

Annual Meeting of the National Health Society.



THE annual distribution of medals and certificates to the successful students of the National Health Society took place on Saturday, the 11th, in the Rubens Gallery, Grosvenor House, kindly lent for the occasion by his Grace the Duke of Westminster, who is President of the Society.

It had been hoped that Princess Christian would have been present to distribute the awards, but a letter was read from Her Royal Highness, in which she expressed disappointment at not being able to attend in consequence of having taken a chill the previous day. Disappointment was also expressed at the unavoidable absence of the Duke of Westminster, and letters of regret at not being present were read from the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Sir Francis Galton, and Lord Ashbourne.

The meeting was presided over by the Duchess of Westminster, who was plainly dressed in black moire silk relieved by white chiffon, and the chair was taken by Mr. Arthur Arnold, M.P., Chairman to the London County Council. He was supported on the platform by Sir Spencer Wells, Dr. Thorne Thorne, Miss Fay Lankester, Sir Dyce Duckworth and Mr. Edward Seaton, while the ladies there were Lady Helen Grosvenor, Lady Priestley, Miss Kenealy, Miss C. Wood, Mrs. Fleming Baxter, and several other ladies and gentlemen.

A beautiful spray bouquet of pink roses was ready for the Princess, and another of yellow roses was presented to the Duchess of Westminster who, assisted by Mr. Owen Lankester, distributed the medals and certificates to some 260 successful pupils. Amongst the recipients of medals was Miss Ethel Brown, Financial Secretary to the National Health Society, and the large audience present, many of whom had recollection of her unflinching courtesy and kindness, took occasion to loudly applaud her appearance.

In his opening remarks the Chairman recalled the old-fashioned adage, which says, "An Englishman's house is his castle," the proper rendering of which, as they all knew, was "An Englishman's house is his wife's castle," and from that fact he urged the importance of women being well instructed in the science of Hygiene and Domestic Sanitation, as is being done under the County Council Technical Education Scheme.

Dr. Thorne Thorne spoke of the good work done by the sanitary authorities throughout the country, but said a line was drawn across the front door of the houses and there women's work was concerned. Two striking incidents had come under his observation of the need of extended teaching on hygiene. In a colliery district, where he was pursuing investigations, he chanced on one of the single-roomed houses not uncommon in the district. This particular house, in addition to the single room, had a lean-to scullery, and he found it served for a family of seven persons as living room, sleeping room, and at the same time as sick room for an invalid, and had for five days been a dead-house for a corpse, and in addition to serving for all these occupants, they also made room for a male lodger.

In another case in a rural district he was investigating cases of over-crowding, and calling at a cottage questioned the woman—a respectable sort of person—as to the number of occupants of the room, "Well, sir," the woman said, "we *have* been twelve, and if the churchyard had not stood me a friend, I don't know what I should have done."

Dr. Seaton, M.O.H. to the Surrey County Council, said that public opinion must be educated before the existing sanitary laws could be enforced, and he trusted to popular lectures on these subjects to educate the public. The speaker very strongly urged the necessity of lecturers on Sick Nursing being qualified Nurses, who had given the required length of years to the study and practice the art required, and he as strongly disapproved of teachers who had only a superficial smattering of a "training." But curiously enough, though there were many ladies in the room in Nurses' uniform these remarks were met by some tokens of dissent. Dr. Seaton's remarks on this subject were so valuable, that they will be fully reported in our next issue.

Sir Dyce Duckworth, speaking of the good work done by the National Health Society, strayed into the subject of marriage, and characterised marriage as the highest calling for woman—a statement that was met with a ripple of scornful laughter, though the audience were with him to a man—and woman, when he said no woman should be permitted to marry unless she possessed certificates from the National Health Society. Sir Dyce went on to say that were he again a young man he should insist on such a qualification in the wife he would seek.

Returning to more serious matter, Sir Dyce Duckworth impressed on the successful recipients of the awards, that they must be conscious that they had only just entered on the beginnings of their study in Hygiene and Sick Nursing.

In conclusion, votes of thanks were proposed and seconded in due order to her Grace the Duchess, to the Chairman and also to Miss Lankester, Miss Stephenson and Miss Brown, by the gentlemen on the platform, Sir Spencer Wells, Prof. Ray Lankester and Sir W. Flower, after which the large assemblage dispersed, many lingering to admire the valuable pictures in the hall and the gallery.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

THE Lord Mayor presided on Tuesday at the Mansion House over the annual meeting. There was a large attendance, among those on the platform being the Duchess of Somerset, the Countess of Iddesleigh, Lady Fitzgerald, Lady Cantelupe, Lady Middleton, Lady Barnard, Mrs. Stephen Coleridge, Alderman Sir J. Stuart Knill and Mr. C. Hanbury Tracy. A summary of the report was given in the *Times* of Tuesday. The chairman congratulated the society on the success which had attended its noble work, and on its financial position. The Countess of Ancaster remarked that the present was the great year of the society, the Queen having been pleased to grant it a charter of incorporation.

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