

Sir Edward Knapp Fisher. The Form of Solemnisation of Matrimony, at the Marriage of H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., A.D.C., R.N., with H.R.H. Princess Marina of Greece, Westminster Abbey on November 29th, 1934 (for Royal Mementoes Collection).

Miss Jessie Holmes, "Women of Worth," illustrations by Dickes. "Ten Great and Good Men," lectures by Henry Montague Butler, D.D. (for Isla Stewart Library).

Miss A. Stewart Bryson, an embroidered Table Cloth with College emblem. Cut Glass Inkstand.

Miss J. H. Macdonald, flowers from South Africa.

Miss E. L. Macaulay, Scotch bun for Birthday Party.

Thirty-two books and two pictures, one of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, and one of Miss Nightingale, the generous gift of Miss E. Dinnie, to the College, were received with sincere gratitude by the Council.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

It was agreed that the next Meeting of the Council be held on Saturday, January 19th, 1935, at 2.30 p.m.

The Meeting then terminated.

REGISTRATION DAY CELEBRATION.

The approach of the happy Christmas Season brought us once again to the Celebration of Registration Day, which was held on Saturday, December 15th, at 4.30 p.m., at the termination of the Council Meeting.

Upwards of 50 Fellows and Members and staunch supporters of the old pioneer days for State Registration of Nurses foregathered in the Secretary's office, which had been beautifully decorated with holly, lovely flowers and crackers by the office staff.

In the centre of the room a splendid frosted cake inscribed "British College of Nurses" was placed with a replica of the seal of the College in marzipan, and below in crimson letters, "Registration of Nurses, 1919-1934," and surrounded by 15 crimson tapers.

This year the celebration will be especially memorable for the remarkable and brilliant Address delivered by Miss Isabel Macdonald, F.B.C.N., a Vice-President of the College, on "A Florence Nightingale of the Commonwealth."

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President, who was in the Chair, called upon Miss Macdonald to speak to them on her discovery of a new nursing luminary of the Commonwealth.

A FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

In commencing her address Miss Macdonald related an incident, arising on a reference to Florence Nightingale, which ultimately led to her discovery of Elizabeth Alkin, whom she described as the Florence Nightingale of the Commonwealth. Preparatory to giving an account of Elizabeth Alkin (or "Parliament Joan") and her nursing activities the lecturer said that she would like first to give some idea of the background against which the figure of Elizabeth Alkin stands, to give some conception of the provisions made for the nursing of the wounded during the civil wars, and the wars with the Dutch. After having done this Miss Macdonald said that, at the risk of lifting events out of their sequence, she would prefer next to read certain documents and entries in State papers as Elizabeth Alkin was herself the author of several of the former. In this way a more correct feeling regarding her would probably arise in the minds of those present than if someone else, from the outset, gave her personal conception of what manner of woman this Florence Nightingale of the Commonwealth was. Miss Macdonald said that she would read these documents and extracts from State papers, slowly and deliberately, because this was probably the first occasion upon which, for nearly three hundred years, they had been read aloud to an audience and equally probably that last occasion upon which they were so read

was in My Lord Protector's Council of State. Now, centuries on, they were read to an audience of nurses, and not unfittingly, for Elizabeth Alkin and Major Bourne (the Sidney Herbert of the Commonwealth) might be regarded as the first adventurers into the field of military nursing organisation.

We do not propose to print here the documents read, although they shed much light upon the individuality of Elizabeth Alkin, upon her compassion, her large heartedness, her "spirit of high sacrifice," her energy and her creative power. At the request of many of those present at the lecture, Miss Macdonald has agreed to have it printed in pamphlet form in support of the Florence Nightingale Scholarships Fund of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain or some other professional object. We will not, therefore, anticipate this publication by giving a fuller account here nor risk mutilating this first story of Elizabeth Alkin by giving a condensed report. Suffice it to say that those who acquire copies of the lecture (probably at the cost of one shilling) will find that it gives to them many interesting glimpses into the nursing of the soldiers and sailors of the Commonwealth.

In closing her lecture, Miss Macdonald referred to the fact that it was the utterance of the name of Florence Nightingale that conjured Elizabeth Alkin out of the shadows of nursing history, and concluded her address in the following words:—"If you are of those who see visions and dream dreams you may descry this afternoon, on the stage of nursing history, two figures whom you have recalled to receive your acclaim. The greater of these two—the Lady with the Lamp—is directing your applause to that other, that she too may share your acclamation—a shadowy, slender figure this, a figure twisted by the 'infirmities' that assailed her when she 'hazarded her life for this Commonwealth,' a figure in a gown of grey. Under the quaint, old-world puritan bonnet is a face with the lines that sorrow and hardship leave, quiet eyes and a mouth that is strong yet tender and kind for 'it pitied her to see poor people suffer.' *Such is the Lady with the Candle.*"*

Prolonged applause greeted the speaker on terminating her most valuable historical record.

The President thanked Miss Macdonald most warmly for her brilliant Address, and expressed herself much moved that Miss Macdonald's genius had revealed the amazing discovery of this great woman, "The Florence Nightingale of the Commonwealth." She felt it difficult to say what might result from the page of nursing history so feelingly revealed. More yet must be discovered and made available of the splendid altruistic qualities of "The Lady with the Candle."

Cutting the Cake.

The nine Members of the Council present and ex-Councillors and pioneer representatives then each set a taper alight.

The President cut the Cake, which was handed round on the beautiful Sir Richard Barnett Memorial Salver and dispensed with the Hester Bateman tartlet slice, an exquisite piece of antique pierced silver.

The Registration Ceremony is always one of the happiest events. Everyone present was in a very gay and appropriate mood, and this year all were delighted to have Miss Margaret Breay with them once more.

THE LADY WITH THE CANDLE.

Miss Isabel Macdonald has most generously agreed to issue the Address on the "Florence Nightingale of the Commonwealth" in pamphlet form, and it is probable

* In the archives of the Commonwealth there are frequent demands for more candles from those responsible for organising the care of the wounded.

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