

The Colonial Nursing Association.

The Annual meeting of the Colonial Nursing Association was held on Wednesday afternoon at Sunderland House, by permission of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. Her Royal Highness Princess Henry of Battenberg, Patron of the Association, was present, and the chair was taken by the President, the Earl of Westmeath, who referred to the loss the Society had sustained in the resignation of its late President, Earl Grey, on his appointment as Governor-General of Canada, and from the Executive Committee of their Vice-President, Mrs. Francis Piggott, owing to her removal abroad.

The report showed a steady increase in the number of nurses sent out, the total number at present being 121.

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Lyttelton was, unfortunately, unable to be present, as he had hoped, to move the adoption of the Report; this duty was, therefore, undertaken by Mr. R. B. Haldane, M.P., who said the work of the Association was of unique importance. It was part of that work which, in a variety of forms was drawing closer together the component parts of the King's dominions in the old relationship of mother and children. That relationship rested on affection, trust, and a desire for mutual helpfulness. If this aspect were kept before the public mind in connection with the Association, he believed the public would respond. We could not help the self-governing colonies such as Canada and Australia, mighty countries which had founded families of their own, to the same extent as those still under crown rule. But the self-governing colonies had not, like the Mother Country, a surplus of women. In these there was a fund to draw upon, from which Colonial Nurses could be made. This country was behind none in the quality of its science generally, and medical science in particular. Our hospitals provided the requisite training for nurses, and this work opened a new career to women. The most potent appeal was that to idealism; such an appeal was made by the nurse who, trained in science and equipped with the most modern methods, with high training and experience, carried her skill to distant parts of the Empire. He was confident the appeal to nurses to do this would not be made in vain, but he wanted also to enlist the sympathy of the British public in the usual fashion. There was an abundance of money in the country for all that was required. There were plenty of people to give it if they understood what was wanted. This cause, whether viewed from the religious, ethical, or political standpoint, should appeal to people. If the need were made known he believed the money would be forthcoming. They were in the beginning of a great work, which could not be limited.

Sir Alfred Jones, who seconded the adoption of the report and the election of officers, said that no man connected with tropical countries could fail to recognise the boon conferred by good nursing. It was only when the Schools of Tropical Medicine in London and Liverpool were founded that much attention began to be paid to tropical diseases. They had made it much better for people in the tropics. Hand-in-hand with the doctor was the competent nurse. He would like the nurse to take yet another step, and he would rejoice to see her training native nurses. They might not be so good as the British nurse, but they would be a great blessing to the sick where British nurses could not go. The speaker said the Association had one fault in that it did not make its wants sufficiently known. They had not asked him for more money; if they had they would have got it; but to show that commercial people did appreciate what had been done by the Association, he announced his intention of raising his subscription from £50 to £250 per annum.

Lady Balfour of Burleigh, President of the Scottish Branch, gave a brief account of its work, and suggested that the influential people present might help on the work of the Association by talking to their neighbours about it when they went out to dinner.

Sir John Rodger, Governor of the Gold Coast, who moved a vote of thanks to the Princess for her presence, said that two schemes outside the sphere of politics stood out pre-eminently to those who lived in the tropics—the London School of Tropical Medicine and the Colonial Nursing Association. They had revolutionised the conditions of life in the tropics. The local origin of malaria was now known to be due to the mosquito. Prevention was better than cure in relation to this disease, and although sometimes one might be sceptical as to the value of drugs, this was never the case in regard to general hygiene, and especially in regard to good nursing. Only those who had seen it could realise the incalculable value of the latter in the tropics. To the heroism, devotion, and womanly sympathy of nurses, the wives, mothers, and sisters of Great Britain owed a debt which could never be repaid.

Sir Patrick Manson, in moving a vote of thanks to the host and hostess, said the medical profession fully recognised the value of the work of nurses. The doctor had no more valuable co-adjutor than the trained nurse, she was his right hand in the treatment of disease. Medical men were anxious for the development of the nursing profession.

The Duchess of Marlborough briefly acknowledged the vote of thanks, and said it was a great pleasure to herself and the Duke to lend their house for the furtherance of such excellent work.

The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, proposed by Mr. F. Dutton.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)