

The Hospital World.

THE WEST LONDON HOSPITAL, HAMMERSMITH.

The West London Hospital Ladies' Association, which is not only a very useful, but also a flourishing Society, held its fifth annual meeting at the hospital on Friday, May 7th. Mary, Countess of Ilchester, Vice-President, who was supported on the platform by the Duchess of Abercorn, was in the chair, and under her able guidance the proceedings were conducted in a most business-like, as well as interesting, manner.

In opening the meeting, Lady Ilchester said that the splendid record of work of the past year was the result of the energy and assistance of many supporters. It was important, however, to obtain fresh ones, as every year there were gaps, caused by death.

The Annual Report and Balance Sheet were presented by the Hon. Mrs. Drewitt, and detailed the various activities of the Association. It has a Samaritan Fund, with an Hon. Secretary, who gives nearly the whole of her time to its business, an efficient lady visitor who, when necessary, follows up cases, or visits the relatives of patients in the wards in their own homes. It has contributed over £17 towards obtaining surgical appliances, and expended £144 19s. on convalescent letters, and on maintaining beds in convalescent homes. It also expended £28 15s. 2d. on railway fares, boots, and clothing, and food for convalescents on leaving hospital; it manages a tea stall in the Out-patients' Department, which is much appreciated by the patients, and also the patients' library, which is ably superintended by Miss Richmond.

There is also a working party presided over by Mrs. Swinford Edwards, which has contributed 204 articles of clothing, greatly needed in the wards, and to supply patients sent to convalescent homes, who are insufficiently clad.

The balance sheet showed a balance in hand of £131 6s. 2d., the income being swelled by two large sums, one of £102 10s. from Mary Countess of Ilchester for admission to Holland House Gardens during the Royal Horticultural Society's Show, and £147 1s. 6d. from the Hon. Madeline Hood, the proceeds of a ball at the Grafton Galleries. The Association has also £350 on deposit at the bank.

An interesting report of the work of the Samaritan Fund was presented by Miss Letts, who said that some societies moved by slowly, indeed one man, whose case was under consideration by a society was back at work before it decided to help him. In necessitous cases

the Fund enabled the Matron to give help at once. No one was allowed to leave the hospital without food or shelter.

The announcement that the Ladies' Association has determined to give £100 to form the nucleus for a fund for a Nurses' Home was very welcome.

Miss Nevile, the Matron, said that the provision of an adequate Nurses' Home was very much on her mind. There were 49 probationers in the hospital, and it was a very great plunge for young girls, not only to take up duty in the wards but to come amongst so many people, and to live continually in public.

In her own training the only thing that marred her happiness was that she had to share a bedroom, and could never, therefore, secure any privacy. She felt a responsibility for the probationers under her superintendence, and she had seen nurses go out of the hospital less refined than when they came into it, which she attributed to a great extent to the conditions of life in the Home. They slept sometimes three, sometimes two, in a room; the rooms were small for two, and there were no screens. Some of them also were so dark that the nurses had to have the gas alight almost all the time they were in them. She urged the necessity for proper provision for the Nursing Staff. She had every possible help from the House Committee and Staff. It was purely a question of funds.

She heard a good deal about private nurses. People said "Preserve us from private nurses." The West London nurses had excellent experience, but it was most important that their nice characters should be also preserved during their training; they could not be so nice and refined when they went into private houses as they otherwise might be, while the accommodation provided for them was so inadequate and so lacking in privacy. She had been in the hospital eight years now, and she felt it more and more. In conclusion, she spoke very warmly of the untold blessing of the Ladies' Association to the Hospital.

Mrs. Rodwell, who urged the claims of the Hospital upon the borough of Kensington, said that the Ladies Association seemed to act as a committee of enquiry, a supplementary charity organisation society, and a widows' and orphans' supporting fund.

At the conclusion of the meeting, those present were hospitably entertained to tea, and then many visited the wards, which looked very bright and cheery, as well as up-to-date, and the patients evidently well cared for and happy. Let us hope that the outcome of the meeting will be that the work of providing the Nurses' Home is proceeded with in earnest.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)