

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

OUR BIRTHDAY PARTY.

On December 7th, the anniversary of the foundation of the Royal British Nurses' Association, the early Members were entertained by those who had joined within the last twenty years and a very pleasant and enjoyable afternoon was spent. It was felt to be more or less in the nature of a family gathering and had all the air of joyousness that one associates with Birthday Parties. When Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, the Founder of the Association, entered the room there was a rousing cheer from those present and we sang "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow." Then Mr. Reidy, the son of one of our Members, played "Auld Lang Syne" and the company joined hands and sang round the huge birthday cake with its forty candles; tea was passed round and "auld acquaintance" was renewed and good old times discussed again. Suddenly in the midst of the "Tea Party" Sairey Gamp was announced, by a smart up-to-date maid, and in walked Miss Birch as this famous character; her entry was greeted with shouts of laughter and exuberant hand shakings. Suddenly there came to her side a small figure in the white coat-frock and soft cap of the modern nurse, and one can scarcely imagine a greater contrast—little wonder that Sairey held up her hands with the exclamation "Is that *me!*" Mrs. Reidy (whose beautiful voice has been an asset to more than one of our parties) sang several lovely songs and, after repeated calls for a speech, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick gave a short history of the founding of the Association, of the victory of the nurses when, in spite of tremendous opposition from the hospitals, they won their Charter, and on the responsibilities that the Charter and the sacrifices of the founders lay upon the Members to see that the Association stands for high principles and for all that should benefit the sick and the Nursing Profession even if it be at the cost of material and temporary advantages. The names of the Signatories to the Royal Charter, names of persons held in high honour in their time but of whom only seven of the thirty now remain with us, were read out, and some of the members remarked afterwards that this seemed to them the most interesting and impressive item in the afternoon's proceedings, a page of real nursing history.

In the midst of the proceedings a telegram arrived from Her Royal Highness, the President, conveying her good wishes to all Founder Members.

The younger Members have every reason to be satisfied with the result of their hospitality; we have seldom had so many of the early Members at headquarters together, and one striking thing is that we have received from the older Members, who could not come, a very large budget of correspondence expressing, sometimes in the most touching words, their appreciation of their colleagues' thought for them in inviting them to partake of their hospitality on the birthday of the Association, which owes so much to their support during the last twenty years of its existence.

CHRISTMAS AT HEADQUARTERS.

The gathering round our Christmas table this year was smaller than usual, probably owing to the fact that Christmas fell on a Sunday, but the thirty-five who sat down to partake of the Christmas cheer were as merry and light-hearted as ever. There were not the usual toasts; but just before dinner commenced a telegram from Her Royal Highness the President was read conveying to the Members greetings and good wishes. Messages of good will were also received from Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Sir Alfred Rice-Oxley, Mr. Montague Price, and others. Mr. Price and Mrs. Harte sent us the fine turkeys which were greatly enjoyed. The dining-room had been beautifully decorated, as were other parts of the house, by Miss Beatrice Treasure, and to her we were indebted for quantities of beautiful flowers and smilax, while Lady Leith of Fyvie renewed her kindness of previous years and sent us a generous supply of evergreens; everyone had words of admiration for the lovely picture which the dining-room presented. The encircling evergreens above the panelling, with smilax falling from the high arch, trailing down the pillars, festooning the windows and the banner, and lying lightly on the long dinner tables, were very lovely against the background of deep cream; graceful narcissi on the tables and fine chrysanthemums in the tall jars on the mantelpiece completed the decoration.

After dinner tickets were drawn for the gifts on the Christmas tree, and there was much amusement as Miss Cattell cut down the fruit. The tree, also presented by Miss Treasure, was so tall that it has had to remain in the hall; very lovely it has been with its fairy lights and trinkets on dark green boughs. Miss Treasure deprecates any mention of her kindness, but we cannot give this short account of our festivities without expressing something of gratitude for the untiring energy and overflowing generosity which characterised her efforts to give her colleagues a Christmas unrivalled even by any we can read of in "the good old times." The remainder of Christmas Day was spent round blazing fires in the drawing-room, where late in the afternoon we all partook of tea and Christmas cake.

Gifts of stockings for the domestic staff were filled with gifts from the Nurses, and sounds of laughter in the early morning (presumably during the unloading of these stockings) woke many of us to the realisation that the year's festival day had come.

The administrative Staff would offer to the Members their warm thanks for the many messages of good will received, and tender their good wishes that all Members of the Association may have a bright and prosperous New Year.

On New Year's Eve we listened to the beautiful service on the wireless. While bringing in the New Year, in the approved fashion, one Member succeeded in breaking accidentally (?) a bottle of cider and, also accidentally (?) a *dark* policeman appeared at the door to wish a "guid New Year 'tae ane an' a'".

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