

globe with its membership of nine countries, while twenty-three nationalities, and at least three races, were represented by nurses who sat around the board and applauded the proposition, eloquently seconded by Miss M. A. Nutting, to endow a memorial which should be of an educational character, to the honour of a woman whose supreme weapon was knowledge.

"The attempts made by men in high places to promote memorials to Miss Nightingale have been singularly unfortunate, and the representatives of her own training school appear to have failed wholly to perceive the real lesson of her life, failed wholly to apply its lesson.

"Nurses have disapproved and resented from the outset the entire form and content of men's proposals for a Nightingale Memorial. They resent the egotistical attitude which led the Memorial Committee to ignore the rank and file of the nursing profession, to seek no light from the organised nurses, who would naturally, because of their life-work, have formed a ripe opinion on the matter, which should have received consideration.

"They resent the application of the wretched, discredited pretext of charity—refuge of mediaeval minds—to themselves, members of a modern, skilled, trained profession, which is absolutely indispensable to society in its present form—absolutely indispensable to Government Departments concerned with public health and well-being—absolutely indispensable to physicians and surgeons in their work with the sick. Without their aid all the fast-developing lines of preventive medicine, public sanitation and hygiene, and social nursing service could not make one iota of progress. To propose to make these expert women the objects of a charitable endowment in honour of Florence Nightingale, who foresaw and foretold all these lines of Health Nursing before anyone else in England did so!—the very idea is endlessly ludicrous, or would be so if it were not sad, and sad it is, because it shows the colossal obstacles which women must overcome in lands where all power is obstinately held in the hands of a sex oligarchy.

"Even the promised statue of Miss Nightingale, which should indeed shine forth among England's heroes, cannot be a source of unmixed satisfaction to nurses, because of the frugal expenditure allowed for it.

"No, the only vital, the only fitting memorial to Miss Nightingale is one that shall embody her spirit, shall perpetuate her energy, shall disseminate her principles, shall raise up women to follow in her footsteps. Her spirit was an indomitable, a militant spirit, not a meek tractable one. Her energy was destructive of man's meddling in things he did not understand, and constructive on lines of woman's public duties. Her principles are: Knowledge, Training, Authority for the woman in the work which is hers. Women will be prepared to follow where she led, only by knowledge, culture, fearlessness, self-reliance.

"The true memorial to Miss Nightingale will be an educational memorial, and to such a foundation not only nurses, but all truth-loving and humanity-loving women and men should gladly contribute according to their ability."

L. L. Dock, R.N.

The Status of the Fever Nurse Completely Effaced.

IN OUR LAST ISSUE we reproduced from *The Daily Telegraph* the able and timely letter of the Medical Officer of Health to the Corporation of Glasgow—Stuart J. A. Laidlaw, Esq., B.Sc., M.D., D.P.H., B.L., D.P.A.—concerning the grave consequences which the policy of the Minister of Health has evolved in neglecting to recognise the value of Fever work and its organisation in relation to epidemic disease. We

warmly thank Dr. Laidlaw for his cogent reply and greatly appreciate receiving the confirmation of our views from one of his professional, official experience, and who had so recently to deal with epidemic conditions:—

"Those medical officers who have been associated during their working lives with fever nursing feel very deeply that the status of the fever nurse has been so completely effaced by the new regulations.

"The truth of the matter is that for some reason the medical advisers of the Government appear to disregard the importance of fever training, and, as you know, their present policy appears to be to lose the identity of fever hospitals in the large general hospital group.

"I am afraid that their calculations were badly upset by our recent smallpox outbreak, and when outbreaks of severe influenza or infantile paralysis again become prevalent they will find that theory and practice are two different matters and that epidemic disease and virus infections pay little heed to the machinations of the Ministry of Health or its counterpart in Scotland."

When the Nurses Bill, 1949, was before the House of Commons, so strongly did the Council of the British College of Nurses, Ltd., feel concerning the future position of the Fever Nurse, that the following letter was addressed to the Minister of Health:—

20th May, 1949.

DEAR SIR,

The Council of the British College of Nurses, Ltd., have had their attention drawn to the omission of any mention of State Registered Fever Nurses in the Nurses Bill now before Parliament.

As Nurses engaged in the nursing of Infectious Diseases including Tuberculosis, outnumber Children's Hospital Nurses by a fairly large percentage, the Fellows and Members of this College view this omission with some concern.

My Council realises that the Training of Nurses will be a comprehensive one eventually, and feel sure that you will agree that there should be some safeguard in the meantime for those Nurses on the Supplementary Fever Register.

Thanking you in anticipation of your courteous attention in this matter.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

ALICE STEWART BRYSON, *Hon. Secretary.*

Health Services in Northern Ireland.

DAME DEHRA PARKER, Minister of Health and Local Government, Northern Ireland, has given facts on the working of the Health Service, for a population of about one and a quarter millions.

Total expenditure during the last financial year on general health services was £3,759,160.

Six million prescriptions were issued, the average cost per prescription during the first six months of the financial year being four shillings.

Dental attention was given to approximately 195,000, and it was estimated that 76,000 people were provided with dentures, either complete or partial.

The total money paid to the Hospital Authority from public funds in the financial year ended 31st March was £5,403,157.

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