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EDITORIAL.

1944 A FATEFUL YEAR.

For several years past, with war ravaging the world, our King has on Christmas Day broadcast a most sympathetic message to his peoples, and this message was as usual transmitted to the world and rebroadcast in many countries in 1943.

"Once again," His Majesty said, "from our home in England, the Queen and I send our Christmas greetings and good wishes to each one of you all the world over. Some of you may hear me on board your ships, in your aircraft, or as you wait for battle in the jungles of the Pacific islands or on the Italian peaks. Some of you may listen to me as you rest from your work, or as you lie sick or wounded in hospital.

"To many of you, my words will come as you sit in the quiet of your homes. But, wherever you may be, to-day of all days in the year, your thoughts will be in distant places and your hearts with those you love. I hope that my words, spoken to them and to you, may be the bond that joins us all in one company for a few moments on this Christmas Day.

"With this thought in my mind, I wish to all who are on service good luck and a stout heart; to those who wait for them to return, proud memories and high hopes to keep you strong; to all children, here and in the lands beyond the seas, a day of real happiness.

OUR COMING VICTORY.

"I send these words of Christmas greeting to all of you who dwell within the family of the British Commonwealth and Empire. I know you would wish me also to send a message of hope to our gallant Allies who fight with us, and to all who, in the loneliness of exile or the horror of invasion, look forward to our coming victory.

"In this year almost passed many things have happened, under God's Providence, to make us thankful for His mercies. The generous strength of the United States of America, the tremendous deeds of Russia, the endurance of China under her long ordeal, the fighting spirit of France reborn, and the flower of the manhood and womanhood of many lands that share the burdens of our forward march—all these have played their part in the brightening of our fortunes on sea, on land and in the air.

"Since I last spoke to you many things have changed. But the spirit of our people has not changed. As we were not downcast by defeat, we are not unduly exalted by victory. While we have bright visions of the future,

we have no easy dreams of the days that lie close at hand. We know that much hard working and hard fighting, and perhaps harder working and harder fighting than ever before, are necessary for victory. We shall not rest from our task until it is nobly ended.

"Meanwhile within these islands we have tried to be worthy of our fathers; we have tried to carry into the dawn the steadfastness and courage vouchsafed to us when we stood alone in the darkness.

ONE LANDMARK.

"This is not the time for a chronicle of our progress. But there is one landmark in the sombre, world-embracing battlefield which I hope and I trust may endure. Wherever their duty has called our men and women, they have gained new friends and come to know old friends better. They have learnt to share the burdens, and to read the hearts, of their neighbours; they have laid the foundations of new friendships between nations and strengthened old ones formed long ago. As a result, there is springing up in every country fresh hope that out of comradeship in sacrifice shall come power to restore and power to build anew.

"I saw proof of this when I visited North Africa in the summer. I saw many thousands of men of the United Nations, united in action, in heart and mind and purpose. The only rivalry between them was in the service of a great cause; their only aim was the defeat of a common enemy.

"In the same spirit of unity, men of divers races have come together in the council chamber and round the conference table; some to meet the stern, immediate demands of war itself; others to heal the wounds that war deals to all humanity—to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, mend the broken, and succour the poor.

"So, as we see the clouds breaking on this Christmas Day, we should take comfort from our faith that out of desolation shall rise a new hope, and out of strife be born a new brotherhood.

"From this ancient and beloved festival that we are keeping to-day, sacred as it is to home and all that home means to us, we can draw strength to face the future of a world riven by a tempest such as it has never yet endured. In the words of a Scottish writer of our day: 'No experience can be too strange and no task too formidable if a man can link it up with what he knows and loves.'"

We Nurses desire to thank our Gracious King and Queen for their example of devotion to duty which we must attempt to emulate day by day.

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