

Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

MISS SWABY SMITH'S PARTY.

Miss Swaby Smith's "Party," given for her fellow members on 1st instant, was the first of our social gatherings for the year. There could be no more genial hostess, and to each guest she extended a warm welcome. Indeed, her duties as hostess were no sinecure as a large number of London members and her own personal friends attended. The guests appeared to enjoy to the full the good things provided, and many were the appreciative remarks we overheard on the kindness of their hostess, and the beauty of the flower-filled rooms. In this connection, too, we would thank the members for the wealth of exquisite flowers they left at headquarters that afternoon—a regular Spring Festival they made to usher in the longer days with their sunshine and blossoming. Only in a few cases were we able to discover who were the donors of all this loveliness, and so we ask them now to accept our most appreciative thanks for the beauty that they left us to enjoy. It has been a source of very real enjoyment to everyone in the club.

LECTURE ON BLOOD PRESSURE.

On Friday, February 25th, at 3 p.m., Dr. Halls Dally will give a lecture at Headquarters on "Blood Pressure," and we hope that there will be a large attendance, as the subject is a very interesting one, and no doubt Dr. Dally will give a great deal of information very useful to nurses.

"BRING AND BUY SALE."

On the same date, at 2 p.m., we propose having a little "Bring and Buy Sale" in aid of the Helena Benevolent Fund. At present, from this fund, we are making grants to a larger number of sick nurses than usual, and we wish to give to them all the help that we can. "The Helena" has become almost like some living entity to our sick folk, and also there are those who regard it much in the same way when they wish to bring comfort to their colleagues. It is a kind of "well of healing" that never goes dry, for, if the Committee make a raid upon its bank balance at one meeting such as almost to exhaust it, with the help from the members and a few dividends it turns up again at the next meeting ready to meet the claims that are there. A little effort at short intervals we like to make, however, to help it in its work, and it is with this purpose in view that we have arranged for a small sale on a date when members will be at headquarters. The prices are to be very moderate, and the plan of those promoting the effort is that each person who comes will bring one small gift and buy one. We have already received some pretty and useful things, as well as promises of home-made cakes and sweets and jam. As a result, we hope to have a nice little cheque to hand into the Committee at its next meeting, enough perhaps to cover that month's grants.

It is at such functions that we realise the value of the "House Beautiful," in which it is possible to enjoy comradeship in delightful surroundings.

AN ODD CONCEPTION OF THE ETHICS OF NUMBERS.

Last month we published for the information of our Members, letters which had passed between the Ministry of Health and the Association. Since then a considerable correspondence has appeared in *The Times* after the publication of a letter from Miss Silverthorne. The following letter was sent from the Association, as it seemed desirable to make certain details clear in regard to the position adopted by our Executive Committee and confirmed by the Council of the Association.

To the Editor of *The Times*,

SIR,

Miss Silverthorne's letter in your issue of January 31st does not quite clearly indicate the position adopted by this Association to the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Nursing Services. Both before the issue of the final list of appointments to that Committee and also after the debate in the House of Commons on December 3rd on the Local Authorities (Hours of Employment in connection with Hospitals and Institutions) Bill, this Association, which was the first organisation of nurses to be incorporated by Royal Charter, pressed for direct representation on the Inter-Departmental Committee both for itself and for other organisations of nurses. This justifiable request was refused. Later when the Association was asked to prepare a Memorandum for the consideration of the Inter-Departmental Committee, the Executive Committee of the Association came to the decision that as (owing to its exclusion from representation on the Inter-Departmental Committee) it was not in the position to participate in the discussion and decisions arising, such a memorandum would prove of little practical value in so far as the policy of the Association is concerned. It might, indeed, readily lead to misunderstandings in view of the fact that so little expert nursing opinion is available on the Inter-Departmental Committee in comparison with the weight of the opinions of those who, however good and altruistic their intentions, have not undergone the experience from which, from the nurse's standpoint, expert opinion can arise.

I am, etc.,

ISABEL MACDONALD.

Secretary to the Royal British Nurses Association.

Following upon this letter there appeared one from Mrs. Blair-Fish mainly concerned with the large Membership of the College of Nursing in relation to its claim to represent nursing opinion. Superficially such a claim might appear justified to the unenlightened reader, but for those who understand the position, the matter appears in a very different light. It shows, this claim, that the College is still resolved to make capital out of its unredeemed pledge of over twenty years ago—the pledge that if a nurse joined the College of Nursing she would, automatically and *without further fee* have her name placed upon the State Register when the Nurses' Registration Bill became law. As was

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