

Farewell Tea to the Nurses and Presentation of Badges

On October 9th, the presentation of the badges by Her Excellency the Countess of Liverpool, to the nurses who are leaving on active service abroad was combined with a farewell tea given in their honour by the committee of the Trained Nurses' Association. Both events took place at the Nurses' Residential Club, in Kensington Street, and in addition to Her Excellency there were present the Hon. James Allen, Minister of Defence, the Hon. G. W. Russell Minister of Public Health, the sixteen nurses themselves, and several of their friends, as well as the council of the Trained Nurses' Association, and a few outside friends.

Mrs. Porter, president of the association, Miss Payne, matron of the Wellington Hospital (vice-president), and Miss Craig, matron of the club, welcomed the visitors, who were received in the nurses' sitting-room, the folding doors between it and the dining-room having been thrown back, and both rooms decorated with very lovely flowers—lillies, anemones, garden broom, and primroses. The scarlet and white anemones which were arranged on the tea-table were particularly beautiful.

In the course of a brief speech which was made previous to the presentation of the badges, the Minister of Defence paid a special tribute to the work that had been done by Sister Fulton and the nurses associated with her in caring for the sick soldiers in New Zealand. They had done excellent work, and the country was deeply indebted to them. He also told his hearers of the longing which had possessed the New Zealand soldiers abroad to be nursed by their own countrywomen, and he was sure that their presence among them would be a source of deep comfort to the wounded and sick wherever they were sent, and that they would uphold the splendid reputation which New Zealand nurses had already earned in their work abroad. Four among their number had already been in Egypt, and they had been very eager to take up their work again. The Minister finished by wishing them a good voyage and a safe return when their work was finished.

Her Excellency the Countess of Liverpool then presented the badges, assisted

by Miss Bicknell, and also added her good wishes to those of the Minister.

The next speaker was the Hon. G. W. Russell, who also paid a high tribute to the work of the nurses, both at home and abroad, and told them that the whole country followed their careers abroad with the deepest interest. On behalf of the Government, Parliament, and the people of New Zealand, he thanked the nurses for what they were doing. They, too, were making sacrifices just as the men were, and they, too, were taking their lives in their hands.

The Mayor (Mr. Luke) was also asked to speak, and he, too, paid a high compliment to the work that women had done for the soldiers. At this time of the country's history he esteemed it a great honour to be in the Mayoral chair, and whether he had done his work ill or well, he had been splendidly helped by the Mayoress, Mrs. Luke.

Afternoon tea was a very pleasant finish to the speeches, and Miss Craig was assisted by her sister, Mrs. Graham Fox, and other helpers. Among those who were present were: Lady Ward and Mrs. Bernard Wood, the Mayoress (Mrs. Luke), Mrs. Kendall, Mrs. Macdonald, Miss Inglis, Miss Walsh, Miss Polden, Mrs. Fortescue Wright, and several friends of the nurses.

The nursing sisters to leave on the transports are: Sister Fulton (wife of Colonel Fulton, of the Trentham Battalion), who for the past three months has been matron at the Trentham Military Hospital. She will be in charge. Under her will be Sisters Douglass (Dunedin), Cumberworth (Christchurch), Stronach (Stratford), Keith (Wellington), Crispin (Wellington), Scott (Christchurch), Jessop (Christchurch), all of whom have been doing duty at Trentham; Sisters Goldsmith (Hawkes' Bay), Brown (Hokitika), Burnett (Clyde). Sisters Nixon, Moore, Lowe, and Ingles came back in the transport Tahiti. Sister Burnett has been stationed at Tauherinikau.

Later in the afternoon Miss Bicknell was presented with a pretty silver trinket box "from Matron Fulton and the nurses of the 7th Reinforcements."