

NURSING ECHOES.

*** Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are especially invited for these columns.*

It may be safely said that few Members of the British Nurses' Association have any idea of the pleasures which can be obtained out of an Annual Meeting. I know, for example, what all the functions of the sort which it has been my unhappy lot to witness hitherto, have been like. Rows of chairs half-filled by middle-aged ladies; a long table, at which eight or ten elderly gentlemen sat, each one of whom made a speech himself, and said, Hear, hear, during his friends' orations. Resolutions solemnly put to the meeting and solemnly declared to be "carried unanimously," although never a person present expressed her "assent in the customary manner." Oh, the deadly dulness of such gatherings! But to those who would like to know how business can be made an excuse for pleasure, and how even an annual meeting can be made enjoyable, I recommend an unvarnished account of how the British Nurses' Association spent July 31 at Cambridge, for which I am indebted to a kind correspondent.

SHORTLY after nine o'clock Nursing uniforms began to appear in the precincts of King's Cross Station, and in rapidly gathering numbers were soon congregated together representatives of nearly every large Hospital in London. It is difficult to estimate numbers, but I suppose that more than a hundred must have been present when the doors of our special train were opened and we took our seats, and punctually at 9.35 steamed out of the station. Amongst those on the platform I noticed Dr. Gage Brown, Mr. Pick, the popular Surgeon to St. George's, Dr. Bezly Thorne, Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss Wood, and many well-known Hospital Matrons. We arrived at Hitchin soon after ten o'clock, picking up a small contingent of Members, and then went on without a stop to Cambridge, which was reached a few minutes before eleven.

THEN we found the first example of the many careful arrangements which had been made for our comfort. Outside the station stood large tram cars awaiting us, which quickly conveyed the whole party to the Guildhall. Mounting the handsome staircase into the ante-room, we signed our names, and passed into the Council Chamber. Punctually at 11.30 Professor Humphry took the chair, and the Annual Meeting began. Mr. Editor will give a full report of the business which was transacted, so I need only tell how kindly the Chairman spoke

of Nurses' work and of the objects of the Association, and of how heartily we showed our appreciation of his address of welcome and encouragement, when Mrs. Bedford Fenwick proposed the vote of thanks to him. A good many, I know, were much surprised to hear such a favourable Annual Report. As someone expressed it, "The Association is so constantly abused, and so consistently silent under it all, that it is a charming surprise to its Members to find it has been so successful." I do hope Dr. MacAlister's suggestion will be carried out, and that this plain straightforward account of what the Association has done, and what it proposes to do, will be printed and circulated broadcast amongst Nurses.

EVERYONE, however, can see now that the Association has made no reply to its few but active enemies because it could well afford to ignore their attacks. I observe that an alphabetical list of the Members' names is to be printed with the Annual Report, so that, in a measure, we may say that Registration has already been commenced. Speaking of this burning topic reminds me to draw my readers' attention to Professor Humphry's thoughtful words on the subject. Coming after Mr. Savory's, Sir Crichton Browne's, Sir Henry Acland's and Professor Marshall's pronouncement a fortnight ago on the same matter, they cannot be pleasant reading for those young gentlemen who were good enough to sign the manifesto against Registration which recently issued from the Stock Exchange.

BUT to return to my story. The meeting was over by 12.30, and then we passed out from the Guildhall and down the long winding street to St. John's College, where we assembled in the Combination Room, and wandered through the suite of long rooms, with their ancient-looking low carved ceilings, into the Library, with its priceless stores of books and manuscripts. It was very pleasant to recline in a beautiful old Chippendale chair at the window overlooking the quadrangle, with its hoary walls and its beautiful central lawn as smooth as a billiard table, and to look across at the little windows of the Fellows' rooms, and wonder how many generations of men had lived in those rooms, and worked, and studied, and taught, and made their College and themselves famous. There is nothing like an old college, I think, to make one realise history. Later on, when we were being entertained at Pembroke College, I wandered away into the hall to see the busts of Wm. Pitt and Gray, which stand at the far corners of the room. The statesman and the poet—the man who made his country's history, and the one who wrote one of the greatest epics in its language—

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