

The first regular Quinquennial was held in London, 1899; the second one in Berlin, 1904; the next will fall in 1909. At these meetings, the National Societies united in the International—at present those of Great Britain, the United States, and Germany—are bound to see that their official delegates are present to carry on the order of business. Their delegates' expenses are, of course, borne, if necessary, by the National Society. The International Constitution, further, makes provision for meetings of an *informal* character at any time or place deemed advisable by the Councillors. At such informal, or interim gatherings, it could not be required that National Associations should pay the expenses of their delegates. They *may do so if they can and will*, but it could not be held obligatory for them to do so, or compulsory upon them to see that delegates from their bodies were present.

This is the plain, common-sense, and obvious state of the case as it concerns informal meetings. For this reason I, as Secretary, have been careful to announce that official delegates were not essential to an informal meeting. We would, in fact, have no right, under our Constitution, to call for official delegates, at any other time than at the regular Quinquennial. The absurd jubilation, therefore, of certain sheets, over the discovery that this coming Conference is "informal" is a crass stupidity.

There will be no regular business transacted at the Paris Conference. This I have also announced. Regular business is confined to Quinquennials. This might also be taken as a cause of rejoicing by our enemies, as well as the "informality."

Informal meetings are designed to bring the nurses, and those other citizens of any country who are interested and active in nursing advance and progress, together, in an informal way; a way which will enable them to become acquainted and learn one another's aims and motives, without binding themselves prematurely. Informal meetings make it possible for nurses who are still unorganised to share as fully and freely in the proceedings as organised nurses—a thing they could not well do if meetings were made up of officially appointed delegates. Our wish and purpose is that each and every nurse may feel that she has the same right and opportunity to take part in these meetings and discussions that the officers of the Council have. There are, in the different countries of Europe, many individual nurses, and many groups of nurses, not yet affiliated with us—perhaps they never will be—yet we wish them to feel freely welcome, and not only that, but also to feel that

the Conference is as much theirs as ours. If there are those of us who pay our own way thither, we need not, I think, be ashamed of so doing.

My second statement, which I will make as the Secretary of the American Federation of Nurses (the National American group which is affiliated to the International Council), is this:

The American Federation, for one thing, is entirely free from snobbishness, servility, and fear of not being associated with society people. It regards as "leaders" of British nursing, and of nursing in other countries, those who strive for the same purposes it strives for; those who share the ideas it acknowledges; those who are going in the same direction it is going in. It regards the Matrons' Council, and those Councils and Societies which are the children of the Matrons' Council, as authoritative and influential bodies in the progress of nursing, and in the advance toward economic, educational, and legal status of an honourable type.

It is steadfastly unfriendly to commercial lay managers, dictators, and manipulators, and the leaders of American nursing are acute enough to understand the true financial motives which underlie the opposition to organisation coming from sources interested in keeping nurses disorganised.

In every country of Europe the number of intelligent progressives in nursing education is a small (comparatively speaking) group. It is this (comparatively) small group that we American nurses regard as "representative" (representative of brains, of ideals, of true democracy, of rightful independence, not of caste and cliques and dull conservatism and autocracy and patronage), and it is with this we mean to ally ourselves wherever possible.

LAVINIA L. DOCK.

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### The Queen and Sick Sailors.

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Queen Alexandra never loses an opportunity of showing her deep interest in the welfare of the sick soldier and sailor, and on her recent visit to Malta, made a point of visiting the Bighi Royal Naval Hospital. Her Majesty was accompanied by Princess Victoria, Admiral Drury, and Rear-Admiral Fisher, and, as she passed through the wards, spoke, as is her custom on such visits, to each patient. She also visited the kitchen, and inspected the diets. The officers and nurses of the hospital were honoured by presentation to the Queen, who spoke a few kindly words to them also.

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