

## THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

### CONFERENCE AT COPENHAGEN.

(Continued from page 103.)

TUESDAY, JULY 31ST.

#### 9.30 a.m.—Morning Session.

#### DISCUSSION ON THE STANDING OF THE I.C.N. TOWARDS THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD.

MISS CHARLOTTE MUNCK (Matron of the Bispebjerg Hospital) took the chair at the Session of the Conference, on Tuesday, July 31st, when the first subject under discussion was "the Standing of the International Council of Nursing towards the College of Nursing, Ltd."

When the Representative of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland was called upon, MISS HELEN L. PEARSE read the Clause of the Statement drafted by that National Council for presentation to the Executive Committee of the International Council of Nurses, published in our issue of August 11th. The Clause was as follows:—

#### THE AUTONOMY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCILS OF NURSES.

In regard to the standing of the "International Council of Nurses" towards the "College of Nursing, Ltd." (Great Britain and Ireland)—and of which copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are sent herewith—which is a limited company of laymen licensed by our Board of Trade, this item does not appear to be in order on the Agenda, since all societies desiring affiliation with the International Council must first be accepted by the National Council of the country in which they are situated. We do not know whether any application has been made direct to the International Council of Nurses by the authorities of the "College of Nursing, Ltd.," for admission into the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, but if so it is an act of the gravest discourtesy for any such society to ignore the National Council of its own country and endeavour to obtain association with the International Council without approaching it through the recognised official channel, and we are strongly of opinion that the only constitutional procedure for the Hon. Officials and Executive Committee of the International Council is to inform the College of Nursing, Ltd., that the International Council has no jurisdiction in this matter.

At the same time we desire to emphasize that the present constitution of the College of Nursing, Ltd., is not in harmony with that of the International Council of Nurses, inasmuch as it is a limited Company composed of laymen, which admits nurses to membership, together with medical and other lay persons; it is, therefore, not a self-governing organisation of Trained Nurses, and it would seem impossible for it to alter this constitution without actually dissolving the company.

The National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland takes strong exception in this connection to interference with its autonomy. Such a policy can only be productive of friction and disorganisation. The vital principle of the autonomy of our National Council affects the status of every affiliated Council, and our Council would offer most strenuous resistance to any attempt to deprive it of self-determination.

The Chairman then invited Miss LLOYD-STILL, Matron of St. Thomas's Hospital, London, who, had been nominated to represent the College of Nursing, Ltd., at the Conference, to present her paper.

#### THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD.

Miss Lloyd Still said in part:—

Following on the outbreak of the Great War, Dame Sarah Swift and Sir Arthur Stanley, who were actively engaged in organising Red Cross work, realised that there was no effective organisation through which the interests of the fully-trained nurse, either from the economic, social or educational standpoint, could be safeguarded.

They invited the Matrons of our leading nurse training schools in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, with representatives from the various Trained Nurses' Organisations, to meet them in conference and endeavour to find a possible solution, and it was, as a result of this conference that, through considerable difficulties, but adhering always to its definite purpose of safeguarding the interests of the fully-trained nurse, the scheme of the College of Nursing, as it now exists, was evolved.

From its foundation, the College has firmly stood for the great basic principles of (1) self-government for the Nursing Profession, (2) State Registration of Nurses, (3) standardised education both in Institutions and Public Service, realising fully the true value of the Nurse as a citizen, and the Nursing Profession as an integral part of the Nation's welfare.

The first duty of those responsible for the establishment of the College was to compile a Register to serve as an electorate by which the governing body of the College could be elected.

In order that the true principles of a democratic constitution should be maintained, power was given to the members to nominate candidates for election, outside the membership of the College, should they desire to do so. Such nominees, if elected, would serve for a period of three years, and it should be noted that their election is entirely in the hands of the Trained Nurses forming the electorate either to elect them by their votes or to reject them if they wish.

Since the foundation of the College, seven years ago, the lay membership of the Council, extending over the period, has been three laymen and one laywoman. These are not included in our membership of twenty-two thousand five hundred and fifty trained Nurses.

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