

present. It has had to be called at very short notice, but the matters to be discussed are of vital and urgent importance to all members of the profession, and the Executive Committee of the Corporation, by convening the Conference, is giving them the opportunity of discussing these burning questions and conveying their considered conclusions to the Government Authorities responsible for just legislation.

THE NIGHTINGALE MEDALS FOR 1919.

The presentation of the Nightingale Medals, given annually to the three nurses of the Nightingale Training School at St. Thomas' Hospital, S.E. who have earned them by their proficiency both in examinations, and for ward efficiency and conduct, is always the occasion of a pleasurable gathering.

This year the ceremony took place in the Nightingale Home on November 17th, in the presence of a large gathering of Sisters and Nurses, "Old Nightingales" and other friends. Both before and after the presentation function tea and other good things were hospitably dispensed by the Matron (Miss A. Lloyd Still, C.B.E., R.R.C.) and the Nursing staff.

Mr. Minet, Treasurer of the Nightingale Fund, said that they met annually in this family gathering for two reasons, to present the medals and to do honour to the memory of the lady who smiled down upon them from the picture behind him—Miss Florence Nightingale.

On these occasions it was usual for him to address them on some topic relating to nursing. The one he had selected this year was a difficult one, and he had therefore written his address, on Trade Unionism for Nurses (which we hope to publish next week) which he proceeded to read.

Mr. Minet then called on Lady Makins, R.R.C., an old Nightingale, to present the medals awarded for 1919. (The Gold Medallist must obtain 75 per cent. of the total marks, 60 per cent. in all examinations and 70 per cent. for Ward efficiency and conduct. The Silver Medallist 65 per cent. of the total marks, 50 per cent. in all examinations and 70 per cent. for Ward efficiency and conduct.) The following were the awards:—

Gold Medal.—Christine Tompkinson.

Silver Medal.—Maria Marjorie Fisher.

Bronze Medal.—Dorothy May Cockell.

These announcements were greeted with loud applause, which was renewed as the recipients went up to receive their medals from Lady Makins, who spoke of the great pleasure it was to her to make the presentations and to say how much she owed to St. Thomas's. She described Mrs. Wardroper, the first Matron of the hospital under the new régime, dignified, neat, and wearing a black silk bonnet, and the Home Sister, Miss Crosland. The training and discipline were hard, but they helped to strengthen their characters. Many improvements had been made since her day,

for not a few of which they were indebted to their present Matron. (Loud applause.)

It would have been a great satisfaction to Miss Nightingale to know of the work of her Sisters and Nurses during the great war. More than one memorial had been raised to her and they were there that day to celebrate a very charming one, but the greatest and most practical of all was the School of Nursing on which her heart was set.

Mr. Minet proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Lady Makins, and announced a telegram from Mr. Bonham Carter, regretting that he was unable to be present, and congratulating the medallists.

The proceedings concluded with three hearty cheers for the Matron, and the singing of the National Anthem.

Subsequently the Treasurer, Sir Arthur Stanley, and the Secretary, Mr. G. Q. Roberts arrived and added their congratulations to those received by the medallists.

ABJECT APOLOGY FOR A CRUEL LIBEL.

MacCALLUM v. BURDETT, THE SCIENTIFIC PRESS, LTD., AND OTHERS.

This case was heard on Tuesday, November 23rd, in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, before the Lord Chief Justice, and a special jury.

As our readers are aware, Miss Emmeline Maude MacCallum, a well-known trained nurse, sued Sir Henry Burdett (since deceased), the Scientific Press, Ltd., and Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., Ltd., the editor, publishers, and printers of *The Nursing Mirror* and *The Hospital* for damages for libel.

At the outset of the case, Mr. BARRINGTON WARD, K.C., Counsel for the defendants, said it was unfortunate the principal defendant, Sir Henry Burdett, had died in April last. He withdrew unreservedly the pleas of justification and fair comment on behalf of his clients.

MR. PATRICK HASTINGS, K.C. (instructed by Messrs. Theodore Goddard & Co.) in opening the case, commented strongly on the utter cruelty of the defendants in maintaining the plea of justification for twelve months. He understood the defence to mean that they could have justified the words until the death of Sir Henry Burdett. He had carefully studied the words of which Miss MacCallum complained, and nothing could justify them. The defendants could not. Yet only three minutes ago they were maintaining the attitude in which they had gone far to ruin this lady's career. The libels had suggested that the plaintiff was a thoroughly worthless person, and he had come there to fight on the assumption that the defendants were prepared to submit not only that they had said these words, but that they were true. Miss MacCallum had had to live for twelve months under that stigma, which had resulted in her losing most of her friends, as well as her means of earning a livelihood.

MR. BARRINGTON WARD said that at the proper time he would tender to the lady, on behalf of his

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