

## MRS. FENWICK RETURNS THANKS.

“Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.”

On rising to return thanks, Mrs. Fenwick was warmly acclaimed by an enthusiastic audience. She said: “I thank you from my heart for this affectionate recognition. The part I have taken with the devoted co-operation of others in helping to standardise nursing progress has filled my life with intense interest, and I have to thank God for superb health which has sustained me in every effort and difficulty without loss of energy or will power. ‘Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.’ The Address reminds me of a succession of events which seem to have taken place but yesterday, all of which I value as landmarks in the consecutive evolution in the great profession I love. On the table before me we have the printed word—the first volume of the *Nursing Record*, dated 1888, now THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING—one of the file of 85 volumes containing the history of the progress of organised Nursing, of which I have held the responsible position of honorary editor for 45 years. Nearly every word—untold billions—I have passed for press.”

### THE BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

“On page 2 we find the report of the enthusiastic meeting of nurses with vision, held in London at St. George's Hall on February 13th, 1888, with the President of the College of Surgeons in the Chair, supported by Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian, President of the British Nurses Association—the first organisation of nurses in the world.

“It is of interest to us to-day to listen to the advice given by Her Royal Highness to those present half a century ago. We cannot do better than take them to heart:

“Princess Christian said:—

‘I have been asked to say a few words to open this meeting—a meeting the interest and importance of which cannot be over-rated. We are met here to-day to lay the foundation-stone of an Association which should not be inferior to any great institution in the kingdom. I said, “lay the foundation-stone,” but that is already laid. We have rather met to enlist public sympathy and support in furthering and holding it up. The British Nurses' Association seeks to unite in common action all who are engaged in woman's highest and noblest work, viz., nursing the sick. The first object of the Association is to obtain for the calling of nursing the recognised position and legal constitution of a profession which shall henceforth be inseparable from the profession of medicine. It will follow from this that in the future every member of the nursing profession must have been educated up to a definite standard of knowledge and efficiency. The importance of this guarantee to the public cannot be over-estimated. Another object is to enable the members to assist each other in illness or old age. But the organisation has a deeper, a wider, a grander meaning. I believe it is the first instance of a large number of women combining, not only to help their overworked and weaker sisters, but also to advance their calling and raise their work to a higher level than it has hitherto attained. If the

Association be successful—and success now depends on the efforts of the nurses themselves—who can foretell where the influence of their example will end? It will, perhaps, be the means of showing women in other walks of life that they, too, can combine successfully, to the advantage of themselves, their fellow-workers, and society in general, in striving after higher things. I should like to say how much I feel personally the great honour done to me in allowing me to become your fellow-worker in this great movement, and I will conclude with some lines which seem to me to embody the true spirit of nursing:—

“‘It is perfect service rendered, duties done,  
In charity, soft speech and stainless days;  
These riches shall not fade away in life,  
Nor any death dispraise.’”

### THE REGISTER OF NURSES.

Mrs. Fenwick then drew attention to the Register of Nurses.

Holding up a slim volume, “Here,” she said, “is a copy of the first Register of Nurses published in 1922, only an inch thick, containing some 6,000 names, and to-day our Register in two volumes contains upwards of 89,000 names. I receive annually as a gift from the Chairman of the General Nursing Council these priceless books—and no gift could be more sincerely valued—evidence as they are of the legal status of women and men members of the finest Profession in the world—and good value at that for the monumental thirty years' struggle in which I am proud to have taken an active part.

“To the younger generation of nurses I would invite you to emulate those who have won the privileges you enjoy and advise you to sacredly preserve them.

“To all present, again thanks; we have lived through strenuous times and enjoyed them. May you do likewise.”

MARGARET BREAY.

## THE REGISTRATION CAKE.

After the presentation of lovely flowers and personal congratulations, Mrs. Fenwick led the way to tea, arranged in the Council Chamber and Office—which were both filled to capacity with a very enthusiastic crowd.

The Registration Cake, beautifully decorated, surrounded by eighteen candles which were lighted by pioneers—was then cut by Mrs. Fenwick—and portions put aside to be sent to old friends of the cause not able to be present.

No lecture was delivered as usual at this anniversary—but Mrs. Fenwick reminded the guests that 1938 was close at hand, and she invited those present “to plant an acorn” by bringing in a new member to Associations of Nurses supporting freedom of professional conscience and high professional ideals—and to realise that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The atmosphere of the reunion was electric with gaiety and human kindness—all present realising that it marked a unique occasion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)