

Branch. H.R.H. the President, who had travelled to Scotland for the purpose, addressed the meeting, and received an enthusiastic welcome.

The replies elicited from members in Ireland were unanimously favourable, but it was pointed out that the existing political anxiety would hinder the realisation of any such project at the present time.

Eminently satisfactory, as such a report of the proceedings and progress of the Association must be, one event, surpassing all others in importance, remains to be recorded, namely, the announcement on the 6th of June, last, of the grant by the Queen, on the advice of Her Privy Council, of a Royal Charter incorporating the Association. The petition of the Association was heard by Lords Ripon, Hobhouse, Oxenbridge, and Hannen on the 21st and 28th days of November, and that distinguished tribunal came to a conclusion which is thus expressed in their own significant words:—

“That a permanent Association, formed for the purpose of maintaining a closer connection among persons practising as Nurses, and thereby ensuring mutual counsel, comfort, and support, and for the purpose of disseminating to the public at large information respecting such persons, is likely to prove of much public benefit, and that such purposes would be better ensured by the incorporation of such an Association.”

* The members of the Association are well aware that the petition was presented in the name of their illustrious President, and they desire to record their grateful thanks for that, and every other token of Her Royal Highness's fostering care and never failing solicitude.

It is noteworthy that, in so far as the Charter differs from the Draft which was submitted in the petition, it enlarges the powers prayed for, and confers others which had not been sought. Also, it is important to observe, that in the recital of the Charter, the Nurses who are inscribed on the list which is maintained by the Association, are described as being “so registered.”

Thus the Association has gained all that it sought, and more; and it now behoves the members of the Royal Corporation to consider most earnestly and studiously the responsibilities which the bestowal of new powers and added dignity has laid on each individual member, as well as the relation in which they now corporately stand to the nursing world at large.

In the first place, it would seem to be sufficiently clear that, inasmuch as every argument which could be advanced against the petition of the Association has been pleaded with all forensic skill and eloquence, and has nevertheless failed to prevail with distinguished, learned, and impartial judges, the hour for controversy and detraction has passed, and that it would be becoming that all parties to the late issue should unite to promote such beneficent objects as they are seeking in common to promote, namely, the raising of the education, the proficiency, and the status of Nurses in general, and the promotion of the comfort and welfare of the suffering to the advantage of the community at large.

As regards Nurses themselves, the incorporation of the Association by Royal Charter signalises the elevation of their calling to the dignity of a recognized profession.

Such a result must be a source of unqualified satisfaction to every member of the Corporation and to every Registered Nurse. It cannot fail to be a cause of legitimate pride to trained Nurses throughout the world, and it should stimulate all to do what in them lies to enhance the worth and dignity of the profession of their choice.

It must not be overlooked that the Association being now incorporated, may justly advance a claim to the confidence of the benevolent and the grateful. It has already assigned two

pensions to disabled Nurses, and it spends a large proportion of its limited income in pecuniary grants to Nurses who have been temporarily disabled by overwork or sickness; and it is not unreasonable to hope that some portion of the great stream of public benefaction, which is one of the distinguishing honours of our country, may be diverted to the fund maintained by the Corporation for benevolent purposes.

Finally, it is suggested to such Nurses as enjoy the distinction of being enrolled on the Register of the Royal British Nurses' Association, that they should, on all suitable occasions, describe themselves as “Registered Nurses.”

The labours of the Association in the coming year will be neither few nor light. As already indicated, the Executive Committee hope to institute a definite course of what may be called post-graduate instruction. In accordance with the provisions of the new Bye-laws, the Registration Board will be reconstituted on a wider and more representative basis, and will become more than ever the articulate embodiment of the leading Hospitals and Nurse-training Institutions of the country.

In fulfilling these and other aims, the Association will seek to justify the confidence it has succeeded in winning, and to afford ever accumulating evidence of its ability to become an institution of truly national value and utility.

DR. BEDFORD FENWICK: Sir Henry Acland, Your Royal Highness, ladies and gentlemen,—I have the honour to propose “that the annual report and the audited accounts be now adopted by this meeting, be entered on the minutes and be printed and circulated amongst the members, and that Mr. Frank Hardy, Chartered Accountant, be elected to audit the accounts of the Association next year.” In doing so it is customary to say a few words as to the various points referred to in these annual statements of the affairs of the Association. The two upon which I will venture to lay special stress are those which refer to the expenditure of the past year. It will be noticed, and I think it is a fact which should be clearly understood, not only by all the members of the Association but by all Nurses outside it, that a very large proportion of the annual fixed income of the Association has been spent upon benevolent grants to members. It will be noticed that out of the £297 received from annual subscriptions and investments, no less than £56 were paid out either in pensions or benevolent grants to Nurses who were in very great need of such assistance. I think that may very fairly be held to show that the Association exists for wider and more benevolent purposes than some have attempted to make the public believe. The next point to which I have to refer is that two years ago when our Journal was first started, it was necessary for the Executive Committee to advance it a loan to meet the expenses. That loan has this year been repaid; in other words, the Journal of the Association, which is sent to every member of the Association, is produced, and despatched at no cost whatever to its funds, and in future it may, perhaps, prove a small source of income. That, again, is a point upon which the Association may somewhat congratulate itself. With reference to the work of the forthcoming year, there is comparatively little to be said, because there is no doubt that the bye-laws having now been approved, as they were last Monday, by Her Majesty's Privy Council, the Association is in working order, but it will require some months, at any rate, before it can so re-organise its details and its Committees, as to be able to carry out any fresh work. But I think what has already been done may be taken as a good augury that whatever

The “NURSING RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work

The “NURSIN RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Wor

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)