

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS CHRISTIAN.

FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL BRITISH
NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

*"It is perfect service rendered, duties done
In charity, soft speech and stainless days
These riches shall not fade away in life,
Nor any death dispraise."*

With these words Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian concluded, thirty-five years ago, her first Presidential Address to the Royal British Nurses' Association. We may fittingly quote them again to-day, for we find no others which so well describe the simple goodness, high endeavour for others, and stainless honour of this great Royal Lady. Words seem to grow meaningless when we lift our pen to put on record the terrible loss which the Royal British Nurses' Association has sustained through her death. For some weeks her serious illness has cast a cloud over the Association she loved so well, and letters have poured in from all parts of Great Britain showing that our anxiety was shared by Members in every part of the country, and when on the evening of the 9th inst. (in the room where, two short years before, Her Royal Highness had declared the Club open) the nurses stood to record their sorrow, we felt that the hearts of Members, in all parts of the Empire, were throbbing in sympathy with those who, reverently and in silence, let their minds dwell on the great Personality who had passed from among us. In the messages and letters which have reached us from the nurses, one note is struck by all—that their sorrow and sense of loss are too deep for words; and so it is with us as we write the notice that is to carry from Headquarters to the Members the official intimation of the death of their President. We feel that they will not blame us if these lines express very inadequately their sense of grief. Feelings, not merely of loyalty, but of deep affection towards their President have knit

together us who are Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and, whatever its history may be in years to come, it will ever be permeated by the fragrance of the memory of many gracious acts of kindness on the part of Her Royal Highness. The younger Members of the Association will perhaps never realise quite how intimately she was connected with everything their Association found it good to undertake, how practical and unselfish was her interest in it, and how, in every decision she was called upon to make, the question "What is best for the nurses?" was the one that pre- faced her considerations and dominated her subsequent action. Here, to-day, in retrospect, we can only touch upon one or two of the many directions in which Her Royal Highness brought her great influence and her outstanding ability to help and strengthen the Association. To commence with, the beautiful preamble of the Royal Charter, in the quaint but strangely dignified phraseology of an olden time, tells how the nurses of the Empire owe this priceless possession to Her Royal Highness, the Princess Christian. It was due to her influence chiefly that we were given the right to prefix the title "Royal" to the name of the Association; and when various private nursing co- operations were founded by the Association from time to time, Her Royal Highness took a most practical interest in the work of organization. In their efforts to obtain legal status for their profession the nurses of the R.B.N.A. had the full sympathy of their President. She took part in every benevolent scheme inaugurated, and indeed in every enterprise undertaken by the R.B.N.A. we have had the unflinching and ever ready support of "The Nurses' Princess." Her interest in the Association lasted up to the close of her life. Of late, when her health has been failing somewhat, we have missed her from the Council table when matters of importance had to be discussed, but the Members may like to know her closing words at our last interview, which

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