

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

VISIT TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION.

Recently the Ramblers' Club enjoyed the great privilege of being taken over the headquarters of the British Broadcasting Corporation. The party was received by Mr. Menzies who conducted us over the studios and mechanical departments.

The first studio to which we were taken was a large room with padded walls covered with grey and green curtains; the ceilings also were draped, and here and there were inserted small perforated squares to allow of a little ventilation. The orchestra is at one end of the room and the musicians are so placed that the sounds are converged at a central point. The microphone is at the other end of the room opposite the piano, and the artists stand at the front of the microphone with the piano behind them, the distance at which the performer stands being regulated according to the strength of the voice. Chaliapin, for instance, has to stand at the other end of the room otherwise his gigantic voice would shatter the instrument. Microphones are placed about the room to catch and control the sounds at will. The instrument which a singer or speaker uses is a double microphone which is hung on rubber stands to prevent vibration and has a perforated cover which they call "the meat safe" as it rather resembles in appearance the little meat safes which we are accustomed to see in small houses.

By the room is a silence chamber which the announcer uses and in which there is another microphone and control box; this is a box with small discs and a movable knob which can be set to different parts of the board so regulating the orchestra, voices, etc., for public transmission. There are seven different studios, five of which were in use before we left and so we had to do our sightseeing quickly in order to get glimpses of these studios before they were in use; a red lamp over a studio door signifies that broadcasting is in progress. The room in which the "Children's Hour" is broadcast is so thickly padded to avoid echoes, etc., that Sir Harry Lauder once christened it the "padded room"; it has felt ceilings and three layers of hessian on the walls to prevent "beating back" of the voice.

A very beautiful studio is the red lacquer one used for singers, speakers, and a quartette orchestra. The room is decorated in red and a tall red lacquer lamp stands by the piano; indeed the apartment has much the appearance of a nice homely drawing room, and its pillars are heavily padded to get the perfect sounds.

After climbing innumerable stairs we found ourselves in a roar of machinery, busy loudspeakers and messages being taken and sent from the different studios in use; the messages are received from the silence chambers and any necessary regulating is attended to. We saw a large board where twenty-one stations are connected up to the studio by telephone; each station takes up the London programme simply by the insertion of a plug. The B.B.C. is connected to two hundred places—hotels, picture palaces,

churches, etc., in order to get the programmes, and the insertion of a plug accomplishes the transmission of this to the public.

A recent very interesting addition to the mechanical department is the Edison Bell Photo Apparatus where a picture of a quarto plate photograph comes out in three minutes.

Altogether the "Ramblers" decided that they had had a most wonderful hour and we have only been able to give a very short summary of all that they saw. The whole building suggested a sort of beehive where doors were continually opening, people were rushing about, and so much work appeared to be in progress, that one realised at last the tremendous organisation and co-operation required to control such an establishment and to broadcast even the smallest item. We shall "listen-in" in future with something more than a mere superficial interest to the B.B.C. since our visit to its headquarters.

Mr. Menzies was untiring in giving us explanations and descriptions of everything and most patient regarding our innumerable questions; we shall not soon forget the courtesy we received during our "ramble" to the B.B.C.

E. H. G.

CLUB FIXTURES.

On Wednesday, February 13th, at 3 p.m., Miss Dorothy Graham has very kindly promised to give us a lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, on Northern Italy. A member who has seen these slides says they are exceedingly beautiful and very unusual. Most of the slides were made from photographs taken when Miss Graham was travelling in Italy after the Congress in Rome. There will be a collection to defray the expenses of the lecture, and any surplus will be used towards a fund which we have opened to provide a screen for the lantern.

For Wednesday, February 20th, at 8 p.m., Miss Hobbs and Miss Theobald are arranging a Bridge Drive in aid of the Purchase Fund for 194, Queen's Gate. The tickets for this will be 2s. 6d. (inclusive of refreshments), and we ask our members to do all they can to help us to sell them, in order that we may make the most of all the kindness and trouble which these ladies are taking in the matter. We hear that the prizes are to be exceedingly nice.

On Friday, March 1st, at 3 p.m., we are arranging for a Conference on the position as regards the demand of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association to have its Certificate recognised as qualifying for admission to the Mental Nurses' Register under the General Nursing Council. Miss E. L. Macaulay, O.B.E., R.R.C., S.R.N., F.B.C.N., R.M.N. (Matron of the Kent County Mental Hospital, Maidstone), has undertaken to address the Conference, and we hope that many nurses will take part in the discussion on a question which is of burning importance, not only to nurses on the Mental Nurses' Register, but to those on the General Part as well. We ask our members to make the Conference as widely known as possible; fuller particulars regarding it will be available

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