

MEETING IN HONOUR OF MADEMOISELLE CHAPTAL.

OFFICER OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR.

REPORT BY A NURSE OF THE FRENCH STATE.

On the 6th of February we met in Madame Achille Fould's house, Avenue d'Iéna, Paris, to express our admiration and gratitude to one whose initiative and ability have raised our profession to the dignity of a sacred work and who has just been made an Officer of the Legion of Honour.

Professor Léon Bernard was the chairman, supported by distinguished official personalities, Presidents of Red Cross societies, Heads of Schools for Nurses, who co-operated with Mademoiselle Chaptal for the betterment of our profession, Parisian and Provincial delegates and many friends and admirers.

Mother Catherine d'Ornellas, of St. Joseph of Cluny, the Vice-president of our Association, conveyed the congratulations of all to Mlle. Chaptal, whose constant and efficient work and prodigious energy in preparing the Congress is known by so many. She thanked her on behalf of all the French nursing nuns for the kindness and support she, as President of the Association, had extended to them. Mother Catherine then presented her with an antique red leather envelope bearing her monogram and the date of her receiving the said distinction, 20th July, 1933, the contents of which are intended for the various good works she has organised.

Then M. Margot, chairman of the Home School for private nurses, founded by Mlle. Chaptal in 1905, spoke on behalf of the members of the board, who consider themselves as her friends. He added that the chairman of the last General Meeting of the Home School, who is the Chairman of to-day's meeting, said that she was one of the promoters of the Schools for Nurses and she bore a high testimony to the value of the nurses she had trained. After receiving many prizes granted by the *Institut* she deserved the present official recognition.

Professor Léon Bernard, a high authority in the fight against Tuberculosis, said that a month ago he was Mlle. Chaptal's official sponsor when she was promoted to the rank of Officer in the Order of the Legion of Honour.

To-day the whole of the National Association and a part of the International Association are congratulating Mlle. Chaptal.

He mentioned Prof. Landouzy, who had a great affection and admiration for Mlle. Chaptal and Prof. Letulle who worked with her for a long time. Through them he became acquainted with Mlle. Chaptal's work.

If Mr. Berthélemy, President of the High Council of the Public Assistance, of which Mlle. Chaptal is a member, had been able to be present, he would have recalled that the *Académie des Sciences Morales* had awarded one of its most important prizes to "Morale Professionnelle," a book by Mlle. Chaptal, in the preface to which Mr. Berthélemy, wrote that Mlle. Chaptal belongs to that élite of active philanthropists whose merit lies not only in their good intention and self sacrifice but in the results achieved.

Of these numerous results Prof. Léon Bernard mentioned briefly the three principal ones, from the moral, sanitary and professional points of view, which are due to Mlle. Chaptal's work.

The present generation, who sees the developments and achievements of the antituberculous dispensaries, cannot realise what the *Plaisance* dispensary was when Mlle. Chaptal founded it. Then, in November, 1900, there were hardly two or three dispensaries, without any method or programme, and when Calmette, in 1902, laid down definite

working principles, Mlle. Chaptal's dispensary in Paris had already produced results of an immense importance. The mortality in that part of Paris had decreased and in all hygiene courses and International Congresses, that dispensary was cited as a model. It was the starting point of the present fight against tuberculosis.

In another direction Mlle. Chaptal realised that the nursing profession had not the acquirements, the moral value, the social status to which it was entitled.

Mme. Alphen-Salvador in Paris, others in Bordeaux and elsewhere had recognised it and worked with one object in view: to do good. But what distinguished Mlle. Chaptal from others is that she wanted to be a nurse herself, to know all the difficulties, labours, duties of the profession as well as the happiness coming from doing good and doing it well.

She founded the Home School for Private Nurses, and without disparaging other institutions, he would say that there is something characteristic in the moral and technical training of Mlle. Chaptal's pupils.

Prof. Léon Bernard then described Mlle. Chaptal's international activity, first of all in the pre-war anti-tuberculosis congresses. He recalled her successes as an orator in all International congresses and in the committee for the protection of children in Geneva, in which Mlle. Chaptal plays a great part. He ended in recalling the splendid success of the Congress of Nurses—after which the French Government decided to show her its esteem and appreciation. Better than all rewards, however, is the feeling that she had done something good. She had done her duty and filled her life with useful work. She is a symbol and example to be followed. Prof. Léon Bernard then thanked Mme. Fould for her kind hospitality.

Mme. Fould replied she was happy to have received Mlle. Chaptal, whom she had known for a very long time, as she began all her good work under the ægis of the Red Cross. She had achieved magnificent work, for which Mme. Fould congratulated her.

Mlle. Chaptal, deeply moved, said that, looking backwards, she had nothing but thanks to give. She owed a lot to the support, help, advice extended to her by friends, such as MM. Letulle and Landouzy. Others, and particularly Prof. Calmette and Dr. Roux, who had recently died, supported her also. They worked in their laboratories and she tried to make a practical application of their discoveries. She could mention many others who had never failed to give her their help.

She expressed her gratitude to her old friend, Prof. Léon Bernard. Everyone wishes to do good, but to accomplish it, you must meet with sympathy and encouragement. Such support ensures success. She thanked also the Red Cross, in which, after commencing work in a provincial hospital, she worked with her dear friend, Mlle. Génin.

Then she thanked all the nurses, those who conceived the idea of the present kind demonstration, the Vice-President, Mother Catherine d'Ornellas, and their General Secretary, Mlle. de Joannis, who organised it. She thanked Mother Catherine for speaking in the name of all the nurses, who have been so desirous to show their old President their affection and appreciation.

She thanked all those who could not be present. She was greatly touched by the award of the decoration because she felt that all professional nurses were honoured in her. The honour bestowed on her was due to all the unknown ones who had not met with the support she was privileged to receive. To all she expressed her gratitude and affection.

Life is neither pleasure nor pain, but a serious business, which it is our duty to carry through and to terminate with honour.

De Tocqueville.

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