

International Council of Nurses.

THE SECOND QUINQUENNIAL MEETING.

Never have nurses of so many different nations gathered together as were assembled at the Church House on Monday morning, July 19th, for the Second Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Nurses. And the importance of their presence was emphasised because they were there for the most part not as individuals, but as the Presidents and the accredited delegates of the National Councils of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, the United States of America, Germany, Holland, Finland, Denmark, and Canada, from the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association and its Tasmanian Branch, and the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association; from the Government of Belgium and the Federation of Lay Nursing Schools; from the Government of Cuba; from the Administration Générale of the Assistance Publique of Paris; from the Council of the French Red Cross Society; from l'Union des Femmes de France; from Mme. Salvador's and Mlle. Chaptal's Schools; from the Bordeaux Schools, including a representative officially appointed by the Minister of War to represent Army Nurses; from the Netherland Bond; from the Red Cross Society of Japan; from the Swedish Committee appointed to organise the Delegation from that country; from "La Source" Training School, Switzerland; from the Spanish American War Nurses of New York; and numbers of other nurses from many countries besides our own, and distinguished medical men from France and Belgium also took part in the proceedings. It is small wonder, therefore, that soon after nine o'clock the hall began to fill, and that by ten o'clock not only was the body of the hall well filled, but rows of eager faces looked down also from the galleries.

While the large audience was assembling they had the pleasure of listening to an organ recital on the fine organ by Mr. C. J. Viner, Lay Secretary of the Universities Mission to Central Africa, who contributed greatly to the pleasure of those present not only by the music before the meeting began but also by the various National Anthems which he played during the proceedings, and each one of these was received with the true spirit of internationalism by the great gathering of nurses from every part of the civilised world—cosmopolitans all, from the very nature of their calling.

The Call to Order having been given, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, the Founder and Hon. President of the International Council of Nurses, gave the following address.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

By MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.
Hon. President, International Council of Nurses.

Members of the International Council of Nurses, and Fraternal Delegates,—It is my happy fortune in the absence of your President to bid you welcome to London, the mother city of our Empire, and were I able to use all the loveliest words of kindness known to those assembled in this great International gathering, they would be inadequate to express the warmth of the greeting which, as President of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, it is my privilege to extend to you.

Our International Council of Nurses, founded but one decade ago, is still so young that, when inviting it to hold its second Quinquennial Meeting in the capital of the United Kingdom, we hardly ventured to anticipate so kind and representative a response to our request. Under this roof to-day are assembled representative leaders of nursing thought and practice from the glorious Republic of the United States of America, the great German Empire, from our loyal and self-governing Dominions and Colonies beyond the seas, splendid Canada leading the van, from liberty loving France, and United Italy, from the historic Netherlands and Belgium, from the brave Scandinavian nations of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, from gallant Finland, and beautiful Switzerland, from Syria, Cuba, and far Japan, to say nothing of our own strenuous workers from England, Scotland, and Ireland.

The presence at our Council's Meeting of distinguished Matrons and nurses from so many parts of the world, is evidence of the close kinship between the nurses of the nations. It is our hope that during the week which is before us, we may, with the intuitive sympathy of the clan come into touch socially, and enjoy many hours of companionship to ripen surely into genuine friendship, and also that in the happiest spirit of reciprocity we may, in the Congress Sessions, exchange professional knowledge and experience for the common good. We nurses, unlike the members of many other professions, are happily untroubled by national considerations. Our work stands apart from every influence, excepting that which promotes the health, and therefore in a large measure the happiness, of the peoples of the world.

It should be the ambition of every member of this Council to closely study economic conditions, and to take an active part in social life. We should aspire, in conjunction with the medical profession, to hold a watching brief for the national health, remembering always that

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)