

of the Amateur Dramatic Entertainment organized in January on behalf of the Association, and which resulted in a substantial increase to the funds.

The Executive Committee beg to report that an action has been brought by Dr. Bedford Fenwick against Miss de Pledge to recover damages for an alleged libel said to have been published in the *Nurses' Journal* of August, 1896; and that they have 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.

It is proposed to hold the Annual Meeting, this year, in London.

The Association is indebted to Dr. Ernest W. White, Dr. Kenwood and Dr. Wethered, for their interesting lectures, and to Dr. Walters, Mrs. Langton Hewer, Mrs. Archibald Dunn, Miss M. E. Hill, and Nurse Woodward for valuable gifts to the Library.

The demonstrations on Invalid Cookery were completed in January, the average attendance at the same being between 30 and 40. This course of lectures proved a great success, and the hope was universally expressed that Miss Earle would give similar demonstrations next winter.

Miss Frances G. Spencer has accepted the appointment of Local Hon. Secretary for New South Wales, whose services will prove of much value, it may fairly be surmised, to the Association.

Miss Ada Pritchard, daughter of the late Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, has been appointed Secretary to the Association.

The adoption of this report having been proposed, it was seconded by Dr. Alderson, who alluded at considerable length to the great services rendered to the Association by Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, and to the well-known fact that it was due chiefly to their work and suggestion that the Association came into existence. He therefore expressed the hope that Dr. Fenwick would not go on with his libel action, as he considered that this would greatly injure the Association.

Dr. Bedford Fenwick thanked Dr. Alderson for his flattering opinions, but reminded him that the case in question was *sub judice*, and he could not therefore discuss it. He felt compelled to object to the suggestion in the report that the Annual Meeting this year should be held in London. The Association, when it was founded, promised the provincial members that the annual meeting should be held in a provincial town, so as to show that the Association was not a narrow metropolitan body but a national institution. In the papers issued, inviting nurses to join the Association, this was promised as one of the advantages to provincial members; and it was definitely stated in the return made by the officers this year, and which was published on page 450 of the "Medical Directory." He had objected last year to the promise of the Association being broken; and the proposal in the present report that the annual meeting should again be held in London, could only be regarded as a deliberate breach of faith, for the third time, with their provincial members.

Sir James Crichton-Browne said the Bye-Laws gave the Council power to hold the meeting wherever it chose, and they were not bound by anything but the bye-laws.

Dr. Bedford Fenwick protested against the misleading nature of the first paragraph of the Report seeing that it was not there stated, as it certainly should have been, that, in addition to the eight members who have withdrawn and the one who has died, the Executive Committee have been compelled to strike a large number of names off the roll because they have not paid their subscriptions for some years. And this fact, together with the further one that at least one-third of the subscribing members have not paid their subscriptions this year, proved conclusively the discredit into which the officials had dragged the Association, and the total loss of interest in the Association which the members consequently felt. With regard to the allusion to his action in the Report, it appeared to him to be eminently ridiculous that in one breath the officials should lament the heavy legal expenses in which they had involved the Association, and that, in the next, they should inform the Council, and expect them to learn with due gravity, that they had actually interfered in legal proceedings between two members of the Association in which they had no concern, and thus proposed to involve the Association in still further expenses. He was informed that Counsel's opinion had been taken upon this matter, and that it was held that such a proposed expenditure of the funds of the Association would be illegal. So if the Council passed this Report, the treasurer and honorary secretaries might possibly find themselves involved in further legal proceedings, entirely of their own seeking.

Sir James Crichton-Browne said that if the Courts refused to allow the Association to pay Miss de Pledge's expenses, he felt sure that there were those in the Association who would do so.*

The report was then adopted with three dissentients.

The next business was the selection of names for the General Council for 1897-98. The list had been drawn up by the Honorary Officials and was suggested for adoption by the Council. Letters were read from 14 matrons, mostly of important county hospitals, pointing out not only the injustice of excluding Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's name from the General Council List, seeing that she had founded the Association, but also the serious loss to the Association of the services of such a well-known and respected member of the nursing profession.

Miss Meyrick said these ladies were mistaken in thinking Mrs. Fenwick founded the Association. Mrs. Fenwick told her that Miss Wood founded it.†

Sir James Crichton-Browne said "the letters would be taken for what they were worth."

Mr. Fardon read the list of nominated medical men, which was accepted; then the list of nominated Matrons, and to fill a vacancy, due to one Matron who declined to serve, he proposed the name of Mrs. Warren, Matron of the Caterham Asylum.

Miss Cartwright said that, in order to show the proceedings of this Council, she begged to propose the name of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick for election on the Council on which, when she founded the Association, she was promised a permanent seat.

* It would be interesting to know whether the report that Sir James permitted someone else to pay his recent legal expenses, is correct [—E.D.].

† This is absolutely untrue. We refer to it in the "Echoes" this week.—E.D.]

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