

THE ISLA STEWART MEMORIAL.

DINNER TO LEAGUE DELEGATES TO THE NURSING COUNCIL CONFERENCE.

It was a most happy arrangement of the Committee of the Isla Stewart Memorial Fund to use the income for the present year in entertaining at dinner, on the evening of April 28th, at the Hotel Jules, 85, Jermyn Street, S.W., the delegates to the Nursing Council Conference who were members of the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses.

The name of Isla Stewart will always be closely and most honourably connected with the long-drawn-out campaign for State Registration of Nurses, and the organisation of Nursing Education by the State, and members of the Nursing Profession know well that had she lived to see the first fruits of her work evidenced by the Conference on April 28th she would assuredly have gathered round her hospitable table, as she loved to do, friends and former pupils when the day's work was done.

The Chairman of the Memorial Fund Committee, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, acted as Chairman, ably seconded by the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mrs. Shuter. Mrs. Victor Bonney, an active member of the Committee, was also present.

The guests of honour were Miss Helen Todd, President of the League, and Miss A. Beadsmore Smith, C.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, who were on the right and left of the Chairman; and Mrs. Shuter, who presided at the opposite end of the table, was supported by Miss M. E. Sparshott, C.B.E., R.R.C., the principal speaker at the afternoon meeting, and Miss E. M. Musson, R.R.C.

Officers of the League present were Miss M. Breay and Mrs. Lancelot Andrews (Vice-Presidents), and Miss Mabel Sleigh (Treasurer), and representatives of Nurses' Associations were Miss Isabel Macdonald and Miss E. Maude MacCallum, members of the General Nursing Council, and Secretary and Hon. Secretary respectively of the Royal British Nurses' Association and the Professional Union of Trained Nurses.

The Committee were specially gratified to have as their guest Miss Montgomery Wilson, R.R.C., Matron of the King Edward VII's Infirmary, Cardiff, and its delegate to the Conference, so that "gallant little Wales" was to the fore.

There was a very happy spirit of comradeship and the dinner was gay and friendly.

At its close Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said that it would be interesting to those present to know what the dinner signified. It was eleven years ago since the profession lost a great Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. All the years she was there she worked steadfastly for the State Organisation of Trained Nurses, but passed away before the Nursing Acts were won.

Those of us who have had the great privilege of seeing these Acts placed on the Statute Book realise that when the General Nursing Council was

formed Isla Stewart, had she lived, would have been one of the first and one of the wisest women to be placed upon it. Those present would remember that, after her death, a Committee was formed to raise a Memorial Fund in her honour. Mrs. Shuter had well conserved the funds, and now that the war was over it was proposed to spend the income annually in some way that would keep her memory green.

Any one who knew Isla Stewart knew her love of hospitality, there was never an occasion in the Nursing world which she did not try to make an occasion for good fellowship, and the Committee thought there could be no more appropriate way of commemorating her this year than by entertaining delegates to the great Conference held that day when, for the first time, nurses came together in a gathering convened under their own Statutory Council.

The spirit of Isla Stewart and all great nursing pioneers was with them on this great day. Matrons had of recent years passed through difficult times. They had seen high standards lowered, and possessed no lever with which to raise them. But to-day they were feeling the power for good through the lever of the Registration Acts. She hoped future matrons would avail themselves of it to the full, and that they would couple with the progress to which we confidently looked forward the name of Isla Stewart, who had had so much to do with the higher evolution of nursing.

One of the greatest virtues in the world was gratitude—gratitude to great leaders and great friends such as Isla Stewart, who was an inspiration to all those working under her.

Miss Sparshott expressed her thanks to the Committee for their hospitality and her great pleasure at being present. She did not know Miss Isla Stewart, but her name was honoured throughout the nursing profession.

Mrs. Andrews expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Fenwick for putting into words what was in the hearts of all. She called to mind Mrs. Fenwick's close association with Miss Stewart, and thanked her for her life's work.

Miss Musson, R.R.C., associated herself with what Mrs. Andrews had said, and congratulated Mrs. Fenwick on seeing the result of her life's work, which few were permitted to do.

Miss Coulton supported Miss Sparshott in thanking the Committee for their great courtesy and kindness in inviting them to be present.

Miss Dowbiggin, C.B.E., R.R.C., said it was beyond her wildest dreams that she should take part in such a function. She quoted some wise sayings of Miss Stewart's as to the relative value of work and recreation.

Miss MacCallum also expressed her pleasure at being present, and spoke of the great help of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING to the younger generation of nurses.

The members of the League present were very happy to meet so many of their comrades, and enjoyed good talk and reminiscences.

M. B.

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