

music of the north ; as the song of the pipes died away the audience cheered to the echo. But this was not the last of Scotland that night. When a third "bonnie Hieland laddie" entered the drawing room the whisper went round that here was the piper who had carried off the challenge cup from all the pipers of Scotland at Edinburgh last year. The pipes of his "brither Scot" passed to the arms of Dr. Mackinnon, and we were able to give our Dutch friends—and the English too for that matter—a demonstration of what the music of the bagpipes is at its very finest. Next a Scotch reel was organised, but it was sad to see that so many of the Scotch lassies had forgotten their steps. Later two Dutch nurses danced a Folk Dance in national dress ; the dance was dainty and full of delightful dramatic action and was greeted with cheers and encores so that "the laddie and his lass" came back again and waltzed round the drawing room while all eyes were held by the movements of the four little wooden shoes that moved so swiftly at their owners' will that they might have been of satin. A Dutch nurse played the music for their first dance, our English band for their second. Then the ballroom floor filled again and dancing went on until, as the clock struck twelve, the band struck up the British National Anthem, the singing of the Dutch anthem followed and—"so to bed."

#### The Day of Days—Presentation to the Queen of England.

The day of days, however, was that before the one on which the Nurses were due to leave. By gracious permission they were to view the State Apartments at Windsor Castle, and so the charabanc was requisitioned again and we set out ; we had a roadside picnic on Runnymede and tried to tell our Dutch friends of its historic significance to the English people. We had been told that we were to go to the visitors' entrance to the castle and, as we approached it, we could not but wonder what the old Norman courtiers would have thought had they been able to visualise our huge steedless chariot driving through the Norman arch. With exceeding kindness the nurses were conducted through the State apartments and all the wonder and loveliness of these was pointed out to them as far as time would permit. But a moment arrived which eclipsed all others in that never-to-be-forgotten day, Her Majesty the Queen accompanied by a Lady-in-Waiting, the Dowager Countess of Airlie, entered the State Room where the Nurses were admiring some marvellous tapestries and each of the Nurses of Holland had the honour to be presented to the Queen of England. Her Majesty graciously asked them questions about the work in which they were engaged. The Nurses had taken with them a bouquet of the flowers of Holland and had asked that this might be given to Her Majesty. On the card attached to the ribbon of Dutch National colours were the words : "To Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen of England with deep homage from the Nurses of Holland." They were delighted when the Queen told them that their flowers were lovely. Afterwards they described themselves as too bewildered to absorb everything, and one of them quaintly, yet eloquently, expressed her feelings about the afternoon's experiences when she said : "When I am on my deathbed *this* is what I will remember." Before we left the Castle we were invited to have tea by the Master of the Household, and as they were enjoying this the Nurses talked to Lady Kathleen Hamilton, one of Her Majesty's Ladies-in-Waiting, and told her of all that they had seen in England and how nursing organisation there compared with that in their own country. Then we set off on our homeward journey, "looking in" at Hampton Court and Kew on the way.

#### The Last Evening Together.

We reached the R.B.N.A. Club at 194, Queen's Gate, just in time to sit down with the Members of the Club at

a long "horseshoe" table, beautifully decorated, for our last dinner together, by Miss Beatrice Treasure. At the close of the dinner the Toast of "Their Majesties the King and Queen of England" was honoured and then Miss Schipper in a few well-chosen words proposed the toast of H.R.H. the President of the Royal British Nurses Association. Next Miss Macdonald, on behalf of the Council of the Association and the Members, expressed the hope that the Nurses from Holland had enjoyed their visit and spoke of the great pleasure it had given to British Nurses. The toast of "Our Guests" was then honoured and replied to by Miss Meyboom, who at the close of a charming speech said : "Words fail to express all that we feel, it is more than friendship that is in our hearts, there will always be something holy in our remembrance of this time we have spent together with you all."

On the suggestion of the Dutch it had been arranged that we should spend the last evening at home and hold a kind of informal conference on matters relating to our profession. Many questions we asked of one another and, after the evening's discussion, came to the conclusion that there was great similarity in the difficulties facing the profession in the two countries and that, as Miss Schipper remarked, these international gatherings must have an important part in bringing about improvement and progress. We were impressed by the keen and practical knowledge which the Dutch possess of nursing organisation ; all along it was evident that their visit to England was in no sense a mere pleasure trip, but a great opportunity for making comparisons and acquiring new knowledge.

#### The Best of Friends must part.

Next day, until almost tea time, the nurses were busy going round the hospitals again and then we all gathered in the drawing room once again. "The disappearing lady who is never to be found when we want to thank her," was unwary for once, and while pouring out a cup of tea. Miss Treasure, of the Registered Nurses Association suddenly found herself in the centre of a ring of all the Dutch Nurses singing their equivalent to "She's a jolly good fellow." Then the familiar but this time unwelcome chariot was announced to be at the door and they all trooped into it, these leaders of nursing thought from another land. They brought gifts of knowledge to us ; we hope they took some away. Be that as it may we feel we were honoured by the visit of nurses who have the spirit and the energy to make such a journey for professional ends. We hope that at no far distant date we may meet again, Miss Meyboom, Miss Schipper, Miss Woensall Hoog, Miss de Lange, Miss Van Ditmar and all the rest.

"Buster," the great black cat, the Club "Mascot," since we came to Queen's Gate, was tied to the front of the engine of the char-a-banc ; he bore up bravely, sitting erect to the obvious entertainment of many pedestrians, and occasionally wagging his tail to the great amusement of those inside the charabanc, but only the wind was responsible for that, for it was no tail-wagging occasion this departure. On the platform appeared the inevitable pressman and the Dutch gave to him a few of their "impressions" of nursing in England. Then Miss Treasure, on behalf of the R.B.N.A. presented flowers to Miss Meyboom and the English Nurses sang "Lang sal sÿ leven," while the Dutch took their places in the train. Regrets at parting were relieved by laughter when it was discovered that the engine driver was so intrigued by "Buster" in the arms of one of the nurses that he forgot to start his engine. To a friendly request that the old black cat might be tied to his engine he received an unqualified refusal, the whistle sounded, handkerchiefs were waved and a score or so of British Nurses must needs seek out an empty 'bus in order to go home together for—"they were feeling very lonely."

I. M.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)