

although the most powerful of the Kings successively obtained some authority over it when they conquered their feebler neighbours.

During the eighth century, when a more settled condition of life became possible, the trade and commerce of London increased in volume and prosperity. A change came about towards the end of the century when the Danes began to invade our coasts—this was carried on till 1016, when Cnut became undisputed King of England.

In 1066, on the arrival of William the Conqueror, the city was in a sufficiently powerful position to dictate its own terms. The Conqueror's charter of 1066 was really a treaty between two equally strong parties. The rest of England was brought under the feudal system, but London was exempt and was confirmed in the enjoyment of its freedom and liberties.

THE STORY OF THE LIFE-BOAT.

By Captain Hall, R.N.

Miss Cutler, Nurse Hon. Secretary, took the chair at the lecture given by Captain Hall, R.N., on "The Story of the Life-boat," which was most fascinating. In commencing his lecture, Captain Hall remarked that he felt that such a lecture must be of special interest to nurses. There was a certain kinship between the work of the life-boats and theirs. Captain Hall has fine work to his credit in connection with the subject on which he spoke. For many years he was inspector for the Royal National Life-boat Institution and he holds the silver medal of the Institution for gallantry. He received this for the part he took in rescuing the survivors of the hospital ship "Rohilla" in October, 1914, a rescue which was the most outstanding event in the life-boat service throughout the War. During the greater part of the lecture Captain Hall demonstrated with a glass tank and a model life-boat, showing very clearly the various details in the mechanism of the latter; all the special devices were shown which enable it to live in a stormy sea.

Until the 18th century there were no life-boats; in 1789 a gentleman in South Shields built the first. Gradually round the coast they were built one by one until, in 1824, there were thirty-nine, but there was little organization until Sir William Hilary, of Douglas in the Isle of Man, conceived the idea of forming the Royal National Life-boat Institution, the object of which was to extend help to all shipwrecks in peace and war. An interesting point about the organisation of this Institution and the work connected with the life-boat service, is that all work is voluntary; subscriptions are voluntary, secretarial and administrative work is done voluntarily and what is most wonderful of all, the work of the men who man the life-boats is voluntary; thus one may say that they are ready at any time to offer their lives as a voluntary sacrifice for the shipwrecked. The Institution provides life-boats for the whole of the five thousand miles of British and Irish coast, places a life-boat at every spot where it is shown to be necessary and where a crew can be obtained, gives rewards for every rescue or attempted rescue, compensates those injured in the service and pensions the widows and orphans of life-boat men as if they had been sailors, soldiers or airmen killed in action.

Captain Hall had many beautiful slides and the series commenced with that great heroine of the seas, Grace Darling. It was difficult to realise that under the poke bonnet and Quaker-like appearance lay a personality capable of such amazing courage. Another slide showed the life-boat being launched by women, many of them aged, thus indicating that the spirit of Grace Darling was alive on the Northumbrian coast long after her death. An interesting photograph was that of Margaret Armstrong, a Cresswell woman, who had never missed helping to launch the life-boat for fifty years; she died quite recently. It is

to be noted that it takes more power to launch a life-boat than to man it and, therefore, the women have to take their part. Pictures were placed on the screen to show the other methods of launching the life-boats; one of the most beautiful was that of a boat being drawn into the surf by horses. It was pointed out by the lecturer that the farmers had to train their horses to take to the water (another piece of voluntary work). One old mare had been the trainer of many horses and a picture was put on the screen showing her leading other horses with the life-boat into the sea; next came a picture of the old horse by herself which was greeted with loud applause. Other pictures showed the slip system of launching the life-boat and also that in which motor boats are used, but in certain districts these are not always available. At the close of the lecture, Miss Cutler thanked the lecturer for a most interesting and delightful afternoon, saying that the nurses had learnt a great deal. It had been a lecture of some personal interest to herself for she had been on the "Rohilla" upon another occasion when it grounded.

DANCE.

Miss Cutler, Nurse Honorary Secretary, is arranging a Dance for the evening of Thursday, January 8th, from 8 to 12 p.m. She asks us to invite all Members of the R.B.N.A., who care for dancing, to be present.

BIRTHDAY PARTY.

As the anniversary of the foundation of the Association fell on a Sunday this year, we held our usual Birthday Party on Saturday, December 6th. There was a smaller gathering than usual; fewer Members came in from the country and also, on the same day, St. Bartholomew's Nurses League was holding its Winter Meeting and its Sale of Work for the League Bed. Miss Beatrice Cutler, Nurse Hon. Secretary, and many other Members, who are rarely absent on the Birthday, felt that they must be present at the Sale held by their League in order to help on the undertaking to endow a bed in the hospital.

Our Birthday cake was a real triumph of the confectioner's art this year; the badge, with its intricate design, was beautifully moulded in the icing above the monogram of the Association and a spray of purple flowers. A number of Members present came forward one by one to light the candles, and, when all were alight, the company joined hands and sang "Auld Lang Syne," which was followed by three cheers for the Founder, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. The cake was then cut by Mrs. Fenwick, and in a very short time most of it had disappeared; when the remainder had been cut up mysterious little packages were carried off by some of the Members to older ones who could not be present, while a small section was retained for luckless night nurses in the Club who could not come to the party.

GIFTS TO THE CLUB.

Miss Allpress, breadknife; Miss Banks, eau de Cologne; Miss Bourne, flowers; Miss Crassweller, cigarettes; Mrs. Giles, flowers; Miss Kirkby, flowers; Miss McCarty, vegetables and flowers; Miss McCash, flowers; Mrs. Nixon, flowers; Miss Northwood, "Essays in Popular Science," by Julian Huxley, and "Reminiscences, Social and Political," by Roma Lister; Miss Treasure, flowers and plants.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

Will those Members who intend to take dinner at the Club on Christmas Day kindly send in their names to the Secretary in order that we may know beforehand the number for whom dinner should be provided. We hope to welcome many Members from outside as well as those in residence at the Club on Christmas Day.

ISABEL MACDONALD,

Secretary to the Corporation.

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