

The International Council of Nurses.

The League of St. John's House Nurses has appointed its Hon. Secretary, Miss Mary Burr, to represent it at the International Congress and Council in Berlin next June. Miss Burr holds the certificate of the House, and received the prize of books awarded to the nurse at the head of the list in the examination. As a writer, she is known to the readers of this journal, and she is also accustomed to public speaking. The League has therefore appointed an excellent representative.

Mrs. Dita H. Kinney, Superintendent of the United States Army Nurse Corps, has consented, with the approval of the Surgeon-General of the United States Army, to contribute a Report on the legislation effected for nurses under Government Departments in the United States Army and Navy, at the Meeting of the International Council of Nurses at Berlin in June. We sincerely hope that it may be possible for Mrs. Kinney to present her Report in person.

Miss L. L. Dock, Hon. Secretary, is anxious that those associated in the International Council of Nurses should take an interest in the following resolution which is on the Agenda for the business meetings of the International Council of Women, and will be discussed at Berlin:—

AFFILIATION OF SOCIETIES OF WOMEN INTERNATIONALLY ORGANISED.

“Resolved, That the executive recommend that a motion be placed on the Agenda for the quinquennial meeting of the International Council as follows: ‘That societies of women internationally organised may become members of the International Council of Women on conditions which shall be submitted to the National Councils for decision by the President, the chief principles underlying such conditions to be (a) that such International Society have branches in not fewer than three different countries; (b) that such International Society submit its constitution and its membership in different countries; (c) that at least two-thirds of the national branches of such International Society be affiliated to the National Council of their own country; (d) that no such International Society be given more than one vote, or, say, one-third of the total number of votes given to National Councils.’

“That only those international organisations be accepted into the International Council of Women whose branches are affiliated to the National Councils in all countries where National Councils of Women exist.

“That the fee for International Societies be fixed at 100 dols., and that such societies as are accepted be allowed each one representative on the Executive Committee and on the Council.”

Miss Dock writes:—

“It may be some time before there is an International Council of Nurses formed of national societies, but it will surely come before many quinquennials

have passed. Already the nurses of Germany have organised their national body, and we have ours. English nurses, who have a number of strong and influential local groups, like our alumnae, have not yet united into one national body, but it is quite certain that they will some day. (I speak now as a prophet, and not with information.) The Australian and New Zealand nurses, who are full citizens of the most enlightened countries on the globe, should be in almost every respect ready, and now the practical point for us is, that only through affiliation with the National Council of Women at home can we share in the work and glory of this magnificent congress of women from all over the world, whose certain mission it is to create a new form of moral standards and a new type of the ideal.

“But we believe that a supreme and sweeping reason for joining National Councils is to be found in these international gatherings, by membership in which we may greatly help in the work of elevating undeveloped womanhood in all countries.

“We ought not to go to these great gatherings simply as spectators, as one goes to the theatre, but as reinforcements to a great army whose cause is just.”

The Dismissal of Nurses at Tooting Bec Asylum.

As various versions reached us of the circumstances of the dismissal of eight nurses at the Tooting Bec Asylum, we have taken steps to obtain information from the highest authority, so as to place the facts accurately before our readers. When they read the almost incredible story which we relate below, we believe they will be unanimous in thinking that the Medical Superintendent and Matron, supported by the Committee, have taken the only possible course for the protection of the patients and in the interests of discipline in their own institution, and of the honour and reputation of the profession as a whole.

The facts of the case are: On February 11th a junior nurse applied to the Matron, Miss Cottrill, to change her work from a particular ward, and, on inquiry into her reasons for this request, the Matron elicited that the charge nurse and deputy charge nurse of this ward were, without reason, making things very uncomfortable for her.

Later on, the Medical Superintendent, Dr. Beresford, with the Matron, interviewed the charge nurse and warned her, and instructed her to warn her deputy, that any bullying or intimidation of the junior staff would be treated with great severity, as it was a thing which would not for a moment be tolerated in the asylum. Within forty-eight hours a very cruel and cowardly assault was committed on this nurse. She was dragged from her bed, and an attempt made to gag her with a stocking (her lip being cut in the attempt); she was also dragged to a bath-room, where she was soured with cold water.

The following morning the nurse reported the occurrence, but refused to give the names of her assailants. Three nurses were sent for by the Medical Superintendent, two of whom acknowledged, on being charged with the offence, that they were guilty; the other gave her word of honour she had nothing to do with the attack.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)