

A CASE FOR KITCHENER.

FLAGRANT INJUSTICE IN A MILITARY HOSPITAL.

The whole of the staff at the Endsleigh Palace Hospital for Officers, W.C., is seething with indignation, and no wonder, for a piece of tyranny is being attempted which we feel sure will arouse the indignation of the whole nursing profession.

As our readers are aware, this hospital of 100 beds has been organized for the treatment of sick and wounded officers, and is financed partly by the War Office and partly by public subscription. It was opened last July, when a highly qualified nursing staff was appointed. Miss Florence Tubbs, holding the certificate of Guy's Hospital, and high credentials, was appointed Matron, since which time no complaint has been made to her concerning the administration of the institution.

The surprise and indignation, therefore, of Miss Tubbs may be imagined when the Chairman of the hospital, Sir Archibald Williamson, informed her on Friday, 8th inst., that the Committee desired her to leave at once, that she had better go the next morning, as if she were going away for a week-end, and not return. This Miss Tubbs said she could not do. The Chairman then required her to give her solemn word of honour that if she stayed for a week, she would not mention her discharge to the staff. In her agitation, the Matron gave this promise, but later came to the conclusion that such a demand was absolutely indefensible, and telephoned Sir Archibald Williamson that she intended to inform the senior Sisters of the matter. This she did, and naturally aroused in these ladies a sense of outrage and warm indignation, whereupon they one and all, the nursing and domestic staff, sent in their resignations, unless justice was done to the Matron, as the reasons given to her by the Chairman for her summary ejection appeared to them of the most frivolous description.

Lady Williamson, wife of Sir Archibald, and joint Hon. Secretary, then took occasion to interview the Sisters and the head cook, and attempted to influence them to withdraw their resignations. They were informed that the dismissal of the Matron was at the instance of the War Office. Later, they telephoned to the War Office for information, and were informed by the officer concerned that he knew nothing of the affair. He later received the Matron and Sisters at the War Office, after having seen Sir Archibald and Lady Williamson, and of course maintained a judicial attitude on the question.

The Matron was subjected to further insult upon the part of Lady Williamson's private secretary, who went to her room on Saturday last to pay her salary, and said she had been told to stay there until the Matron had left the building. This Miss Tubbs refused to do.

We learn that the medical staff, which is composed of some eighteen specialists, met in consultation on Monday evening—a meeting at which Sir Archibald Williamson was present, and that later their delegate interviewed the Matron, and told her that they were of opinion that she must leave on Saturday, but they hoped she would influence the Sisters to remain in the hospital and be loyal to the Committee—a decision upon the part of the medical staff which we deeply regret, as they would be the very last to permit one of their own cloth to be summarily ejected from office by four members of the Committee, without being informed of the charges made against him, and afforded an opportunity of self-defence.

The nursing staff are determined that this injury shall not be inflicted on the Matron without the fullest publicity. As the case stands at present, the Matron is to be turned out on Saturday. The whole nursing and domestic staff have resigned, and intend to leave the hospital with her.

The following resolution has been unanimously adopted by the Staff and sent to the Press:—

RESOLUTION.

We the nursing and domestic staff of the Endsleigh Palace Hospital for Officers beg to offer our most indignant protest against the manner in which the Committee has attempted to summarily eject the Senior Nursing Officer, Miss Florence Tubbs, without acquainting her with the accusations against her, or affording her an opportunity of self-defence.

We one and all beg to give notice that if justice is not at once done by the Committee, and Miss Tubbs reinstated as Matron, it is our intention to leave the hospital with her on Saturday October 16th. But before taking this serious action we desire to appeal through the press to the public who have provided the means to finance this hospital, to see that justice is done, so that our patients, who are military officers, may not in any way suffer from the course of action which we feel compelled to adopt.

We beg to inform the public of the names of those who compose the Committee of the Endsleigh Palace Hospital for Officers, Endsleigh Gardens, London, N.W., so that they may know who are the persons who are individually and respectively responsible for this tyrannical action.

Chairman.—Sir Archibald Williamson, Bart., M.P.

Vice-Chairman.—Lord. Colebrooke, C.V.O.

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