

## The Standard of Nursing at Bart's

The Public Meeting, held at the Medical Society's Rooms on Monday, June 6th, "to consider the position of the Nursing School at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and to take such action as may be desirable" upon the appointment of a Matron's Assistant from the London Hospital to the position of Matron and Superintendent of Nursing at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, to succeed the late Miss Isla Stewart, although convened only at a few days' notice, was crowded to the doors, every available seat in the room was filled, and far out into the passages, and the room beyond, the standing room was also occupied. It is estimated that three hundred nurses and their supporters were present, and, even before the meeting opened, it was quite evident that the strong determination animated everyone present, that the splendid work for humanity and the professional reputation of their late Matron should not be contemptuously ignored without the strongest possible protest, and that the value of the Bart's certificate should not be depreciated without the reason for this injustice being inquired into. The feeling through the room was electric, and there was no question that the meeting was of one heart and one mind.

The meeting was called to order by Miss Maud Banfield (cert. St. Bartholomew's Hospital), formerly President of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, who called upon the Secretary, Mrs. Shuter (cert. St. Bartholomew's Hospital) to read the notice convening the meeting.

Mrs. Shuter then reported letters and telegrams of warm support and sympathy too numerous to read, including letters from members of the Scottish Nurses' Association, and from the Irish Nurses' Association. The following are of special interest:—

DEAR MRS. SHUTER,—In case I may be prevented from attending your meeting at the last moment, I am writing to you to say how I sympathise with the nursing staff of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in having a nurse from another institution—and that one the London—put over their heads. Unless the Electing Committee are in possession of knowledge which is not available to the rest of us, I can conceive of no step more calculated to damage the prestige of the St. Bart's nurses in the eyes of the public than this one, or to undermine the feelings of loyalty of the Bart's Staff to their own institution.

I can understand that the present staff are unable to express their feelings openly and freely on the subject, having due regard to the question of discipline, so that I am glad to see

that the matter is being taken up outside. I wish you every success. From what I have heard in conversation with other Bart's men there is a considerable feeling of indignation abroad.

Very truly yours,  
LEONARD DOBSON, M.D., Lond.,  
Governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

DEAR MRS. SHUTER,—I learn that you are arranging for a meeting to be held to-night to protest against the appointment of a Matron to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, who has not been trained in that institution. I regret exceedingly that I cannot attend this meeting, and hear what transpires, for on the face of it, and unless adequate explanation is forthcoming, it seems to me that a grave slight has been passed on a large number of ladies who have in no way deserved such treatment.

Yours sincerely,  
RICHARD REECE, M.D.,  
Governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

DEAR MADAM,—I am very sorry that it is impossible for me to be present on Monday, as I much wished to join in the protest against what can only be described as an unwarrantable and unprovoked attack on the good name and the reputation of our Nursing School. Fortunately these stand so high, and are so firmly grounded, that no attack, from whatever quarter delivered, can do more than provoke amazed contempt.

But it has been a great shock to all of us, who, like myself, have always had the firmest belief in the mutual loyalty, honour, and good faith of Bart's and its government.

There is no member of the Nursing School, either past or present, from the most experienced Matron to the youngest probationer, who does not understand, and feel, that an intentional slight has been cast upon a body who were, to a woman, loyal to their great Alma Mater and her teachings.

It is an insult to many memories that the successor to our late Matron should have been chosen from a hospital with a lower standard of training than St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

I have no doubt but that our protest will take such a dignified and effectual form as shall make it worthy of the traditions of Bart's.

I am, dear Madam,  
Yours faithfully,  
M. MOLLERT,  
(cert. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Matron  
Royal South Hants and Southampton  
Hospital).

The following telegram Mrs. Shuter said she read with special pleasure as it was from a lady who for five years had held the position of Sister at the London Hospital:—

"Sorry impossible to attend meeting. To me it seems incredible that the authorities of St. Bartholomew's Hospital should have offered so gratuitous an insult to the memory of their late Matron, and to their own training school.—K. V. MACINTYRE, Matron, Infirmary, Wigan."

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