

countries of the world, and when during the week's Congress many questions affecting the interests of the community were discussed. It was during this International Congress of Women, when representative nurses of other nations were in London, that the International Council of Nurses was founded.

She then showed how the purpose of the International Council of Nurses is to bind together National Councils, which, in their turn, are formed of delegates from self-governing nursing societies and training-school Leagues, which gather up the certificated nurses of each school; provision is thus made for every graduate nurse who associates herself in this way to have voting power direct, or through the chosen delegate of her League, in the National Council, and yet still further in the International Council of Nurses.

When this central international organisation was formed in 1899, those present gave themselves five years in which to organise in individual countries and report progress at Berlin in 1904. The five years had nearly passed away. The International Council of Nurses would meet at Berlin on June 17th. What had been done in the direction of international affiliation?

The United States of America were, at present, the only nation ready to enter into full membership of the International Council of Nurses. Yet, in 1892, American nurses had no organisation whatever, and Mrs. Fenwick described her visit in that year to Mrs. Hampton Robb (then Miss Hampton), Superintendent of Nurses at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, where, for the first time, she met Miss Dock, and their keen discussion of the question of organisation. The seed then sown fell on fertile soil, and, in 1901, when she visited the States, the whole country was covered with a network of organisations, whereby the graduate nurses of the various schools were gathered up into Alumnae Associations, and these Associations in their turn, feeling the need for closer contact, had formed the National Associated Alumnae. The Central Society held an Annual Convention to which each of the school Alumnae deputed delegates, and these Conventions have been of the greatest benefit to all the participating Associations.

The American nurses who were in London in 1899 went back and took yet another step, associating together their Superintendents' Society and Associated Alumnae into a National Federation, the five officers of which act as its representatives in the National Council of Women. Thus American nurses were ready for international affiliation; they had, indeed, a genius for organisation, and this consisted in their legislating for the needs of the time. It was a mistake to make a Constitution so stodgy that it could not be altered; it was better to have a loose tie, so that future generations could

easily accept what had proved to be good and useful, and discard what was unnecessary.

In the United Kingdom, Irish nurses already had their Association, whose President would be at Berlin in June. Scotland had so far not organised sufficiently for its nurses to be represented in an associated capacity. In England we had eight societies composed of certificated nurses which elected their own officers and committees, and which numbered at least 2,000 members, standing for vital principles. These could easily unite, and 2,000 women thus associated in a society in the unity of comradeship were of more value than 80,000 standing outside for nothing at all.

German nurses were also beginning to form themselves into societies, and when once they seriously considered organisation they would probably deal effectively with it, for most German women had the advantage, which English women of the middle classes have not always had in the past, of a good general education.

Mrs. Fenwick then asked whether those present felt, or did not feel, that it was desirable that each of the societies they represented should delegate a certain number of members on to a central Provisional Committee, which might offer itself for federation with the International Council of Nurses at Berlin. She spoke of the educational advantage of keeping in touch with other nations. As a British woman she was jealous of any other nation forging ahead of her own country, but we must realise that, unless we organised nursing education on a different basis, other nations would go ahead of us. She thought that the meeting should not separate without coming to some definite conclusion with regard to international affiliation. The fact that such a meeting had assembled as the result of sending out a few invitations was in itself a proof of the interest taken in the matter.

Miss Stewart then read again the first resolution, which was proposed by Miss Barton, President of the Chelsea Infirmary Nurses' League, and seconded by Miss Pell Smith, Vice-President Leicester Infirmary League. The latter greatly regretted the unavoidable absence of their President, Miss Rogers, and said that the opinion of the Leicester League, so far as it had been ascertained, was most universal in favour of affiliation. Miss Marquardt asked how the expenses of the Central Committee would be met, and Miss Stewart replied that the expenses would not be large, and suggested that the combining societies should each be asked to pay a small affiliation fee.

Miss Todd thought the desirability of affiliation was self-evident, and that a combination of societies having a joint membership of 2,000 was quite enough to make a beginning. All progressive movements originated with a small number of people.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

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