

The International Council of Nurses.

A meeting of the Organising Committee of the forthcoming Quinquennial Meeting of the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses, to be held in Berlin in June, 1904, was held at the Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, on Tuesday, October 22nd, at which the President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, presented the following report:—

THE REPORT.

Since the meeting of the officers of the International Council of Nurses, held at Buffalo, U.S.A., in September, 1901, I have been in constant communication with the hon. officers and hon. vice-presidents of the Council.

In Great Britain.—Miss Isla Stewart, Hon. Vice-President, has done much to encourage co-operation amongst trained nurses by the active part she has taken as President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland and of the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, and it is gratifying to report that the Matrons of several important training-schools have stimulated the desire for co-operation amongst the nursing staffs, and taken the initiative in helping them to form Leagues for professional and social intercourse. Miss Stewart is in favour of strengthening the bonds of union amongst certificated nurses by some form of affiliation between the Leagues, which would bring the nurses of the various schools into touch by co-operation, and thus upon a wide and liberal basis founded on the graduate vote enable nurses to meet and discuss, in a helpful manner, their professional and social affairs, out of which co-operation it is hoped that a National Council of Nurses for the United Kingdom might in time be evolved on thoroughly representative lines—Scotland and Ireland forming branch or national councils if so inclined.

Letters have been addressed suggesting some form of affiliation to the Presidents of existing Nurses' Leagues in England by Miss L. L. Dock, the Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Nurses.

In Scotland and Ireland.—Co-operation amongst nurses is practically non-existent in Scotland and Ireland. This is the more disappointing as there are many able women holding positions of authority in nursing circles in both countries whose efforts would, I feel sure, be crowned with success if they would take the initiative in either forming Councils of Matrons or Leagues of Nurses in connection with the many excellent training-schools which now exist in both countries.

In the United States of America.—In the United States of America the nursing profession is effectively organised on co-operative lines, and the two great national societies of nurses—the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for

Nurses and the Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States (that is a society of affiliated Leagues)—have come together by delegation and formed the American Federation of Nurses (in effect a National Council of Nurses), which is ready and willing to affiliate with the National Councils of Nurses of other countries when formed, and thus to compose the International Council of Nurses, as provided for in its existing Constitution.

As the result of the solidarity of the nursing profession in the United States, and the respect which it engenders in the public mind, State Registration of Nurses has been effected in four States of the Union during the present year.

In Australasia effective co-operation exists in New South Wales and Victoria amongst trained nurses, through association in the Australasian Trained Nurses' Society, the Victorian Trained Nurses' Association, the Prince Alfred Hospital Trained Nurses' Reunion, and the recently formed Australasian Matrons' Council—in the building up of which societies Miss S. B. McGahey, Hon. Vice-President, and Miss M. D. Farquharson, Councillor, have worked untiringly.

In New Zealand.—The profession of nursing has been put on a legal basis in New Zealand by Act of Parliament, a Bill for the Registration of Trained Nurses having been passed in 1901, by which a minimum standard of education and qualification in nursing has been defined. Mrs. Grace Neill, Councillor, to whose efforts legislation was largely due, has been appointed Deputy Registrar for the Colony, and is of opinion that the system of registration by the State has already proved of great benefit to the community.

In Canada.—The growth of co-operation amongst nurses is slow, but is proceeding on Alumnae lines. Owing to its geographical position it has participated in much of the progress effected by Canadian women trained and holding high professional positions in the United States. Canadian Matrons co-operate with their American colleagues, and together form the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools, and the courtesy of social amenity is constantly exchanged between Leagues of Canadian and American nurses.

The Hon. Treasurer, Miss Agnes Snively, Lady Superintendent of the General Hospital, Toronto, is in warm sympathy with all that tends to create a deeper sense of professional responsibility amongst trained nurses, and is doing good work in encouraging co-operation amongst Canadian nurses.

In Holland.—Miss L. Kruyse, Hon. Vice-President, takes a leading part in co-operative movements. A Matrons' Council is now formed in Holland, consisting of some forty members, which meets in friendly conclave; there are two associations of nurses, and great progress is being made in the professional and social well-being of Dutch nurses.

In Germany.—Fraulein Hedwig von Schlichting,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)