

Departure of New Zealand Nurses for the Front

Presentation of Badges

Au Revoir and Good Luck

The fifty nurses who are going to the front from New Zealand assembled in Parliament Buildings yesterday afternoon for the purpose of being invested with the official badge. It is of artistic design, made from several submitted in answer to a request of the Minister of Defence, who evidently found a difficulty in accepting any one design in its entirety. Surmounted by the Royal Arms, the badge is bordered with a fern leaf in silver, and inside that portion of the design is the Red Cross, with the lettering: N.Z.A.N.S. underneath in silver on a blue enamel ground. "That will show where we come from," said one of the nurses, "and it will also let anyone know who we are in case of accident, because each one bears an identification number." They were manufactured by Mr. C. M. Bay, of Willis Street. The nurses wore their uniforms of grey, with red collars and piping on the overcoats, and a row of brass buttons down the front of the upper garment, the red and grey shoulder straps adding a military touch. Those present at the ceremony included the Right Hon. W. F. and Mrs. Massey, the Hon. J. Allen (Minister of Defence), the Hon. R. H. Rhodes (Minister of Public Health), Mrs. H. D. Bell, and Mrs. F. M. B. Fisher. Miss Maclean, matron-in-charge of the contingent, called up the nurses one by one, and they were invested with the insignia of Dominion nursing royalty by Mrs. Massey and the Hon. J. Allen.

At the conclusion of that part of the ceremony, Mr. Massey said he desired to express the appreciation, not only of the Government, but of the people of New Zealand as a whole, of the fact that those present had offered their services to the Empire, and to the country to which they belonged in the very serious crisis through which we are passing. He was quite certain that

their services would be thoroughly appreciated by our men at the front—those who are there now and those who may go there in future. He desired to compliment them particularly on their healthy and sturdy appearance; as far as looks went and in every other respect he was quite certain they would be a credit to New Zealand. He could only wish them a pleasant voyage and a safe return. (Applause.)

The Hon. J. Allen reminded the nurses that they were going not simply as a batch of New Zealand nurses—they were going as Empire nurses. "We are not sending you," he said, "to nurse New Zealand troops alone. We are sending you to do whatever the Army Council in England may ask you to do; but whether you are sent to Europe, or Egypt, or Turkey, the good wishes of New Zealand go with you, and we wish you good luck, a safe voyage, and a safe return. You carry with you the fair name of New Zealand, and we look to you to create another tradition for us (this is the time of great traditions), and when you come back we shall look upon our fifty nurses as another of our records. Good luck." (Applause.)

The Hon. R. H. Rhodes also expressed his appreciation, as head of the Public Health Department, of the number of nurses who had volunteered for active service. Almost all the nurses in our public and private hospitals had expressed their willingness to go and serve their country in this crisis, and it gave him very great pleasure to feel that that spirit existed among the nurses. Knowing the good work they had done in the hospitals, he was quite confident that they would uphold the best traditions of the nursing profession.

Before leaving the nurses and visitors were entertained at afternoon tea.