

Royal British Nurses' Association.

ANNUAL MEETING AT OXFORD.

THE Annual Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association was held in the Hall of Balliol College, Oxford, on Monday, July 24th, under the presidency of Sir Henry Acland, Bart., M.D., K.C.B., and was graced by the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, the President of the Association. There were also on the platform Dr. Gage-Brown, Sir Dyce Duckworth, Dr. Bedford Fenwick (Treasurer), Dr. Bezly Thorne and Miss Grace Gordon (Hon. Secs.), Dr. Alderson, Miss Ridley, Miss Butler, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss Mackey, Miss Cureton, Miss Elma Smith, Miss Betty, Miss Loch, and Miss Robins (Secretary).

The notice convening the meeting was read by Miss Daisy Robins.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Dr. Bedford Fenwick read the audited accounts for the past year.

Dr. Bezly Thorne read the annual report as follows:—

REPORT

to the Annual Meeting assembled in Oxford, July 24th, 1893.

The total number of Members on the Roll is 2,591; the total number of Nurses on the Register, 1,932.

The year which has passed since the last Annual Meeting has been more fruitful in important events than any which have preceded it in the brief history of the Royal British Nurses' Association.

When, in August last, the country was threatened with an invasion of one of the direst and most dreaded of diseases, the gracious President of the Association lost no time in initiating measures for meeting the expected attack. A Special Committee was appointed, under whose auspices a roll of volunteer Nurses for attendance on cases of cholera was opened in London, classes of instruction were organised, and lectures were delivered by Dr. Heron; and, as the result of conferences which were held with the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board and the principal metropolitan and provincial medical officers of health, measures were devised which, should the necessity arise, will enable the Association to act with promptitude and certainty as a central intelligence department through which Nurses can be supplied to meet such unavoidable deficiencies as may arise in the service of the sanitary authorities. The Lord Mayor of London, with that energy and solicitude for the general welfare which has always characterised the holders of his important office, was pleased to issue, on the 25th of January last, a circular letter inviting the Mayors and Provosts of the United Kingdom to bring the subject of the Roll of Volunteer Nurses under the notice of such Nursing Institutions, and employment agencies, as might be within the sphere of their influence. At the same time, the Special Committee took measures to make it clear that the duties which it had

undertaken would in no way interfere with the freedom of contract between Institution and private Nurses and the authorities whom they might be deputed to serve. Thanks to conditions which it is not within the purpose of this meeting to discuss, cholera has, this year, revived much later and less generally than had been anticipated by experts, and, so far, no call has been made on the Special Committee. Before leaving this subject, it is due to the present Lord Mayor of London, and to his immediate predecessor in the Civic Chair, that the Association should record its grateful thanks for their sympathy and support, and for the generous hospitality with which the resources of the Mansion House were placed at the disposal of the Association for the purpose of holding conferences with the leading sanitary authorities.

In another direction the Association has made a new departure. At the meeting of the General Council which was held on the 21st of October last, and on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, it was decided to institute a Special Badge for bestowal on Nurses whose services should be considered worthy of such distinction, and the first award was made to Miss Kate Marsden, a member of the Association, who, having distinguished herself by her self-denying labours to relieve, at the cost of personal privation and danger, the unhappy condition of lepers in Siberia, had the honour of receiving the Special Badge from the hands of H.R.H. the President.

In the latter part of last year, the offices of Lady Honorary Secretary and of Secretary became vacant through resignation. Miss Grace Gordon, having consented to undertake the onerous duties of the honorary office, was duly appointed by the General Council on the 13th of January last; and Miss Daisy Robins was appointed to the post of Secretary at an earlier date by the Executive Committee. The Corporation is to be congratulated on having secured the services of two officers whose zeal and abilities qualify them in an eminent degree for the performance of the important duties of their respective offices.

The fifth annual Conversazione was held on the 7th of December and was numerously attended. Her Royal Highness the President, accompanied by H.H. the Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, was pleased to be present, and bestowed badges on a number of members of the Association.

Sessional Meetings have been held as usual, and have included a course of educational lectures on medical subjects. It is felt that a wide field of useful work lies before the Association in this direction, for opportunities of improving their knowledge after the completion of their training cannot fail to be appreciated by Nurses who desire to advance in culture and efficiency.

The Association notes, with gratification, the distinguished position which has been occupied by two of its members, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and Miss de Pledge, as delegates to the World's Fair at Chicago.

Early in the current year, the Executive Committee came to the conclusion that the time had arrived for gathering together, in some kind of union, the members who are scattered throughout the Sister Kingdoms, and, having received a number of encouraging replies from members in Scotland, delegated the Honorary Officers to visit Edinburgh in April last with a view to conferring with leading medical men and matrons. As a result of these efforts, a representative meeting was held on April the 5th in the Victoria Hall of the Waterloo Hotel, under the presidency of Dr. Joseph Bell, at which it was resolved that it was desirable that a Branch of the Association should be founded in Scotland, with headquarters in Edinburgh. Further, on the 1st of June, a meeting, at which some 2,500 persons were present, was held in the Synod Hall, Edinburgh, to celebrate the initiation of the

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