

## THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

The National Institute for the Blind, of which the Annual Report is just to hand, is under the distinguished patronage of Their Majesties the King and Queen and Her Majesty Queen Mary. The President of Chorleywood College is Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, and of the Sunshine Homes Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice. The headquarters of the Institute are at 224-228, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

The Institute and Allied Homes are doing important and valuable work for a group of people of all ages and both sexes, and bringing an immense amount of health and happiness into lives which might otherwise be vacant and dreary.

### Report of the Executive Council.

The Report relates that in 1868, when Dr. T. R. Armitage presided over the first Council Meeting of the British and Foreign Blind Association (which later became the National Institute for the Blind), the Council consisted of himself and three other blind men.

The full Council of the Institute, as reconstituted in 1938 under Sir Beachcroft Towse's chairmanship, consists of 97 members, blind and sighted, representing all parts of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and every type of interest involved in work on behalf of the blind.

This year the Executive Council records the culminating step towards a representative constitution taken on March 3rd, 1938, when those who constituted the old Council accepted the necessity of

enlarging it to meet modern conditions and to provide for further developments and the consolidation of the Institute's work on a national basis.

When the Joint Committee appointed by the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Associations on the Welfare of the Blind put forward its scheme for co-ordinating more closely all over the country the work of voluntary and official agencies with the expressed intention of rendering the voluntary services better able to continue their work in the future, we accepted the proposals, in so far as they affected us, in full confidence that the scheme of reorganisation would strengthen the hands of all agencies for the blind, voluntary or official.

We are grateful to the representative members of the Council who have so ably served the Institute in the past. We now welcome to our consultations a number of members with great experience in local government as aldermen or

councillors, as town clerks, medical officers of health, or education officers. They will add great weight to the Council, and we have no doubt that apart from the wisdom they bring to our debates, the first-hand experience of national work which they will gain will be of value to them in dealing with the problem of blindness as it presents itself in the localities where they exercise their administrative responsibilities.

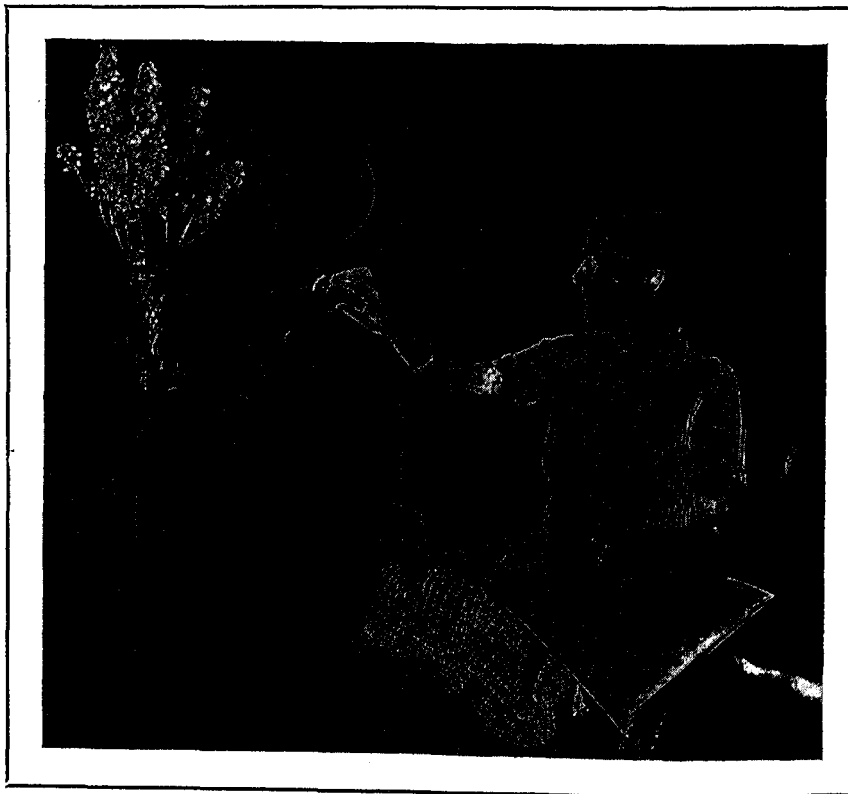
The representative character which the Institute has now assumed does not in any way diminish our dependence on voluntary support. On the contrary there is a constant growth in our responsibilities and inevitably in our expenditure.

With all the good will which public authorities display, 80 per cent. of our funds have to be obtained year by year from the charitable public.

### The Production of Braille Books and Music.

The National Institute is the largest publisher for the blind in the British Empire and the Report begins with accounts of the year's work in the production of Braille books and music. "The kind of characters, so hopelessly complicated to the careless eye yet so clearly 'visible' to the practised finger suffice to unlock for the blind the 'King's Treasury' of literature."

"The fourth centenary of the English Bible has been fittingly celebrated by the issue of the first volumes of a new edition of the Revised Version of the New Testament. When this edition is completed the blind will have an edition of both Authorised and Revised Versions of the Bible worthy of note in the annals of book,



Blind Listener, with her "Braille Radio Times," tuning in by means of a Braille-marked dial.

production." "Several new books dealing with Braille throw a light on the marvellous adaptability of the system. A summary of contracted German Braille, an international Greek Braille code, and an algebraic method of writing chess literature in Braille are among the year's publications."

"The National Institute publishes 25 periodicals in embossed type—20 in Braille and five in Moon—comprising five weeklies, 12 monthlies and six quarterlies. Four of the weeklies are newspapers, the fifth being a Braille edition of the *Radio Times*. The total circulation of these periodicals amounted, last year, to 755,131."

Braille music constitutes an important position in the work of the Institute, and its experts have now perfected the Braille Music Notation System to such an extent that its symbols are now used throughout the world, and every musical work or piece of music published by it can be obtained by blind musicians and music lovers in every country at a mere fraction of its cost of production.

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