

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

THE NURSING RECORD

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No. 1995. Vol. 82.

OCTOBER, 1934.

Price Sevenpence.

EDITORIAL.

BRITANNIA RULES THE WAVES.

The intensity of feeling aroused by the completion and launching of the 534 can only be fully comprehended by an island people, bred within reach of the sea, with the love of it in their hearts, and a great pride in the glorious history of the British Navy, and the supremacy of the British Mercantile Marine on the high seas, infusing every fibre of their being.

The 534, now the "Queen Mary," is, as the King declared in replying to the address of welcome to their Majesties to Clydeside, spoken by Sir Percy Bates, "no longer a number on the books, but a ship with a name in the world alive with beauty, energy and strength," and thousands upon thousands assembled at Clydeside to show their appreciation of the action of our King and Queen in making the return journey between Balmoral and Glasgow to mark their sense of the significance of the occasion and to share the joy of the nation, by whose will she was completed, that at long last, all difficulties have been overcome, and the beautiful ship is in her own element, awaiting her mission of service.

Therefore did our Sailor King and his Consort, the Heir to the Throne, Cabinet Ministers, Directors of the Cunard White Star Line, workmen who had helped to build the great ship and members of all sections of the people, assembled at Clydebank on September 26th to participate in, or to witness, the send off of "the stateliest ship now in being" to prove their realisation that she is much more than a commercial venture, she is a sacred symbol of the endeavour, the fortitude, the determination which would not be gainsaid when her prospects of completion seemed darkest, and to demonstrate that, as such, she will ever hold high place in the affections of the British people.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

The moment was tense with emotion when the King spoke as follows:

"I thank you for your loyal address of welcome to us.

As a sailor I have deep pleasure in coming here to-day to watch the launching by the Queen of this great and beautiful ship. The sea, with her tempests, will not readily be bridled: she is stronger than man; yet in recent times man has done much to make the struggle with her more equal.

It is still less than a hundred years since Samuel Cunard founded his service of small wooden paddle-steamers for the carrying of the mails across the Atlantic to America. Those first Cunard ships were of 1,150 tons. A few people, now alive, must, in childhood, have heard those ships spoken of with wonder as evidence of man's mastery over nature.

To-day we come to the happy task of sending on her way the stateliest ship now in being. I thank all those, here and elsewhere, whose efforts, however conspicuous or humble, have helped to build her.

For three years her uncompleted hull has lain in silence on the stocks. We know full well what misery a silent dockyard may spread among a seaport, and with what courage that misery is endured. During those years when work upon her was suspended we grieved for what that suspension meant to thousands of our people. We rejoice that, with the help of my Government, it has been possible to lift that cloud and to complete this ship.

Now, with the hope of better trade on both sides of the Atlantic, let us look forward to her playing a great part in the revival of international commerce. It has been the nation's will that she should be completed, and to-day we can send her forth no longer a number on the books, but a ship with a name in the world, alive with beauty, energy, and strength. . . .

We send her to her element with the good will of all the nations, as a mark of our hope in the future. She has been built in fellowship among ourselves; may her life among great waters spread friendship among the nations."

A SHIP WITH A NAME IN THE WORLD.

Then came the supreme moment. The Queen pressed a button, and as the stately ship began her descent to the river the Queen's voice rang out clearly through the microphones:

"I am happy to name this ship 'Queen Mary.' I wish success to her and to all who sail in her."

The launching of the "Queen Mary" was accomplished.

What of those to whom her destinies will be entrusted?

British seamanship is superb, and British seamen are superb also, else were the building of mammoth ships of small avail; but passengers of all nationalities travel in them content, because they know that in any crisis their lives will be the first consideration of the ship's officers and crew.

Nor do we forget that the members of our own profession have traditions as noble. When in the Great War the *Marquette* was settling to her doom, the nurses—all honour to the Dominion of New Zealand to which they belonged—claimed their right of sacrifice, insisting "Fighting men first." And in Liverpool Cathedral there is commemorated the heroism of the stewardess of the *Stella* when she foundered on the dangerous Casquet rocks.

So long as the present traditions of British seamanship, and the selfless courage and devotion of all grades who serve on British ships endure, so long we may rest assured that Britannia will continue to rule the waves.

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