

THE other item of news is that the Reading Room is now furnished ready for the use of Members. I must here apologise for an error made in respect to this matter in these columns some weeks ago. I was told that the Executive Committee had decided that it would be advisable to open a Reading Room, and imagined that it would be at once carried into effect. It appears, however, that this, like all other schemes, had to be first submitted to, and adopted by, the General Council. The meeting of that body last month accepted the idea, and now I hear it is an accomplished fact, and that the ground floor room at the offices has been furnished, and is supplied with all the professional papers, *The Lancet*, *The British Medical Journal*, *The Hospital Gazette*, *The Medical Press and Circular*, and *The Nursing Record*, and with several of the illustrated weeklies. It is hoped, I am told, that a library will shortly be formed of Medical and Nursing works of reference, and also some lighter literature.

CONSIDERING how very centrally placed the offices are—at Oxford Circus, that is to say, in the very middle of London—it needs no gift of prophecy to foresee that the Reading Room will be largely patronised by Nurses, especially those in town for the day. It is always a difficulty for such to know where to leave a parcel, or to get a rest; and the Association, unless I am mistaken has commenced in a small way what may very probably develop into a Club for Nurses, with all the numberless advantages which such institutions provide for men. Of course it is well known that the Central Home for this purpose was one of the first schemes sanctioned by the Association, and it is satisfactory to see how quickly its programme is being carried out, now that the great work of Registration is off the stocks.

THERE was a large gathering at Grosvenor House on Friday afternoon, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Metropolitan and National Nursing Association. Sir Rutherford Alcock, who presided, referred with satisfaction to the progress of the organisation, as recorded in the fourteenth annual report, from which it appeared that the number of patients nursed during the past year was seven hundred and forty-six, while no fewer than nineteen thousand nine hundred visits were paid to the sick. The chairman testified to the efficiency of the system under which Nursing service was supplied by the Society, and congratulated its members on the fact that, thanks to one or two munificent donations, the debt of eight hundred pounds had been completely wiped off. I heartily congratulate Miss Mansel, the energetic Lady Superintendent,

upon the excellent work she and her co-workers have done during the past year. It is probably known to most of my readers that the Association, which only admits gentlewomen to its service, was the forerunner of most of the District Nursing work now being carried on throughout the kingdom and all over the Metropolis.

WITH all these Nursing matters on the tapis, well may the papers remark that this is a time of unwonted interest in Nurses, for in addition to the foregoing a meeting was announced to be held yesterday, by the invitation of Lady Lucy Hicks-Beach, at the official residence of the President of the Board of Trade, Downing Street, to urge the claims of the Rural Nursing Association, an organisation which aims at providing District Nurses for the poor in country districts.

At a recent meeting of the Omagh Board of Guardians, I am glad to note that a circular was read from the Local Government Board stating "that their attention had been called to the subject of qualifications of Nurses placed in charge of Workhouse Infirmarys and Fever Hospitals, and cases having come under notice where *untrained and unqualified persons have been elected to those offices and at salaries which no qualified Nurse would accept*. The sick poor cannot be expected willingly to seek treatment in Workhouse Hospitals if they have not confidence in the qualifications and efficiency of the Nurses in charge. The highest skill and attention of the Medical Officer may be neutralised by the ignorance and incapacity of the Nurse charged with carrying out his instructions." The Local Government Board advised the Guardians that when vacancies occur they would endeavour to obtain *trained Nurses*, and offer *reasonable salaries to enable them to do so*. I need hardly say that the italics are mine and that the above is a sign of the awakening to much better things as regards nursing in Workhouses, and I sincerely hope that the Local Government will carry their good intentions into effect with a firm hand.

WHILST mentioning workhouses, I am very pleased to notice that the erratic but energetic Mr. William Stead is, through the *Review of Reviews*, instituting a system for supplying all those workhouses in the kingdom in need of supplies of reading matter, with magazines, newspapers, &c.

It will be seen from a letter which appears in the Correspondence column this week (which letter, by the way, has been "crowded out" fo

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)