

The Australasian Trained Nurses' Association.

CONFERENCE OF OFFICIAL DELEGATES OF THE STATE COUNCILS.

We briefly alluded last week to an interesting and important Conference of delegates deputed by the different State Councils affiliated with the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, and fully reported in the *Australasian Nurses' Journal*.

The Conference was held in Sydney on Monday, July 19th, and the following days, and the delegates on their arrival were met by members of the Sydney Council and were hospitably entertained. They were:—*South Australia*—Dr. T. G. Wilson and Mrs. Chennell; *Western Australia*—Dr. Cumpston and Mrs. Scott; *Queensland*—Dr. McLean and Miss Hunter; *Tasmania*—Dr. Ramsay and Miss Wayn.

The first Session of the Conference was preceded by a dinner at the Australia Hotel, when members of the Sydney Council met the delegates in social intercourse. The President of the Association, Dr. Fiaschi, presided.

FIRST SESSION.

DR. BLACKBURN, Hon. Secretary of the Sydney Council, briefly outlined the business to be considered by the Council.

FEDERAL COUNCIL.

The first subject discussed was the formation of a Federal Council, introduced by Dr. T. G. WILSON on behalf of the South Australian Branch. Dr. Wilson explained that he only asked the approval of the Conference of the general principle of a Federal Council. The details could be worked out afterwards. He moved the following resolution:—

RESOLUTION.

"That a Central Governing Body of the A. T. N. A. be formed, to be called the Federal Council of the A. T. N. A."

He suggested that this Council should be composed of representatives from each State, and as the States were separated by long distances, that the headquarters should remain in Sydney, that each State should choose its representatives from doctors and nurses resident in Sydney, acting on its behalf, and that one of the members of the Council should be elected as its President or Chairman.

The resolution was seconded by MRS. CHENNELL (South Australia).

In the discussion which took place, MISS GOULD (New South Wales) asked how the Sydney representatives could be educated to understand the local needs of the State they represented. Dr. Wilson replied that they would be guided by local opinion. If more direct touch was needed, each State would have a right to send a delegate to attend the Federal Council, but this delegate would have no vote.

DR. McLEAN (Queensland), speaking on behalf of the Queensland Branch, was averse to an alteration in the present method of government. He should much object to have a Sydney member representing Queensland, as he did not consider that members

in Sydney could intimately discuss the well-being of Queensland nurses. The Queensland Council was far better able to do that.

DR. CUMPSTON (Western Australia) said he and his fellow-delegate had no instructions from their Council on the subject, and mentioned that, as he passed through Melbourne, Dr. Springthorpe had assured him that if the Federal Council were created the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association would be prepared to come under its jurisdiction and send two delegates to the Council. The whole Commonwealth would thus come under one jurisdiction. Speaking as an individual, he thought no sufficient advantage would be derived from having another Council of Sydney members. He said, further, that a question which was intimately connected with the Federal Council was that of State Registration. If there were no prospect of State Registration, he should be more in favour of the proposal, but one of their chief aims was to pave the way for legislative control. The moment State Registration became a fact in any State, their Association ceased to exist in that State as regarded many of its functions. Personally, therefore, he should oppose the motion. It was hardly worth while to disturb present conditions, and they had better work on and pave the way for State Registration. He was in favour of leaving things as they were.

DR. RAMSAY (Tasmania) said that the Tasmanian Branch would prefer a continuance of the present arrangement.

DR. BLACKBURN (New South Wales) said that if the States were anxious for a Federal Council, the Sydney Council would offer no objection; but when a proposition for the appointment of a Federal Council was made some two years ago in the *Journal* it was not contemplated that it should be composed of Sydney people. He did not quite see how these people, picked out by the States, would be more able to interpret the rules than the present Council of the Association in Sydney; but if the States thought they could, and wanted the change, New South Wales would not object.

On being put to the meeting, Dr. Wilson's motion was lost.

We agree with Dr. Blackburn that, to be of real value, the delegates forming the Federal Council must be members of the branches of the States which they represent. We think Dr. Wilson over-rated the difficulty of distance. The experience of the International Council of Nurses has proved that nurses from all parts of the world are ready to attend an International Congress once in three years; and a Federation of the State Councils represented at a triennial Conference, which might be held in the different States on the invitation of a branch Council, would be of great value in binding together the nurses of the Commonwealth, and be fruitful for good in the discussion of nursing matters of common interest.

The question of the State Registration of Trained Nurses was next considered, as Dr. BLACKBURN explained that Dr. Mackellar's Bill would probably be introduced on the following Wednesday, and he would like to be able to forward to him a

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