

subscriptions, leaving a total on the Roll of 2,740. The total number on the Register is 2,714, of whom 174 have been enrolled during the year. The annual meeting of the Association, of which a report has already appeared, was duly held in the great hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the chair, in the unavoidable absence of Her Royal Highness the President, being taken by Sir James Crichton Browne. The Hon. Treasurer and Mrs. Langton kindly held a reception of members at their house during the afternoon, the large attendance testifying to a sincere appreciation of their hospitality. The ninth annual conversazione, held in December, proved a great success both socially and financially, and was largely attended by the members and their friends.

Her Royal Highness the President graciously presented the badge of the Association to upwards of 40 members, including both nurses and medical men, and was present afterwards at a concert contributed to by Mlle. Guilla Ravogli, Mon. Johannes Wolff, and other well-known artistes. The best thanks of the Association are due to Lady Duckworth, and to those ladies and gentlemen who kindly assisted in promoting the success of the amateur dramatic entertainment, organised in January on behalf of the Association, and which resulted in a substantial increase to the funds. The action brought by Miss Breay against Sir James Crichton Browne, the chairman of the annual meeting on July 22nd, 1896, for ruling out of order a resolution standing in her name upon the agenda, has been decided. The case was first brought in the City of London Court, and a verdict given for the plaintiff with a farthing damages, with leave to the defendant to appeal to the Divisional Court of the Queen's Bench. That decision was reversed, and a verdict ordered to be entered for the defendant, with costs. An action has been brought by Dr. Bedford Fenwick against Miss de Pledge, as hon. editor, to recover damages for what he alleges to be a libel, published in the *Nurses' Journal* of August, 1896, and the Executive Committee has referred the matter to the Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Secretaries as a Sub-Committee with power to defend the action on behalf of the Association. Miss Breay instituted legal proceedings against the Association to restrain them from using their funds in defending the action brought by Dr. Bedford Fenwick against Miss de Pledge. On the application of Miss Breay, Mr. Justice North granted an interim injunction until the trial of the action. The Association successfully appealed against this order, and the Court of Appeal dismissed the interim injunction (on appeal), and ordered Miss Breay to pay the costs of her application to Mr. Justice North and of the Appeal. The Sessional Lectures delivered this winter by Mr. Isenthal, Prof. E. W. White, Dr. Kenwood, Dr. Wethered, and Miss G. Scott were much appreciated, and the attendances at them good throughout. On the 30th April, the course was brought to a close, when Miss G. Scott, late matron of the Sussex County Hospital, read an interesting Paper on "The Failures and Successes of Private Nurses." The Demonstrations on Invalid Cookery, also held during the winter months at the offices of the Association, were completed in January. These proved a great success, the average attendance at the Demonstrations being between 30 and 40, and the hope was universally expressed that Miss Earle would give a similar course next winter.

The lending and reference library continue very

popular; there are at the present time 664 books catalogued. During the year 68 volumes have been presented through the generosity of subscribers and friends.

The Sub-Committee appointed to consider the revision of the Bye-laws has now submitted its report to the Committee. The consideration of this subject and other matters have retarded the progress the Committee had hoped to make upon the subject of the admission of mental nurses to the Association. The matter has not been lost sight of, and the report upon it may be shortly expected. Miss Frances G. Spencer has accepted the appointment of local hon. secretary for New South Wales, whose services, it may fairly be surmised, will prove of much value to the Association.

In the last Annual Report of the Executive Committee, it was stated that the journal of the Association was edited by Miss de Pledge, whose services in this connection were gratefully recognised. Miss de Pledge has now retired from this office, and the journal is conducted by an Editorial Committee. Miss Alice Ravenhill finding herself obliged on account of her health to resign her appointment, Miss Ada Pritchard, daughter of the late Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, has been appointed Secretary to the Association."

The Hon. Secretary then, formally, moved the adoption of the Annual Report, which was seconded by Mrs. Coster.

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK said: The gratifying news has reached the nurse members—thanks to the press—that the Hon. Officers and the members of the Executive Committee anticipate with pleasure a free and open discussion by those here present to-day; and with equal pleasure I rise to avail myself of this novel situation.

Everyone in this room is well aware that within the last month some of those members who strongly disapprove of the present methods of management of our Association have formulated their grievances in definite charges, and that those charges have been printed and signed by many matrons of important hospitals, and circulated as widely as time has yet permitted. That protest ends with the expression of opinion that we have no hope that our grievances will be redressed from within the Association, and that therefore we demand that a public inquiry should be held into the present disastrous condition of affairs. I may add that if the Hon. Officers and the Executive Committee shirk that inquiry, the public can draw but one conclusion; and that is that they are afraid to face it, and that they have committed the injustice and general mismanagement of which we accuse them. (Applause and hisses.)

In order to explain the present position of affairs, I must recall the facts that less than twenty years ago the internal management, and especially the nursing of the sick, in many hospitals, was still in a chaotic condition, and it was not until educated women entered the hospital wards as nurses, and were appointed to positions of authority as sisters and matrons, that reforms took place. The rapidity of these reforms was remarkable; well-organised nursing schools were instituted and the sick were nursed with intelligence and devotion.

At what a cost those pioneer nurses of the 'seventies accomplished their great work, I need not mention; that they were often hungry, always weary,

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