

THE NURSES' LEAGUE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL, ROCHESTER.

A general meeting of the St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester, Nurses' League was held in the Board Room of the Hospital on Saturday, September 1st. Miss M. Pöte Hunt, President of the League, and Matron of the Hospital, presided, and was supported by the Hon. Secretary, Miss M. K. Steele, and the invited speakers, Miss H. L. Pearse and Miss G. Le Geyt, who were presented by the members with charming posies of carnations; Miss Pearse's being crimson in colour, while the scarlet ones given to Miss Le Geyt provided just the touch of colour needed to brighten the neat khaki uniform of the Women's Hospital Corps which she was wearing, and harmonized exactly with the scarlet of tabs on the collar and shoulder straps.

The President expressed her pleasure in welcoming the members to their second annual meeting, and also in welcoming Miss Pearse and Miss Le Geyt, who had been good enough to come down from London to speak to them. She then called on the Hon. Secretary to present the Annual Report.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Miss Steele reported with regret the death of one of the first members, Miss Agnes Mann, on active service, who lost her life when the hospital ship *Saltia* was torpedoed in the Channel; those who knew her, greatly regretted the ending of so vigorous and useful a life. Ten new members had joined the League during the past year. The Statement of Accounts up to December, 1916, would be printed in the next issue of the *League News*.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

Miss H. L. Pearse then spoke on the aims of the National Union of Trained Nurses, and urged the formation of a local branch, as "Union was Strength." She emphasised the importance of self-government and of governing bodies being elected by the persons whom they were to govern.

They had most of them heard of the College of Nursing. Until such time as it guaranteed in its Bill that on the first governing body, which would frame the rules and regulations which the registered nurses would have to obey, the self-governing societies of nurses associated in the Central Committee should be represented; that Committee which realized its responsibility to conserve the liberties of nurses, would not support a Nurses' Registration Bill conjointly with the College of Nursing, but when occasion offered would have its own Bill introduced into the House of Commons.

She concluded by warmly urging the formation of a branch of the National Union of Trained Nurses, an association of trained nurses founded on self-governing lines, but said if those present wished to join the Union they need not wait for the formation of a branch in that area, but could join the one for scattered members.

THE IDEALS OF THE SOCIETY FOR STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

Miss Le Geyt, in an earnest speech, delivered with a force which must have carried conviction, said that in the Nursing Profession the younger generation knocked increasingly at the door; for yearly the training schools increased their Roll of Graduates. Consequently the Society looked for the support of the new members of the profession to uphold the struggle, and not to cease in their efforts until a State Register of Nurses was granted by Act of Parliament.

The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses was unanimous in resolving that any form of Registration for Nurses should provide an adequate proportion of self-government.

In view of the general upheaval in the nursing world caused by the demand for nurses during the war, and the uncertainty of the economic conditions which will prevail when "Peace with Victory" comes, it would seem inevitable that a difficult time of reconstruction awaits the profession. She earnestly entreated the younger generation of nurses to carefully study all printed matter purporting to be for their welfare, and to bring their highest critical faculties to bear on the subject. As members of a League they had excellent opportunities for debating the different points of view relating to the future organisation of the profession.

If knotty points arose, and they felt a desire for fuller information she recommended the spacious letter-box of the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING—a Journal which had always devoted its columns to supporting the principles of registration and the higher education of nurses.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TRAINED NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Miss M. Breay conveyed the following message from Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President of the National Council of Trained Nurses, to which the League is affiliated. Mrs. Fenwick said she had noted with great pleasure that they were to discuss State Organisation and Registration from the point of view of the Society which drafted the first Nurses' Registration Bill, secured the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons which had presented a unanimous Report to Parliament in favour of Nurses' Registration, had promoted the Bill which passed the House of Lords in 1908, and had, in combination with other societies, secured a majority of 229 in the House of Commons in 1914 for leave to bring in the Nurses' Registration Bill promoted by the Central Committee. With the prospective and imminent responsibility of women in this great Empire it was incumbent on every member of the nursing profession to take a personal interest in, and acquaint herself with, legislative proposals affecting her profession.

During the thirty years in which she had been working for nursing organisation she had from time to time been told by individual nurses, "my

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)