

International Congress of Nurses. Progress of State Registration.

Interest in the International Congress of Nurses continues to increase. Miss M. Amy Turton, Hon. Vice-President of the International Council of Nurses for Italy, who has done such good work recently for the sufferers from the Messina earthquake, writes that she hopes to be present, and Miss Elston writes from Bordeaux, "We are getting more and more enthusiastic about the Congress as the time draws nearer." Dr. Lande, Member of the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Assistance Publique*, as well as Administrator of Civil Hospitals at Bordeaux, who took part in the Paris Conference in 1907, intends to attend, and the *Irish Trained Nurse*, which announces that Mrs. Kildare Treacy has been deputed by the Irish Nurses' Association to take an official part in the Congress, says: "On a former occasion Mrs. Kildare Treacy very kindly organised an excursion party to Paris, in connection with the Congress held there. We hope she will do the same thing again, and that a large contingent from the Green Isle will accompany her to London for the Congress in July."

A large number of Matrons have written accepting office as Vice-Presidents of the Congress, providing that this does not involve public speaking. No one who does not wish to do so need take part in the discussions, but as one of the first objects of the International Council of Nurses is the interchange of international hospitality, the Organising Committee of the Congress are anxious that the international visitors should be assured of a cordial and hospitable welcome. An influential list of professional Vice-Presidents will greatly assist in providing this assurance.

Miss Greenstreet, for so many years Sister Mark at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, has kindly consented to organise the mortuary exhibit at the Nursing Exhibition at Caxton Hall, in connection with the International Congress of Nurses. This is a section which is sure to be of considerable interest to many nurses, and suggestions as to making it of practical value will be gladly received. The mortuary is a department which has lain far too much outside the province of nurses in the past, but, setting aside the fact that till it is in their hands, the refinements which have been introduced into the wards will be absent from the mortuaries; it is also right that nurses who undertake private nursing work should know something of the care of bodies until their interment. During the exhibition Miss Greenstreet will take charge of the mortuary section, and will be glad to give information as to the various exhibits.

On Thursday, May 13th, the Prime Minister has consented to receive a deputation, organised by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, of Members of Parliament, members of the medical and nursing professions, and representatives of influential societies of women in support of Mr. Munro Ferguson's Nurses' Registration Bill. The gratitude of all members of the Society is due to Mr. Asquith for consenting to receive a deputation on this important question.

Will all members of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses note that the date of the Annual Meeting of the Society is Saturday, May 29th, and keep this day free. The meeting will be held in the Rooms of the Medical Society, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W., and Miss Isla Stewart, President of the State Registration Society, will be in the chair.

The statement issued by the Central Hospital Council for London in opposition to the demand for State Registration of Trained Nurses embodies practically the same opinions as were placed by Hospital Committees before the Privy Council in 1892, and before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1904, and on neither occasion influenced the judgment finally expressed. These opinions have thus been already considered, weighed, and found wanting, and the fact that no further argument can be brought forward in support of the case for the anti-registrationists is sufficient proof of the inherent weakness of their case. The statements have been answered and refuted, but we are once more confronted with them, and especially with the assertion that apart from such a specialty as midwifery the extent of the technical knowledge of a nurse is secondary in importance to her personal character.

Setting aside the fact that personal character in a midwife is of the very highest importance, it is beyond the comprehension of the average person to understand why, because a nurse is professionally skilful, it should be assumed that her personal character is indifferent. It is a stricture which our highly trained nurses do not deserve. On the other hand, if a person possessed of all the virtues failed in an emergency to compress an artery, or to dress a wound under aseptic conditions, the subsequent result might be even more disastrous to the patient than her lack of the possession of all the virtues.

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