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Editorial.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

The invitation sent by the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland to the International Council of Nurses, to meet in London next year, and the probability that this invitation will be accepted by the Hon. Officers, on behalf of the Council, is matter for congratulation to the nurses of the United Kingdom. Several cordial invitations have been extended by the nurses of other countries to the International Council, but the general opinion seems to be that its next meeting should be held in London. It is interesting, therefore, to review briefly the history of the Council.

Its formation was proposed by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, at the Annual Conference of the Matrons' Council in London, in 1899, which took place during the week that the International Council of Women was holding its Sessions. It was thus an excellent opportunity for making such a proposal, as a number of foreign nurses were attending the Congress, the majority of whom were present at the Matrons' Council Conference. The idea was warmly taken up, and a Provisional Committee appointed to give effect to it which met before the foreign delegates left London. At this meeting the English members were deputed to draw up a Draft Constitution, which should then be sent round to the international members for criticism and suggestion.

The Council has since met three times, its regular Quinquennial Meeting being held in Berlin in 1904, when the hospitality then extended to it, and the professional fellowship enjoyed with the nurses of other nations have left an ineffaceable memory with all who took part in it.

It has, however, held two other conferences, the one at Buffalo, U.S.A., in 1901, when the kindest hospitality was extended to the visitors by their American colleagues, who also organised the Congress which was such a memorable success; and the last in Paris in 1907, when every honour was extended to the Council by the municipality, and by ladies in the forefront of the movement for the better organisation of nursing in France.

Next year we may hope that we shall have an opportunity of returning some of the hospitality we have ourselves enjoyed, and in order to make our meeting one which will stand out, as other meetings of the Council have done, as red letter days in the lives of all who have been privileged to share in them, much work and organisation will be necessary, and everyone concerned must do her part to contribute to its success. As soon as the summer holidays are over the work of organisation must be begun, and we have no doubt that, with the co-operation of all, the meeting will be one worthy of the occasion and of the great Metropolis in which it will take place.

The inspiration of an International Nursing Conference can never be forgotten by those who have experienced it. It must be felt as an influence for the rest of their lives. The prospect of such a Conference in London is, therefore, very welcome.

A similar opportunity can occur but rarely within the lives of any one of those who will take part in the proceedings next year, for, as the number of affiliated National Councils increases, each in its turn will desire the privilege of entertaining the nurses of the world. Let us, therefore, make the most of the opportunity and combine to make the London Conference a magnificent success.

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