

THE SCOTTISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The fourth annual meeting of the Scottish Nurses' Association was held in the Charing Cross Halls, Glasgow, on November 7th. Sir William Macewen presided over a large and interested audience of over 300. The annual report was presented by the secretary. The treasurer's statement, showing a satisfactory balance in the general account, was presented by Miss Dow, who intimated the receipt of special donations of over £50, bringing the Foundation Fund up to over £65.

The election of Mrs. Strong as president was moved by Sir William Macewen, seconded by Miss Wright, and very cordially agreed to.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

Dr. P. Hamilton Robertson, secretary, submitted the report by the Executive Committee for the past year, in which reference was made to the National Insurance Act. It was stated that it had been very difficult to define the exact bearing of the Act on nurses in general, and that there were still many difficulties in regard to which the Commissioners had not given any decision. The Women's Friendly Society of Scotland, which had 11,000 members, had established a section for nurses for the purposes of the Act, and already nearly 1,000 had joined. The executive regretted that, owing to the congested state of business in Parliament, they could not report any progress with the Registration Bill for nurses. The cause of registration was, however, advancing both in the British Colonies and in foreign countries, and sooner or later Great Britain and Ireland must fall into line. The membership of the association continued to increase, 236 new members having been admitted during the year. The question of the provision of association rooms was before the executive, and it was hoped that some arrangement might soon be made for securing premises which would serve all the purposes of a club.

The report was adopted on the motion of Miss Aitken, seconded by Nurse Hope.

THE OFFICE BEARERS.

Office-bearers were appointed as follows:—President—Mrs. Strong, formerly Matron of the Royal Infirmary; Vice-Presidents—Sir William Macewen, Dr. M'Gregor Robertson, Miss Wright, Miss Donald, Miss Aitken, and Miss Tisdall; Interim Secretary—Dr. P. Hamilton Robertson; Assistant Secretary—Miss Finn; and Treasurer—Miss Dow. The following were elected to the vacancies in the Committee:—Miss Millman, Miss Ritchie Thomson, Miss Whyte, and Miss Maitland. Dr. Devon was also elected a member of the Committee.

Miss Marion B. Blackie gave a short address on the Insurance Act as it affects nurses, and a statement was made by Miss Ritson, of the

Women's Friendly Society of Scotland, on the progress of the Nurses' Branch of that Society.

LETTER FROM MRS. STRONG.

A letter was read from Mrs. Strong by Miss Waddington, in which she congratulated the members on the progress that had been made by the Association, and in which she wrote in part:—

"What you want now is unity, a united band of workers, as we see in the medical profession. It is when great questions arise, such as the present one, in connection with the Insurance Bill, that we see what unity can do. It is only as an organised body that you can have any weight, or make yourselves a voice in public events. You will never be one—any more than any other profession—in your individual thoughts and ideas, but you *can* and *must* be one in fundamental principles, if you are to accomplish anything; and in this you have shown your wisdom by including all branches of nursing in your membership—the voice of all must be heard, and conflicting interests must be brought into some kind of harmony. Had there been an united effort, Registration would have been gained long since; the injustice to nurses, arising from the want of it, is daily apparent—for want of a common standard, both of education and final tests.

The best of training can only give you technical knowledge, and that is all that examinations can test; the personality of the nurse is the chief factor, and that examinations cannot determine; still we must have sound knowledge. Every great movement, every advance in the world, has been preceded by thought, and long before it has been shaped into visible form, great expenditure of effort, and, often, even of life, have been made, to attain the end. By the time legislation has enacted State Registration of Nurses, some of us will have passed away; but do not allow that thought to deter any from making an effort towards the attainment of that end. Nothing of any moment can be accomplished by you, as individuals, but as a collective body the nurses may attain the ends they aim at."

Miss Wright moved a vote of thanks to Sir William Macewen for all the work he had done during the past three years as President. This was accorded with enthusiasm. In his reply Sir William, referring to the Registration of Nurses, said the question had been put aside for the time being. They were waiting until Parliament could consider something else than Home Rule and matters of that kind, and he was afraid that the Bill for the Registration of Nurses could not be brought forward this year. Everything was, however, ready, and with some slight modifications he had no doubt the Bill would get through whenever they had an opportunity of bringing it before Parliament. They wanted a proper standard for nursing, and they wished that to be registered, so that nobody could become a nurse by simply putting on a cap and apron.

previous page

next page