

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL.

Just as our Supplement is going to press we have received the sad intelligence of the death of the Princess Royal. The sympathy of all Members of the Corporation will go out to our gracious President, H.R.H. Princess Arthur of Connaught, in the irreparable loss she has sustained. Two members of the R.B.N.A. Co-operation, who have had the honour and privilege of nursing the Princess Royal, have spoken of the courage with which she met suffering and growing weakness, and indeed there were some anxious hearts when, last summer, Her Royal Highness journeyed to the north to take what proved to be her last glimpse of her beautiful Braemar. The grief of the King, who was devoted to his sister, and of all Members of the Royal Family, will be shared by His Majesty's subjects all over the world, and we grieve indeed that the New Year should have ushered in so great a sorrow for our beloved President and her sister, Lady Maud Carnegie.

CHRISTMAS AT HEADQUARTERS.

Christmas was celebrated at 194, Queen's Gate with all the usual gaiety and we were delighted to have with us on Christmas night two distinguished American nurses—Miss Roberts, Editor of the *American Journal of Nursing*, and Miss Wales, a leader in Public Health work on the other side of the Atlantic.

The house at Queen's Gate lends itself to decoration in the old English Christmas style and especially admired was the wreath of shining holly, with its scarlet berries, that encircled the room over the high panelling; an attractive motif introduced this year was an arrangement of little silken Union Jacks projecting from the holly. A great white bell hung from the centre light and a fine bunch of mistletoe from the arch between the dining-room and the Council Chamber. Down the pillars and along the arch trailed dainty smilax, and it drooped also in delicate festoons on each side of the banner which hung from the high arch of the window at the top of the room. On the lace curtains drawn across the windows fluttered many small fairies with garments of rose leaves. Over the doors in the hall were masses of holly, and mistletoe hung from the large horse shoe which some superstitious member, years ago, found in Queen's Gate and brought into the Club; that and the large black cat, presented to us on our first Christmas day at "one-nine-four," are regarded as essentials in any scheme for Christmas decoration now. The old clocks in the hall and dining-room looked singularly benevolent when wreathed in holly, and the sinister picture of Father Time with his scythe seemed to recede into a far horizon. The long dinner tables were very beautiful with their smilax and alternate tall vases of white lilac and scarlet poinsettia; hidden away beneath the decorations were little parcels wrapped in bright paper and ribbon, one for each person at the dinner. The drawing-room, too, was beautiful with flowers among the red roses,

suggestive of many a legend and old tradition. Altogether Miss Treasure managed to excel herself this year in her labour of love, but the Christmas tree was the final triumph in her scheme of things; she knows just the one to choose and it stood, slender and graceful and sparkling, under the hall lights. She had made a stipulation this year that no Christmas presents were to be placed on it; it was to stand in "the home from home" with the symbolism only that belonged to it in olden times—its green branches symbolic of the Life Everlasting, its decorations symbolising light or knowledge. "Because, like that, I think it will be so much more a beautiful memory and will seem to shine out with its message to those of us who can't be here." But, at the last, she added another suggestion of "peace on earth" when she gathered together the flags, in miniature, of many lands, of those whose nurses had visited the Club from time to time and the flag of the Netherlands must needs be very near to the Union Jack, in memory of those happy days in the spring "when the Dutch nurses came to play with the English nurses." Incidentally there was one very strange happening in connection with these flags. Miss Treasure was at pains to "rub it in" that the Union Jack was on the right side of the tree and that the Scottish flag was well to the left and lower than the Union Jack which, apparently, is very English. Odd things happen at Christmas time and the fairy at the top of the tree had apparently held counsel with the little elementals perched here and there on the branches. No one can say what "the Wee Folk" did do but the fact remains that the fairy was found one morning holding the Scottish standard on the top of the tree. However, the schemes of "the Wee Folk," like those of mice and men, "gang aft agley" and the flag of Scotland was promptly "put in its place." We hear that the fairy is too shabby to be laid aside for another year, or is it that Miss Treasure wishes to secure one less enterprising? "What a lovely tree," we constantly heard people say as they entered the hall, and little children, attracted by the glitter of it, came and pressed their faces against the glass of the front door and each time the nurses opened this wide, that these little folk might come in; often you would find them standing in the hall hand in hand, absorbed in wonder or tip-toeing about the branches pointing out, with their little fingers, the strange fruits of the tree to one another. On Christmas morning the same small faces appeared shining with a Christmas smile and a very recent application of soap; they had come back, the small pagans, to their tree worship and to show to the nurses new boots and a tiny new great coat that Santa Claus had brought. These wondering children, in an age when most of us have lost the gift of wonder, seemed just to complete the picture of Miss Treasure's Christmas tree.

The postman always takes a lively interest in Christmas at Queen's Gate and he appeared much more sympathetic with the spirit of Christmas (as he turned a sackful of parcels upside down on the hall carpet) than with the luckless member of the administrative staff who is responsible for

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