

balance was a decrease on that of last year, so that for the first time it had spent more than it received. This was not surprising, owing to the many claims upon the community just now. Nevertheless, she hoped the deficit would soon be made up.

The Audited Accounts were adopted, on the motion of Mrs. Bridges, seconded by Miss Pell Smith.

#### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee, on the proposition of Miss E. J. Hurlston, seconded by Miss M. Lord, were re-elected.

Arising out of the Report, the President reminded the meeting that the members usually had the pleasure of Major Chapple's presence at the annual meeting, but this year he was prevented from attending by his military duties. Since the beginning of the year, first on a hospital train, then in a military hospital, and now in the Dardanelles, Major Chapple had been serving his country. Their champion, Sir Victor Horsley, was also on active service.

Mrs. Fenwick then invited Miss Beatrice Cutler, Hon. Secretary of the National Council of Trained Nurses, to present the paper which she had prepared in conjunction with the Hon. Officers of the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, on Military Nursing and Registration.

#### MILITARY NURSING AND REGISTRATION.

Miss Cutler said:—

When war was declared last autumn between this country and Germany, trained nurses at once realized that all the available nursing skill in the country would be needed for the adequate care of the thousands of sick and wounded men who would inevitably require trained nursing, as the result of the deadly struggle entered upon with a nation whose energies and scientific knowledge had, for many years, been concentrated on preparation for war.

Those who for the last quarter of a century have been pleading for the definition of educational standards for trained nurses, and the formation of a Register, under the authority of the State, of those who have attained that standard, realized at the same time the supreme value which that Register would have been at this crisis.

The Government had at its disposal in the Medical Register, when war was declared, a complete list of every medical practitioner in the country, and therefore knew the extent, and the limit, of the supply. Registers of Dentists, Chemists, and Sanitary Officers were also available.

Concerning trained nurses, however, no such precise information was forthcoming, nor was

any standard in force, maintained by statutory authority, defining what is required by those assuming the title of trained nurse, and the consequence was that in the early days of the war many emotional persons, who suddenly realized that they were heaven-born nurses, and could therefore dispense with the hospital training imperative in the case of those not so blessed, hastily proceeded to undertake work which should only be performed by skilled nurses, and of so grave a nature as to tax even the resources of the fully trained to the utmost.

There is probably not one person in the country who would not subscribe to the statement that our soldiers are entitled to the very best of nursing, and it is therefore the more to be regretted that for the last quarter of a century social influence, and economic privilege, and the apathy of successive Governments in regard to nursing legislation, have prevented effect being given to the unanimous recommendation of a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1905 that a Register of Trained Nurses should be compiled.

It is manifest that the legislation proposed, which has secured the strong support in Parliament of a Select Committee, and the principle of which has been accepted by the Houses of Lords and Commons; which has practically the unanimous support of the British Medical Association; which is incorporated in a Bill having the considered support of every organized society working for State Registration in Great Britain and Ireland; and which is of paramount importance to every sick soldier, as well as every sick civilian, should no longer be delayed.

The supreme importance of a National Register, with the qualifications of every man and woman in the country for National Service is constantly urged upon our attention. There is a consensus of opinion that had a National Register been in existence, "the work of selecting this man for the Army, that for the railway, another for the Telegraph system, this woman for the motor, that for the Army clothing factory, would have been as easy a task as it proved in Germany." The work of compiling such a National Register while war is proceeding, though it may be necessary, will be a stupendous one, especially where the skilled professions are concerned; but this I can say with confidence, that if Parliament will entrust the Societies associated together in the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses, with the task of forming a State Register of Trained Nurses, they are ready to begin it to-morrow, and to bring to bear upon it some of the best organizing brains, and the

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