

convey the sympathy of the Council with their losses, and that their Certificates of Membership, if lost, be replaced.

Letters from Miss D. M. Dickinson on the Assistant Nurse question were reported.

#### The Case of Miss A. M. Brownlow, S.R.N., F.B.C.N.

The President notified the reception of a letter from Miss Alice M. Brownlow, Matron, County Hospital, Farnborough, Kent. She reminded the meeting that in July, 1939, a Ministry of Health inquiry vindicated Miss Brownlow on charges alleging that she had treated the Nursing Staff unfairly. The County Council application for sanction to dismiss her was refused.

In February, 1940, on the nomination of Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Minister of Health, the County Council appointed Miss Nora B. C. Iles, of Guildford, Superintendent Matron. Thus there were two Matrons in office—in one hospital—with resulting friction and disorganisation—a situation provoked by Ministerial ignorance. Miss Brownlow had sent a copy of the following letter:—

Copy of letter from John Moss, Public Assistance Officer, to Miss Brownlow, Matron, County Hospital, Farnborough.

COUNTY HALL, MAIDSTONE.

June 25, 1941.

DEAR MADAM,

County Hall, Farnborough.  
(Matron).

I have to inform you that a letter has been received from the Minister of Health stating that the Minister is satisfied that the arrangements embodied in the direction given by Mr. MacDonald, on December 20, 1940, which were designed to secure that Miss Iles should act as Superintendent Matron of the Hospital and you should assist her, have not proved successful and cannot, in the interests of the efficiency of the Hospital, be allowed to continue.

The County Council has been informed that the Minister is satisfied that Miss Iles, if assured of the loyal assistance of the nursing staff, is fully competent to administer the nursing side of the hospital, in all its departments, but that your continuance in your present position is incompatible with efficient administration. It is understood at the same time that the Minister does not feel that on the evidence before him, he would be justified in removing you from office under the powers contained in the Public Assistance Order. In the circumstances he has decided that in order to secure the efficient administration of the hospital, the proper course is to place you forthwith on leave with pay (including the sum paid in lieu of emoluments) and he has accordingly directed the County Council, notwithstanding the terms of the previous direction, to take the necessary steps for this purpose. This arrangement will continue until further notice or until you take up other remunerative employment. In the latter event, the adjustment of the payments made by the Council to you will be necessary. In accordance with the Minister's decision I must therefore ask you to commence your leave, in the circumstances indicated by the Minister, on the 30th instant, which means that you will not be undertaking duty at the Hospital on July 1.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN MOSS,  
Public Assistance Officer.

After considering this letter the Council were unanimously of opinion that Miss Brownlow had been most unjustly treated. She had in the past been exonerated of unproved accusations, and her subsequent treatment by her accusers had evidently been intolerable, and her work made impossible by divided authority.

The proposal to pay her £500 a year of public money, in lieu of office, appeared unjustifiable, and presumably would interfere with her pension. Practically the present

Minister of Health had deprived Miss Brownlow of her office and livelihood without a public inquiry—a most unjustifiable action.

Major Walter Elliot was in authority when Miss Brownlow was unjustly accused and acquitted. Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, instead of leaving well alone, appointed Miss Iles as a second Matron in one hospital, adding insult to injury, and creating an intolerable situation, which one would have imagined no Registered Nurse would have accepted, and now Mr. Ernest Brown, pleading for loyalty for Matron number two, practically turns Miss Brownlow out of doors.

The Council was of opinion that to permit one of its faithful Fellows to be so injuriously treated could not be tolerated without protest, and unanimously agreed that a considered protest be sent without delay to Mr. Ernest Brown, Minister of Health.

#### The History of Nursing Section.

The President handed to Miss A. M. Bushby, the Organiser of the History Section, the following gifts for tabulation, thanks for gifts having already been sent.

(1) From Miss Jessie Holmes, S.R.N.: A Scarf presented to her, when a Sister at the Hospital at La Panne (26 years ago) by Queen Elisabeth of the Belgians. A treasure recognising the patriotic services of Miss Holmes in Belgium during the Great War.

(2) From Miss A. Goodrich, Dean Emeritus of Yale University School of Nursing, an Hon. Vice-President of the I. C. N.: A card issued by the Californian Nurses for their quota for the F.N.I.F. Fund, illustrated with a charming drawing of the head of Miss Florence Nightingale, and inscribed as follows: "God's Precious Gift is often literally placed in the Nurse's hands" (Florence Nightingale's Notes on Nursing), of which Miss Goodrich writes: "It seems to me to present in tangible form the unquenchable flame of belief in ultimate good."

(3) "Florence Nightingale," by Lytton Strachey. From David Belaysse Fenwick.

(4) With the Compliments of *The American Journal of Nursing*, "The Story of the American Journal of Nursing."

(5) From Miss Mary M. Roberts, R.N., Editor of *The American Journal of Nursing*, "Thirty Fruitful Years," "a history of *The American Journal of Nursing*, dedicated to the courageous and far-seeing pioneers who laid the substantial foundation of professional journalism for Nurses in the United States."

(6) Letter from Miss L. Lavinia Dock, commending reminiscences, "so precious and perfect," in *The British Journal of Nursing*.

(7) Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God, to be used on the National Day of Prayer. Appointed by His Majesty the King.

(8) "The Comfort that is Easter." "He was acquainted with grief," a religious Play, written and donated by Hilda Trevelyan-Thomson.

(9) "Black Record—Germany Past and Present," by the Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Vansittart, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.Litt.

#### The King of Yugoslavia.

It was agreed to offer, with respectful duty, a bouquet of English Roses to His Majesty King Peter of Yugoslavia, together with the offer of any service which might be in the power of the members of the British College of Nurses.

#### THE ANNUAL MEETING.

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting should be held in September instead of in July, so that certain proposals for the future conduct of business might be prepared for discussion.

The meeting then terminated.

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