

The International Council of Nurses.

Miss L. L. Dock, the Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Nurses, proposes to arrive in Europe in August, and will spend a year on the Continent, also visiting England no doubt, preparatory to attending the first Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Nurses in Berlin next summer. This is good news, as this unaffected, "straight" little lady is held in universal respect by the nursing profession, and, we feel sure, if any woman can make the meeting in Berlin a success it is Miss Dock.

Those of us who are interested in the great sisterhood of nursing abroad as well as at home know something about the International Council of Nurses and its aims. We know that it was provisionally founded at a meeting of the Matrons' Council—a fruitful source of nursing progress—in London in 1899, and that the Constitution was adopted in the July of the following year.

Its Preamble runs as follows:—

"We nurses of all nations, sincerely believing that the best good of our profession will be advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose, do hereby band ourselves in a confederation of workers to further the efficient care of the sick, and to secure the honour and the interests of the nursing profession."

And the Objects are—

"(a) To provide a means of communication between the nurses of all nations, and to afford facilities for the interchange of international hospitality.

"(b) To provide opportunities for nurses to meet together from all parts of the world, to confer upon questions relating to the welfare of their patients and their profession."

Article III. defines the membership of the Council as follows:—

"Any National Council of Nurses formed of representative societies and institutions of nurses, provided their Constitution be in harmony with the basis of the Constitution of the International Council, may become a member of the International Council with the approval of the Executive, and by the payment of £1 per year for each of the four representatives deputed to act as delegates on the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses."

The basis of the Constitution is the *graduate nurse's vote*; that is, National Councils of Nurses can only enter the International and have *voting power* in its Grand Council (which meets once in five years) if they are composed of Societies of Nurses who are self-governing, as are the Alumnae Associations in the United States and our few Leagues of Nurses at home. Thus, every nurse who helps to form a League can through dele-

gation express directly her opinions on the International Council.

THE INTERNATIONAL NURSING TREE.

Professions, like nations, can only flourish by the development of the individual sense of corporate responsibility. The first aim, therefore, of the International Council of Nurses is to encourage trained nurses to organise all over the world and to make them articulate. Thus, in the formation of National Councils of Nurses, *graduate suffrage* must ultimately be adopted as a fundamental principle. Rooted, therefore, in the graduate vote, the Nursing Tree will branch by delegation into Leagues of Nurses, blossom by delegation into National Leagues of Nurses, the fruit of which will be apparent in the ripe deliberations of the International Council of Nurses, composed, it is to be hoped, in time, of the delegates of National Councils of Nurses from every civilised country in the world.

As will be seen, the scheme of organisation is sound and simple. It is easy to predict that great importance will be attached to decisions arrived at by a body of nurses so *directly representative* of all shades of nursing opinion as those delegated to act on the International Council. It should ultimately become the Deliberative Assembly of the Nursing World.

The question of the moment is, how are the nurses of the United Kingdom to be represented *officially* in the *first quinquennial* meetings of the Grand Council of the International at Berlin? At present the Council consists of *individual* members only, who represent *their own personal opinions and nothing more*. Is the time ripe or no for the Leagues to form a Provisional Committee on a basis which would qualify its delegates to sit on the Grand Council of the International Council with *voting power*, and take part in its deliberations *officially*, or must we wait for a further term of five years for such powers?

The following individuals form the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses at the moment:—

PRESIDENT.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Founder of the International Council of Nurses.

HON. SECRETARY.

Miss L. L. Dock, Hon. Secretary of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses.

HON. TREASURER.

Miss M. Agnes Snively, Lady Superintendent, General Hospital, Toronto.

COUNCILLORS.

Miss Isla Stewart, President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland.

Miss M. Breahey, Hon. Secretary of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland.

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