

THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE CHAIR OF NURSING AND HEALTH.

The next paper was presented by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick on the important subject of the proposed Florence Nightingale Chair of Nursing and Health. Mrs. Fenwick said that when we were told that the British people were on the downward plane we need not believe it. Anyway, we might console ourselves that Britain bred Shakespeare and Florence Nightingale. No other nation would ever beat that record, and the nations generously acknowledged it. We were equally generous, for not for a moment would we attempt to monopolize their genius. Their greatness was immortal. "Come, peoples of this little sphere," we said, "and share it with us."

We nurses had been singularly favoured that one of the most stupendous intellects with which a human being had been blessed should have been used in evolving the principles, and perfecting the methods, of our very special work. It was when we realized this fact that we grasped the magnitude of our honourable inheritance, and our individual responsibility towards it. Our most perfect homage was no doubt rendered in the selfless performance of duty. Yet we also needed to express the thankfulness and devotion we felt. It was well for us that we should do so. We needed always to keep generosity flowing from its source, and the very essence of true nursing was to be giving out sweet and lovely things all the time. No sooner had our great High Priestess passed away than there was a demand to raise memorials to her name. A committee was formed, and money was collected. Many nurses subscribed to it. The scheme included the erection of a statue in London, which we should all delight to see there; and the provision of pensions for indigent nurses; but neither of these memorials in any degree satisfied those nurses who appreciated the real debt they owed to one of the greatest educationists of our time. Therefore, as a perpetual and living memorial to Florence Nightingale, it had been proposed in the circles of the International Council of Nurses that an educational foundation should arise in her name, which should take the form of a Chair of Nursing and Health at an English University.

Mrs. Fenwick said she had the honour to propose this special form of Memorial at the last meeting of the International Council of Nurses, at Cologne, in 1912. It was warmly acclaimed by the representative nurses of many countries there assembled; and Miss Nutting, Professor of Nursing and Health at Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York City, in seconding the proposal, said that "no one could withhold their support to a proposition for the endowment of an educational memorial in Florence Nightingale's honour—a real memorial to her could take no other form."

It was therefore proposed to take active steps between now and the meeting of the International Council of Nurses at San Francisco in June, 1915, to raise funds for this offering, through the various National Councils.

The presentation of gifts would be the chief feature of the Congress, and would take place on Education Day, at the Session to be held in the beautiful Greek theatre at Berkeley (by permission of the University of California).

It was intended that those bringing gifts should form in procession, as was done in the ceremonies of universities; and that this Pageant should be presented in great beauty, and with due solemnity. An oration would be spoken. The privilege would be extended to every nursing organization and individuals of bringing a tribute to the memory of the woman to whose genius we owed to-day the joy of our work and service. Any group, however small, whether a National Association, a Nurses' League or Society, or any other body, might, therefore, if it would, send or depute its own representative to present its own gift.

As a beginning every Matron, Sister and Nurse was invited to give a day's pay, which would press heavily on no one.

All information concerning the organization of this memorial could be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, National Council of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford Street, London.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10TH.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, who presided at the Afternoon Session, drew attention to the importance of the questions to be considered. The economic position of the trained nurse, to be dealt with by Miss Musson, was vital to her efficiency and well-being; the co-operation of Superintendents of Nursing Homes was imperative, as they, of all members of the nursing profession, had the greatest financial stake in their work. Nurses as a rule did not invest money in their work, they were a salaried profession, but Nursing Homes were usually financed by the Superintendents, and it was essential that they should be well organised so as to possess the power to keep their work on a high level, for the benefit of the patients and also to protect their own interests; this was the subject of Mrs. Stabb's paper.

In regard to Poor Law Nursing, which would have an able exponent in Miss Gibson, it must be organised as a State Service under the various Local Government Boards.

THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE NURSE.

Miss Musson said that the economic position of the nurse was a question on which she felt strongly. It had been for some time apparent to those who held posts in hospitals that the supply of well-educated nurses fell short of the demand, and since their field of work had been so greatly widened by the various social developments of the past decade the shortage had become acute.

It had been stated that there were too many private nurses, but she has continual applications from various parts of the country, and abroad, for nurses for private work, and she did not hear from the nurses of any lack of work. For district

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