

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

THE PRESIDENT WISHES THE MEMBERS A
HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

DEAR MISS MACDONALD,—Will you kindly convey to the Members, through the Official Organ of the Association, my best wishes for a happy Christmas and for all good things in the coming year. I hope that the New Year may be a prosperous one for our Association.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

ALEXANDRA, *President.*

THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS DINNER.

Her Royal Highness the President has been graciously pleased, on behalf of the Association, to invite the International Students, now at Florence Nightingale International House, to dine at our Headquarters on Christmas night. We look forward very much to this pleasure and hope to be able to entertain our guests in typically English Christmas fashion. None more than the nurses are to be relied upon to observe all the traditions that cling about Christmas night, and we hear already a rumour that Father Christmas himself is coming to welcome our guests at the doorway.

CONCERT.

Her Royal Highness, the President, was graciously pleased to be present at a very charming concert recently given at our Headquarters. It was arranged by Miss Bessie Kiek, who herself gave a beautiful rendering of some of Chopin's music and she also accompanied the other artistes. Miss Eda Kersey, violinist, delighted us with Slavonic and Hungarian dances, and a rollicking lilt by Dinicu-Heifetz; Miss Antonia Butler's fine 'cello performances gave full evidence of the variation of feeling expressible on this instrument. We enjoyed deeply, as we often have before, Miss Dorothy Clarke's beautiful contralto, especially in her rendering of "The Lament of Isis," and Miss Maxwell-Lyte's contribution to the afternoon's entertainment was made the more delightful by her dainty impersonations of the characters in her folk songs. We had a beautiful setting in which to enjoy all this music, for Miss Treasure had supplied us with very lovely flowers for the occasion.

AN APPRECIATION.

We are requested by Miss Meyboom to publish the following kind appreciation in our official organ:—

The Dutch nurses, who have had the privilege of meeting Miss Cecilia Liddiatt, wish to express their deep regret on learning of her death.

We do remember her kindness and help so well in the glorious days of 1930 when we visited the Royal British Nurses' Association's Club. Miss Liddiatt was always our jolly guide in that wonderful time and took a warm place in our hearts. She shall remain in our remembrance as a true and valuable international friend.

FREDERIKE MEYBOOM.

LECTURE.

THE STORY OF THE VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS.

By MAJOR RIGG, O.B.E., F.S.A.

Miss Elma Smith took the Chair when Major Rigg gave his lecture on "The Story of the Voluntary Hospitals," and referred to Major Rigg's repeated kindnesses to the nurses and to his close connection with hospital work. In commencing his lecture Major Rigg said that in one sense he felt that it was appropriate that he should give a lecture on this subject as it was just fourteen years since he had been, quite unexpectedly, appointed Chairman of the National Temperance Hospital. The causes which brought into being the voluntary hospital system are such as to arouse our admiration and are an honour to the English race, especially on the humanitarian side. Medieval hospitals before the Reformation were monastic and admittedly the learned men and great monks of pre-reformation times were the benefactors of the sick.

It was only in 1719 that the voluntary hospitals were founded. Henry VIII dealt a blow to the sick and the infirmaries when he confiscated the monasteries. Yet, whatever Henry's character may have been, he was ahead of his times from an educational point of view and for medicine he did much. Through Cardinal Wolsey, inspired by Dr. Linacre, the priest physician, Henry founded the Royal College of Physicians, and by this he placed medical education on a stable basis. Twenty years later, in 1540, he granted a Charter to the Barber Surgeons, and in the hall of the Barber-Surgeons' Company to-day there stands Holbein's portrait of him in his old age. In 1745 the Royal College of Surgeons came into being and the Barber Surgeons were superseded; the barbers were the blood-letters in the old days, hence the hairdressers' pole of to-day.

In the year 1540 the condition of the poor was terrible, and Sir Richard Gresham, whose son was the founder of the Royal Exchange, presented a petition to Henry for some reformation in regard to the streets. People then were in dire poverty and lay dirty and ill-clad about the streets; Gresham claimed that it was time something was done. Henry was thus induced to undertake some of the responsibility for work done by the monasteries and he gave charters to the five Royal Hospitals—Christ's Hospital to deal with education, Bedlam (or Bethlem as it is now called) for the care of patients suffering from mental diseases, Bridewell for the retention of vagabonds and St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's for the care of the sick. Edward VI carried on and consolidated this good work.

The Chartered Hospitals made little provision for the sick beyond housing them but it was not long before Elizabeth realised that something must be done to deal with sickness. This led to the foundation of the Elizabethan Poor Laws. The parishes were each one made responsible for the sick of their districts; for the poor, in old age, almshouses were built. It sounds a fine ideal but it was soon found that the

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