

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

INTERNATIONAL GUESTS AT THE CHRISTMAS DINNER.

When the President, H.R.H. the Princess Arthur of Connaught, learned that the Florence Nightingale International Students, many of them far from home, had no engagement for Christmas Day dinner, she graciously wrote to Miss Dorsey, the Warden of Florence Nightingale International House, and invited them to take dinner at the Headquarters of the Royal British Nurses' Association, which is always a very festive occasion, an invitation they were delighted to accept.

As the coach containing the fifteen international colleagues drew up at 194, Queen's Gate, its doors were opened wide by no less a personage than Father Christmas himself, who greeted the guests with "A Merry Christmas to you all," and handed to Mrs. Bedford Fenwick a bouquet of white lilac and pink and white carnations "with the love and best wishes of the Members in residence." The guests stood about for a moment to admire the splendid Christmas tree lit with electricity; among the dark branches there shone the sparkling decorations placed there by the donor (Miss Beatrice Treasure) earlier in the day. Just as the Christmas guests entered there commenced to ring through the hall and staircases the words of "The First Noel," sung by Miss Dorothy Clarke in her beautiful rich contralto.

The Florence Nightingale International students were received in the drawing-room by the Members in residence, who were delighted to welcome such distinguished guests, and after sherry had been served everyone descended to the dining room. The partition between it and the Council Chamber had been removed and, together, these noble rooms presented a truly Christmas-like aspect with their fine white panelling, and beautiful carving encircled with holly, trails of smilax hanging round the arch between the rooms, the embroidered symbolical Banner suspended from the window canopy behind the Chair and the Flags of the different nations represented at the Dinner projecting from the arch above the fireplace.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was in the Chair, supported by Miss Nan L. Dorsey, U.S.A., on the right, and Miss Elizabeth Smith, B.A., Canada, on her left. Miss Breay and Miss Bushby represented the hostesses at this table, and Miss I. Macdonald and Miss Hutton presided over long tables where members in residence took charge of the guests.

A telegram was read from H.R.H. the President in the following terms:—

"Please give to everyone my best wishes for a happy Christmas and many good things in the coming year. Convey to our international guests all my good wishes for prosperity and success in the work that lies before them in many distant lands.

"ALEXANDRA,
"President."

Other telegrams of greeting followed from Mrs. John Temple (the fairy godmother of the R.B.N.A.), from Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C, from Sir Alfred Rice-Oxley and, lastly, one from a recipient of one of the Christmas cheques wishing the members "as happy a Christmas as you have given to us" and asking that there be read to them the first quotation in the Stevenson calendar (*i.e.*, "May the blessing of God lift and rest upon ye").

The Chairman, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, then called upon the Secretary to say grace, and after this, with laughter and talk, everyone proceeded to enjoy the Christmas fare provided on the long tables decorated by Miss Treasure with tall vases of white lilac, scarlet carnations and poinsettias, trails of smilax and gorgeous crackers.

The sparkling wine was the gift of Mrs. John Temple, together with other dainties for the tables and tree. Mrs. Hutton had sent a practical gift of a turkey, of which quite a little flock were required. From Miss A. S. Bryson dainty sweets had been received, and from Miss Walker and others flowers for the drawing-room. Glorious plum puddings in blue flames were presented to view, and mince pies and trifles did not come amiss. Laughter and gay chatter made the happiest of human music—the whole room realised there is no nationality amongst nurses.

Someone whispered "smoke," but the Chair reminded those present that the King must first be honoured.

THE TOASTS.

THE KING.

The Chairman then rose and gave the Toast of "The King," which was warmly acclaimed.

THE ROYAL FAMILY.

The Toast of "The Queen and the Royal Family," coupled with the name of the President of the Association, Princess Arthur of Connaught, was then proposed and honoured.

"Kings, Queens, Presidents and Dictators" of the countries represented at the table were then toasted—after which "Ladies, you may smoke" was announced from the Chair.

THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.

The toast of the evening, given by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was "The Florence Nightingale International Students coupled with the name of Miss Dorsey."

The Chairman said that the gathering of the first group of students admitted under the Florence Nightingale International Foundation at the headquarters of the Royal British Nurses' Association, was an historic event—she acclaimed them with very sincere pleasure. It was an important item of nursing history that the Association founded in 1887 was the first Association of trained nurses in the world, and in the year 1937, when the organised

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