

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

INVITATION.

Miss Macdonald will be "At Home" to Members and friends on Thursday, October 17th, from 4 to 6 p.m. She asks that this notice be taken as an invitation to be present, and hopes that many may be able to come.

THE CHRISTMAS CALENDAR.

By the time that the present issue of the Journal goes to press our Christmas Calendar will be in print, and those who wish to procure copies of it to send to their friends should order them in good time, as it will be less easy this year to secure fresh supplies when the first have been exhausted. The object in producing this calendar is to enable us to send, to about a hundred and fifty sick and aged nurses, cheques that will secure for them comfort and happiness on Christmas Day. We wish that all those who so kindly helped to accomplish this in past Christmases might realise what their generosity means; in almost every letter of acknowledgment there is expressed, in some way or another, a great thankfulness that "though laid on the shelf we are not forgotten." Indeed, all through the year there come indications that Christmas Day has proved a kind of landmark which sheds light into every day of the year that follows, and a realisation too that we are making already an effort towards giving to them "another good Christmas." Apart from this aspect, others who have generously bought the calendar have had kind things to say about what it implies to feel that they make a kind of circle of helpers, each of whom is reading the same beautiful or inspiring quotation each day.

In this new calendar the verses for the days of the year come from the pens of the British poets, from Chaucer onwards, the calendar has three hundred and sixty-six gems from a vast variety of writers. The necessity for having so many represented (Britain is peculiarly rich in her poets) has often caused us to set aside lines, which we longed to insert, in order that we might thereby find a place for still another poet of note. The verses selected are not inserted merely because they voice some great idea or truth, some moral aspect or mood of high aspiration. Many of the verses do speak the sublime thoughts of the masters of poetry, and poetry is an art which lends itself to such thoughts, and is indeed part and parcel with them. But there are other examples of poetry to be found in the calendar for 1936, such as, for instance, have about them the fragrance of old-time things. Here is John Lydgate, the fourteenth-century dietitian and monkish student of medicine, who gives you sound advice in rhyme of the dangers of over eating, worry and such like; he devoted no small part of his poetry to the subject of the cure of disease and the teaching of hygiene, especially of personal hygiene. Then there are lines in the calendar from Crashaw, another poet-physician. Dryden and Pope offer sound moral and philosophic truths in language terse, poetical and pleasing. Chaucer interpolates a verse at times after a manner that reminds you of those telling little asides that he makes use of so often in "The Canterbury Tales." The "Immortal Will" jostles with Robbie Burns, and James the First of Scotland with the Ettrick Shepherd.

The Brownings have beautiful mystical thoughts to offer, and Chapman comes along with cheery optimism. Sir Walter Raleigh, than whom, if we are to believe Stevenson, nature made not finer gentlemen, is here; and Blake, who, whatever his contribution to literature, and it was very great, achieved something else as fine as his works—the power to realise himself. Then there are Herrick, Herbert and Dr. Donne with lovely things to say; nature worshippers like Wordsworth, Joanna Baillie and Jean Ingelow, besides many of our wonderful modern poets such as Sir Henry Newbolt, Rupert Brooke, Flecker, Housman, Binyon and the rest. These are but a few of the troubadours whom we have called upon to collect together for you a string of real gems to send to your friends at Christmas time that you may "rope in" the lonely ones for "A Merry Christmas." Each poet in his turn will discover to you some facet of his fancy, throughout the days of the year, to drop it into your subconscious memory—a thing of beauty each one, that will never "pass into nothingness," but will help to bring harmony into the turmoil of the present. Poetry is probably the greatest of the arts, and, like all arts, it has something to contribute to healing. The ancient Greeks knew its power in this respect, and the mantras and magic couplets, of times later than theirs, were founded upon a decadent memory of such understanding in ancient times. A study of the rhythms, and especially those of classic poetry, shows that these rhythms, or measurements as they are sometimes called, bear a very close relationship to the rhythms of the body as they exist in the circulation and respiration, and it follows that those afflicted with tendencies to nervous ailments often find solace in reading good poetry or in making verse. There is another striking fact about good poetry—it is never a cloak for untruth, although in many of the classics you may have to ponder well ere you find the truths they set out to teach. For these and other reasons, we think that the scheme for the calendar of 1936 should prove an acceptable and graceful one, and on the cover of each is a reproduction, by Messrs. Raphael Tuck, of some beautiful flower painting. The price of the calendar is 1s. 6d., as in previous years, and it is obtainable at the offices of the Association. Envelopes are supplied with the calendars to save any extra trouble to those who are kind enough to purchase them, in order to help us to ensure a happy Christmas for those who might otherwise have a very lonely one, and who during their working days have done so much to make Christmas happy for others.

CLUB FIXTURES.

Thursday, October 17th.—Miss Macdonald "At Home" from 4 to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 23rd.—Lecture by Dr. Adèle Avery on "Special Diets" at 3 p.m.

Wednesday, October 30th.—Ramble. For particulars apply to the office.

Wednesday, November 6th.—Lecture with lantern films on "Scenes in London," by Mr. Herbert Paterson, C.B.E., F.R.C.S.

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