

Mr. PICK and Mr. PEARCE GOULD considered that the Rule should stand in its proposed form.

Dr. FENWICK pointed out that, in 1889, the promise was made to the provincial members that the Annual Meeting should be held in a provincial town, and that every year until last year that promise had been kept. The Association was not a merely Metropolitan Society, and he therefore objected to the suggestion that it should hold its Annual Meeting again in London this year.

Dr. THORNE denied that it had ever been decided that the Annual Meeting should be held in a provincial town, but did not explain why until last year this course had been invariably adopted.

The Report was then adopted with six dissentients. The list of members proposed for the General Council for 1896-97 was then submitted by Mr. Fardon, and was objected to by Dr. Fenwick and others on the grounds that a number of medical members had been removed from the list who had taken great interest in the Association, being replaced by gentlemen who had only recently joined the Association; that the Matrons' list only contained the name of one Matron of a London General Hospital, while Matrons of important county Hospitals were also conspicuous by their absence. Apparently these ladies declined to serve on a body from which the founders of the Association had been removed, and their places were taken by ladies who were in charge of Sanatoriums at Boys' Schools, and of little Convalescent Homes and Nursing Institutions. And to make up the necessary number it had been found necessary to add several ladies who were not and never had been Matrons, and of one Matron who was not a Nurse. The glory had indeed departed from the Royal British Nurses' Association when these were the only ladies who would serve on the Matrons' list of its governing body. With reference to the Sisters' and Nurses' list, Dr. Fenwick could not adequately describe the "job" which was proposed. Thirty names were proposed to fill vacancies. In former days, the Association being honourably managed, each Hospital had its fair share of representatives on the Council, and when these retired in rotation, other Nurses from the Institution were nominated to take their place. It was actually proposed now that thirteen Nurses from the Middlesex and six from the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary should fill nineteen of the present thirty vacancies, leaving eleven representatives only for the rest of the Hospitals in the United Kingdom. He protested against such an attempt to "pack" the Council, and proposed that the Council should refuse to accept this list.

The CHAIRMAN said he understood that the list had been prepared with the greatest care, and putting it to the meeting, declared it carried.

The proceedings then terminated.

A Scheme for the Formation of a Central Hospital Board for London.

A VERY interesting meeting was held on Monday, at the Rooms of the United Service Institution in Whitehall, upon the invitation of the Charity Organisation Society, to consider a scheme for the formation of a Central Hospital Board for London.

The Earl of Stamford presided over a numerous gathering, and Mr. C. S. Loch read letters or tele-

grams of apology for non-attendance from the Princess Christian, the Duke of Westminster, the Lord Mayor, and many others. Letters expressing general approval of the proposal had, he said, been received from 658 general practitioners and 106 medical men on the staff of Hospitals or Dispensaries. Sir Trevor Lawrence and a few others replied in terms adverse to the scheme. Upwards of 100 ladies and gentlemen had consented to join a General Committee to carry out the proposal.

Lieut.-Colonel Montefiore then read a draft scheme for the formation of a Hospital Board. The document pointed out that there were in London twelve Hospitals with Schools, ninety without, and eighty-four Charitable and Provident Dispensaries. The number of in-patients dealt with in the course of the past year amounted to 87,119, and the out-patients to 1,299,132. In addition to the voluntary system, and apart from the Hospital accommodation for infectious diseases, there were twenty-six Poor-law Infirmarys, dealing with about 10,500 patients daily, in addition to those who were inmates of the sick wards of the workhouse; and in the course of the year more than 130,000 "permanent," "ordinary," and "midwifery" medical orders were issued in connection with the forty-four Poor-law Dispensaries of the metropolis. The Hospitals and Dispensaries were, generally speaking, placed in districts where they were required to meet the demand for medical relief during the last, and the earlier part of the present century. The more newly-settled population of the last forty years was often ill-supplied with Hospitals and Dispensaries. These and other facts indicated the necessity of better organisation. It was suggested that the proposed Central Board should have a representative membership, but, while collecting information, and having at its disposal inspectors or visitors, should not possess compulsory powers. The Board, while leaving to the Hospital Sunday and Saturday Funds the function which they now fulfil of making annual grants to Hospitals and Dispensaries, should have at its disposal funds sufficient to enable it to make adequate grants to Hospitals for special purposes. With this object it should have an income of, say, £20,000 a year. The members of the Board would number 169.

The Earl of Stamford formally moved a resolution approving of the establishment of a Central Hospital Board for London.

Mr. R. D. Acland seconded the motion, although he did not approve all the details of the scheme.

Mr. Sydney Holland thought that unless the proposed Central Board was going to have behind it the power of the purse it would be entirely useless. The proper Central Board was the Hospital Sunday Fund Committee, made representative of the Hospitals.

The discussion was continued by Messrs. Holmes, Hale, Castellan, James, Brown, Ryan, and others.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said she was glad to see a clause in the suggested scheme referring to the Nursing in Hospitals. Amongst the male speakers, stress had been laid upon the importance of lay and medical representation on the Central Board. But no reference had been made to the necessity for direct representation of the Nursing department. She ventured to hope that in nominating an Executive Committee to consider the scheme in detail, that some representative Nurses would be invited to take seats thereon. The time had come when women preferred to plead their own cause.

This suggestion met with general approval. The motion was eventually carried.

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