

THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

ST. JAMES' HOSPITAL, BALHAM.

The First Annual Prize-Giving to the Nurses of St. James' Hospital, Balham, a very notable and inspiring function, took place on Tuesday, May 20th, the certificates and prizes being distributed by the Chairman of the Board, Mr. G. Fowle. The Distribution took place in a large Army hut, with a raised platform at the end, and through the open windows behind it one had a glimpse of the garden beyond, while the grey walls of the hut formed an effective background for green and rose-coloured screens, the masses of mauve and white lilac, and the crimson poppies in a gleaming shell case, with which the hut was decorated. One side of the hut was filled to its utmost capacity with nurses and probationers in their fresh blue and white striped uniforms, and the other with members of the Board of Guardians, and invited guests.

The Chairman said that the duty of distributing the prizes and certificates to the nurses was a most pleasing one. The prizes were given by the Medical Superintendent, by the Matron, and last, but not least, there was the Gold Medal given by the Guardians. He attributed the greatest value to the certificates. Anyone who knew anything about the nursing profession knew that the standard required of the present day nurses was much higher than formerly. The Nursing Profession was held in the highest esteem, and the Chairman counselled those now receiving their certificates not to let anything on their part happen to belittle it.

CERTIFICATES.

He then presented certificates to Nurses Violet Geaton, A. Mills, A. Lauder, E. Mant, R. Burgess, P. L. Parker, K. Marsh and W. Matthews (First Class Honours), also to Nurses A. Burrows, H. M. Bond, H. M. Linekar, M. C. Jones, L. Jones, R. Mitchell, P. Bartrum, M. Preece, M. Oliver, A. Cutbush, R. Coleman, A. Russell, Z. Johanssen.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT'S PRIZES.

The following nurses were the prize winners:—

For Anatomy and Physiology.—Nurse Mant.

For Medical Nursing.—Nurse Walsh (not present).

For Surgical Nursing.—Nurse Geaton.

MATRON'S PRIZE.

Awarded on Ward Reports and Conduct.—Nurse Matthews.

SPECIAL PRIZES IN FINAL EXAMINATION.

Nurse K. Marsh and Nurse E. Seeley.

GOLD MEDAL.

Given by the Guardians.—Nurse Violet Geaton.

The Chairman said that the award of a Gold Medal was suggested by the Medical Superintendent, Dr. MacCormac. The Guardians had decided to have a die made, and it was an interesting fact that until next year, when he hoped another would be awarded, the Medal he was now presenting to Nurse Violet Geaton was the only one from that die in existence. He then presented the Medal, which is awarded to the nurse with the highest aggregate marks, to Nurse Geaton.

This beautiful medal is suspended from an orange and blue ribbon. It depicts St. James-the-less, the patron Saint of the hospital, carrying his pilgrim staff, scrip gourd and book. It is inscribed round the edge "St. James' Hospital Nursing School, Wandsworth," and on the reverse side a laurel wreath surrounds the name of the prize-winner and the dates of her training.

As each nurse came up the hut to receive her certificate, prize or medal, she was warmly applauded, the popularity of some nurses, including the Gold Medallist, being evident from the ovation they received.

Mr. W. J. Sidey, Vice-Chairman of the Board, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said that, whenever one met nurses, one met a healthy body of women with a sound mind in a sound body. That was the greatest wealth, and the most perfect form of life one could possess.

Dr. MacCormac, the Medical Superintendent, in seconding the proposal, coupled with the name of the Chairman the names of the whole Board. He further said he thought the nation did not quite appreciate the true, scientific work of nurses. The professions of medicine and nursing were interdependent, and in the Public Health Service the scientific nurse served quite as important and scientific a function as the scientific physician. Nurses, who were everlasting witnesses of the frailty of human nature, had a brilliant future before them. It was a matter of great interest to him as Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, to see the gradual unfolding of character in the young girls who came to them for training, as the eyes of their souls were opened, and their sympathies widened. They were helpful to those who could not help themselves, to whom in the day of their tribulation they extended a tender hand and a sympathetic heart. He thought there was no more impressive sight than the way these poor chaps, handicapped as they were, crossed the dark river. "When," said Dr. MacCormac to the nurses, "you come to pass that river, you will receive as credentials the blessing of Him in whose footsteps you have trodden, for the care you have given to the sick, His children."

He concluded by saying that the day marked another milestone in the advance of their Training School, and prophesied that the Wandsworth Union would continue to progress in the scientific training of the nurses. He thought it very fitting that the Guardians should be interested in the nurses turned out from their Training School.

The Matron, Miss Constance Todd, S.R.N., M.M., R.R.C., expressed the great pleasure it gave her to support the Resolution on behalf of the Nursing Staff, and to have the opportunity of expressing their thanks to the Chairman and Board. The Chairman had referred to the strenuous character of the work of nurses at the present day; there were a good many former nurses in the room, and she was sure they would all say that the present day nurses did not work half as hard as they had done. She cordially supported the Resolution.

The nurses here rose and sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow, and so say all of us," while the Chairman beamed upon them with manifest pleasure at this spontaneous testimony to his popularity.

Miss Todd further expressed the hope that next year they would be opening their new Nurses' Home, and that the Chairman would play a game of tennis on the courts, to which the nurses were so eagerly looking forward.

Those present then adjourned to the garden, where tea was served at little tables on the lawn, bright with vases of golden laburnum. Lilac, laburnum and may trees were at their best, the songs and music of the nurses delightful, and the pleasant ceremony ended on a very gay and happy note.

Mr. Leonard Ropner, a Stockton-on-Tees shipbuilder, has presented £10,000 to the extension fund of the Stockton Hospital. His father, the late Sir Robert Ropner, gave £10,000 for the same purpose on the celebration of his diamond wedding.

We congratulate the hospitals on some magnificent windfalls. The late Mr. Sydney Larnach, of Yew Lodge, East Grinstead, bequeathed upwards of £100,000 to charity, of which our leading London hospitals are to receive £10,000 each.

Alderman Sir John Charles Bell, Bart., also left thousands to good works.

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