONALDSON, who on rising was received with much applause, said she could not express to the Royal British Nurses' Association her deep appreciation of, and gratitude for, the happy thought and gracious deed in her honour in arranging this dinner. It almost overwhelmed her.

The Association during the last eighteen months had meant a great deal to her. She had always been identified with its ideals, but had for some time been away from London and so not able to come into close touch with it.

The name of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and her work for the nursing profession had always been an inspiration to her. Now that she herself would have such an opportunity of helping young students she hoped to be able to pass on some of Mrs. Fenwick's professional aspirations to the younger generation of nurses.

She was leaving at the London Temperance Hospital a very promising, very brilliant group

of young students; she commended them to the Association.

The Chairman then read the following telegrams:—

TELEGRAM FROM H.R.H. PRINCESS CHRISTIAN.

"Please associate me with the Corporation's welcome to Miss Donaldson and Professor Nutting this evening. Convey to the former my good wishes, and to the latter an expression of the pleasure which it gives me to know that she is the Association's guest to-night.

"HELENA,

"President of the Royal British Nurses' Association."

TELEGRAM FROM THE SCOTTISH NURSES' CLUB.

"The Scottish Nurses' Club rejoice at your appointment to Glasgow. We hope to welcome you personally soon after your arrival.

"STEWART, Secretary."

MR. PATERSON then said that one of the most important events in the annals of nursing had taken place recently, namely, the opening of the State Register of Nurses. One name would always be associated with that movement. He need not say that it was the name of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. She had ploughed a long and lonely furrow, but she had fought on, ever keeping one aim in view. She had done great work as Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, but it was as a founder of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and as the pioneer of the movement for State Registration of Nurses that she would be gratefully remembered by posterity.

He asked those present to drink to her health, to congratulate her on the fulfilment of her life's work, and upon the opening of the State Register.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, in responding to the toast, said forty years of work for one cause was apt to damp all but the most ardent spirits. At the very first meeting, almost before the British Nurses' Association was founded, its promoters had adopted State Registration of Nurses, and the granting of diplomas, as part of their programme, and put these aspirations in print. When afterwards she took that paper round to leading medical men and asked them to help the nurses they were seriously shocked, and advised her to put it into the waste paper basket. It took 34 years to accomplish that programme. The nursing profession hardly realised yet what enormous powers had been given them under the Nurses' Registration Act, and the Rules based upon it. Everything depended upon the interpretation of the Act, and the drafting and administration of the Rules.

The silver pen with which the Minister of Health had signed the Rules was now the property of the General Nursing Council, and would be mounted, and carefully preserved, so that future generations of nurses might know how much importance was attached by the nurses of to-day to the signing of these Rules.

It was a very great privilege to have lived to see the accomplishment of this work. She hoped

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)