

Royal British Nurses' Association.

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Royal Charter.

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ARTISTIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY.

We have had a number of communications on the article which appeared in our last issue on Occupational Therapy. Out of those there has arisen the suggestion that we arrange to have a class at headquarters where members can study certain branches of the arts and crafts. We have done what is possible in the matter and have been able to secure the services of a highly qualified art teacher who will come on Tuesday afternoons from 3 to 5 p.m. We shall be glad to hear from nurses who would like to join this class. There are many subjects which can be taught in connection with Artistic Occupational Therapy, among which are the following:—Basketry, Beadwork, Bent Iron Work, Bookbinding, Candle and Lampshade Making, China and Pottery Decoration, Flower-making, Leather Work, Lino Cuts (for textile printing), Marionettes, Rug-making, Toy-making, Weaving and, of course, all the different forms of the craft of the needle.

Will those who communicate with us mention any special branch that they would like to take? There is no doubt that educational therapeutic methods will tend to develop more and more, both in curative and preventive work, therefore a knowledge of such crafts must prove valuable, and are, moreover, likely to react in a very healthy way upon those who practise them, whether they happen to be sick or well.

One is tempted to try to analyse the reasons why Occupational Therapy should be such an important factor in curative treatment and many suggestions in this connection come to the mind. In art of any kind there is a greater or less degree of freedom given to the creative faculty to function; this faculty is inherent in every normal person and, if it does not function, then it becomes a kind of foreign body in the organism, a disharmonising one. We live in the great machine age, an age of great materialism and great scientific triumphs, an age which must not be too much disparaged, but at the same time we must realise that compared with the Renaissance or almost any other age, it is one in which nervous disease predominates. We remember as a child reading "John Halifax, Gentleman," a great work of fiction in its time. There it is told how the workmen burned the mills and destroyed the new machinery. Superficially it might appear that the wreckers saw, in this machinery, a menace to their economic position, and so indeed it may have been, but the matter went deeper. They had a subconscious knowledge, which they interpreted somewhat differently in the consciousness, that this, to them, almost demoniacal machinery would more and more gain the mastery over mankind and would usurp the paths along which artistic health-giving faculties can function. Beautiful hand-made furniture, porcelain, lace, tapestry and the like have a far greater subjective value to mankind than the objective value they possess.

RAMBLE.

We have just concluded arrangements for the last Ramble into the country, for this season, for September 19th. Our main destination is Cambridge and we hope to enjoy this as much as we did the expedition to Oxford some two years ago. We shall proceed later on a drive to the factories of Messrs. Chivers who have very kindly invited the nurses to tea there. The cost of the ticket for the Ramble will be 7s. 6d. and, for details as to the time when the charabanc will leave Queen's Gate, the places where it can stop to pick up people and other matters, application should be made to the Secretary. We shall have a drive through lovely country and we hope to be able to stop at a few places of interest on the way. One will be the 15th century Church of Bishops Stortford, and the Vicar has promised to show to us its precious 13th and 14th century documents. Mrs. McCarthy has also most kindly invited us all to an early lunch at the vicarage before we continue on our way to Cambridge.

INVITATION.

Miss Macdonald will be "At Home" to Members of the Association and other friends at 194, Queen's Gate, on Thursday, October 11th from 4 to 6 p.m. She asks them to take this notice as an invitation to attend and hopes that many will be able to be present.

LECTURE.

Major Rigg, O.B.E., F.S.A., has most kindly arranged to give us a lecture on "The Story of the Evolution of the Voluntary Hospitals" on Thursday, October 18th at 3 p.m. We look forward to this with great pleasure and Major Rigg is always assured of a large and enthusiastic audience when he comes to lecture at the Royal British Nurses' Association. We have greatly enjoyed lectures which he has given each autumn for many years now and which have served to introduce us to so much history and to so many ancient customs and traditions connected especially with London. As a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a much coveted distinction by all students of antiquity and history, Major Rigg is well qualified to give these lectures which are so much appreciated and no doubt he will add something to our knowledge of the history of nursing when he traces the growth of some of our oldest hospitals. We hope that there will be the usual large attendance at this lecture.

DANCE.

Some Members of the Club are organising a dance to take place in the latter part of October and we learn that they have commenced a subscription list among themselves to defray the expenses of this. They have not yet decided the date upon which the dance will take place but, in the course of a few days, their arrangements will be completed and any Member who desires particulars regarding those should write to the Secretary when full details will be supplied.

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