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EDITORIAL.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

The announcement that a meeting of the International Council of Nurses is to be held in Copenhagen at the end of May has been received with unfeigned pleasure by British Nurses. The former meetings have been so useful, so stimulating, so enjoyable, that it has been one of the real deprivations to nurses, consequent upon the war, that no meeting has been held since an Executive Meeting in San Francisco in 1915.

Financially it will be possible for many European Nurses to attend a meeting in Copenhagen, and we think the choice of the capital of Denmark is a very happy one. Copenhagen is a most beautiful and interesting city, easy of access, the Danish Council of Nurses is extremely well organised, and we have no doubt of the excellence of the arrangements it will make for the International Meeting, or of the warmth of the welcome the delegates will receive.

It is now nearly a quarter of a century since the International Council of Nurses was founded in London, and for the information of the generation of nurses which has grown up since that time a brief account of this foundation may be useful.

At a meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, held during the meeting of the International Council of Women in London in 1899, at which a number of distinguished foreign nurses were present, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick spoke on "The International Idea," and proposed "That steps be taken to organise an International Council of Nurses." The proposal was unanimously approved, and a Provisional Committee constituted on the nomination of the foreign nurses then in London, who also requested the English members to draw up a Draft Consti-

tution. This Draft Constitution, previously circulated, was submitted and approved at the meeting of the International Council of Nurses in Buffalo, U.S.A., in 1901.

The organisation decided upon was simple, but most effective. Taking the certificated nurse as the Unit, she is then associated with other certificated nurses of the same Training School in a School League or an Association composed entirely of nurses, and these Associations in their turn are associated together in a National Council of Trained Nurses. The associated National Councils form the International Council of Nurses, thus opening up to the most recently qualified nurses a spacious professional environment in which they are brought into contact with the leaders of the nursing profession throughout the world.

From its foundation it has been the custom of the International Council of Nurses to hold a Congress in connection with its business meetings, such Congresses being organised by the National Council of Nurses of the country in which the meeting is held, which also arranges delightful social functions. The Congresses held in Buffalo in 1901, Berlin in 1904, Paris in 1907, London in 1909, and Cologne in 1912, when nurses of 23 nations were present, afforded demonstrations of the capacity of nurses for organisation, were fruitful in useful results, and are full of delightful memories. The San Francisco Meeting in 1915 was shorn of its glory owing to the war, and we do not yet know to what extent the Congress and Social side of the meeting at Copenhagen will be developed. But we are sure that Mrs. Henny Tscherning, the President of the International Council of Nurses, and the Danish Council of Nurses, will do all in their power to maintain the great traditions of the Council, and we shall keep our readers well informed of the details of the arrangements.

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