

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

Miss Clara D. Noyes, who attended the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Council of Nurses at Copenhagen, as nominee of the American Nurses' Association, has supplied an interesting summary of its proceedings to the *American Journal of Nursing*. We desire, however, to correct one error in this report. It will be remembered that the League of Red Cross Societies somewhat unofficially intimated to the President of the I.C.N. that it was prepared to establish the Headquarters of the International Council of Nurses in its Paris office, than which nothing in our opinion could be more inappropriate.

Miss Noyes writes: "The Executive Committee discussed the offer of the League of the Red Cross Societies, but inasmuch as the office of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING had already been voted upon by the Congress as its official office, this could not be changed without a meeting of the Grand Council. Furthermore, it was felt that questions incidental thereto were beyond the authority of the Executive Committee to settle."

We may inform the younger generation of internationalists that the Headquarters of the International Council of Nurses has never been located in, or associated with, the office of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. When the International Council of Nurses was founded by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick in London in 1899, the Council, primarily composed of British, American, and German nurses' organisations naturally voted to have Headquarters in London, and the beautiful room at 431, Oxford Street—the board room of the Registered Nurses' Society—was made available, free of cost, for the work of the Council. Here, records have been kept, and for many years, nurses have come from all over the world seeking help and professional advice, which has been readily available from experts.

Here Miss Lavinia Dock, R.N., did much of that wonderful work which built up the International Council of Nurses in all the principal nursing centres of the world—an inestimable service to the Nursing profession and the community—which, apparently, is not realised at its true value by the younger generation of American nurses.

The official organs of the nurses' national organisations affiliated to the International were adopted as the official organs of the International Council. Thus the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING has, since 1899, been the recognised organ of the I.C.N. in Great Britain, just as the *American Journal of Nursing* fills the same position in the United States.

The League of Red Cross Societies has its uses, but the control of the International Council of Nurses is not one of them. It is advisable, therefore, that whilst working in sympathy side by side for the benefit of humanity, each organisation should maintain its autonomy and independence. Co-operation with all, but fusion with none, is our policy.

HOW THE COLLEGE CAUCUS CAPTURED THE COUNCIL.

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The Nurses' Directory Bill was not squandered in the "Lords" without an immense effort upon the part of the State Registrationists to instruct their Lordships, and I should like to place it on record that the little army of propagandists were listened to with the most courteous consideration, their letters and appeals most kindly replied to, and the case for Registration easily grasped by our hereditary legislators—educated men of the world. Lord Amphilhil thought it was a pity all this work should be lost, and he advised the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses that it would be wise to strike whilst the iron was hot, and withdraw its Bill "to regulate the qualifications of Trained Nurses and to provide for their Registration," from the House of Commons, then in charge of Sir. R. C. Munro Ferguson (now Lord Novar), and have it brought into the House of Lords. In accordance with this advice Lord Amphilhil brought the Bill into the "Lords" on June 23rd, 1908. It was read a second time on July 6th, and a third time, and passed, with the support of the Government, on November 10th of that year. The Bill was brought from the Lords to the Commons on November 16th, and ordered to be printed. Alas! Mr. Asquith being then in power, and apparently a confirmed "anti," the Chief Whip, the late Master of Elibank, refused to give time for the consideration of the Bill, which could easily have been provided, with good will, before the end of the Session.

The Nurses learned one useful lesson during 1908, and that was that however friendly a Lord might be, almost invariably his "lady" wife was strongly opposed to defining standards of nursing education, and providing legal status for trained nurses. Apparently the peeresses were wedded to a system of the social patronage of "Gamps," a system which unfortunately had even then spread through the country, through the Cottage, and County Nursing Associations with which they were associated as Patrons and Presidents. The influence of these ladies was at the disposal of the Anti-Registration Party. We praised Allah that they had no votes!

1908 saw the formation of the first Scottish Registration Committee, with Miss E. S. Haldane, L.L.D., as Chairman, and in the following year the Association for the Promotion of the Registration of Nurses in Scotland, and the Scottish Nurses' Association were organised—a great step forward as they placed State Registration in the forefront of their work.

In 1909 three separate Registration Bills were introduced into the House of Commons and there were now some eight organisations including the British Medical Association, which had pronounced for State Registration.

In 1910, on my initiative, an invitation was sent through the Society for State Registration to these

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