

has few equals, and, perhaps, no superiors. I will speak only from the point of view of a trained nurse; Mrs. May Wright Sewall will with greater force discuss the question from the wider point of view of its public usefulness. The nursing profession, above all things at present, requires organization; nurses, above all other things at present, require to be united. The value of their work to the sick is acknowledged at the present day by the Government of this and of all other civilized countries, but it depends upon nurses individually and collectively to make their work of the utmost possible usefulness to the sick, and this can only be accomplished if their education is based on such broad lines that the term "a trained nurse" shall be equivalent to that of a person who has received such an efficient training and has proved to be also so trustworthy that the responsible duties which she must undertake, may be performed to the utmost benefit of those entrusted to her charge. To secure these results two things are essential; that there should be recognized systems of nursing education and of control over the nursing profession. The experience of the past has proved that these results can never be obtained by any profession unless it is united in its demands for the necessary reform, and by union alone can the necessary strength be obtained. This union has been commenced in this country and in the United States. It remains for the nurses of other lands to follow our example, and unite amongst themselves; but I venture to contend that the work of nursing is one of humanity all the world over, and it is one, therefore, which appeals to women of every land without distinction of class, or degree, or nationality. If the poet's dream of the brotherhood of man is ever to be fulfilled, surely a sisterhood of nurses is an international idea, and one in which the women of all nations, therefore, could be asked and expected to join. The work in which nurses are engaged in other countries is precisely the same as that in our own. The principles of organization would be the same in every country, the need for nursing progress is the same for every people, and my suggestion briefly is, therefore, that we should here and to-day inaugurate an International Council of Nurses, a body like the International Council of Women, composed of representatives of the nursing councils of every country, a body which shall in the first place help to build up nurses' councils in those countries which do not now possess any nursing organization at all, which shall afford to those countries the information acquired in England and America in the progress and development of our work, aiding them with our experience, helping them to avoid the difficulties which we have met.

I beg, therefore, to propose:—

"That steps be taken to organize an International Council of Nurses."

This resolution was seconded from the chair by Miss Stewart, supported by Miss M. Huxley, and carried unanimously with enthusiasm.

The following resolution was then proposed by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, seconded by Miss M. Huxley, Lady Superintendent of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin.

"That the Hon. Officers and Hon. Members of the Matrons' Council be invited to form a Provisional Committee to consider the best methods of organizing an International Council of Nurses with power to add to their number."

Mrs. Fenwick then proceeded: "I would suggest that the nucleus of this Committee should meet together in London at once, and would suggest that Mrs. Quintard, and Miss Lucy Walker, of the United States, Mrs. Norrie, of Denmark, Miss Kruysse, of Holland, and Miss Watkins, of Cape Colony, be invited to join the Provisional Committee."

MRS. MAY WRIGHT SEWALL said:—"Madam President, ladies belonging to the Matrons' Council, and all friends, we are come together to discuss this suggestion made by Mrs. Fenwick. Not being a member of the Matrons' Council, I have no right formally to support the resolution, but were I a member of that Council, I should take the heartiest pleasure in supporting it. I wish to speak, however, of certain difficulties that we must face in order that we may overcome them, and while my friends are either kind or unkind enough to imply that I may fly—and flying is not practised—while they walk, and that is the accepted method of locomotion, I will say that I see nothing that is not entirely practical, both in the International Idea itself and in this application of it. I had the honour to say, last night, at the banquet so generously given by your Council, that I have always regarded the work of a nurse as a work which lifted her out of the limitations that beset other occupations; because you do not, I believe, when you enter a Hospital, enquire to what nationality the man or woman belongs whom you are called to nurse, and I have never heard that a fever discusses that question before taking possession of its victim; neither have I ever heard that any disease modifies itself to suit the nationality of those whom it assaults; although, of course, we recognise that countries through their climates, soil and physical conditions, breed what we may call, in a sense, national diseases; yet, if any one of a different nationality comes to that climate, he is not the less, but the more, easily

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