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EDITORIAL.

THE CONGRESS AND AFTER.

After any great event it is well to gather up its impressions and lessons, lest we allow them to evaporate and so suffer loss thereby.

Impressions during those never-to-be-forgotten weeks in Montreal, during the Nurses' International Congress, came thick and fast—so fast indeed that we could only store them in our memories to be considered later more precisely. First the splendid organisation. So perfect was it that we hardly grasped the fact that a group of busy professional women, whose days were normally crowded with work, had made such complete arrangements that between 7,000 and 8,000 nurses, including Canadians, were able to attend the meetings of the Congress in comfort.

Then the hospitality. We have heard of Canadian hospitality, now we have experienced it, and it is of a rare vintage. Miss Upton told that accommodation had been provided for some 99 per cent. of the Overseas Nurses, and added that the Committee on Housing had combed Montreal over, and she really believed that it had secured "every respectable bed." Then charming clubs opened their doors to Congress members; hospitals and private individuals, as well as professional organisations, entertained us at luncheons, teas and dinners, not only individually but collectively in groups of hundreds. Were we invited to one of the charming country houses on the banks of the shining St. Lawrence, cars and motor coaches appeared automatically at Headquarters, and the guests were packed into them by Miss Hersey or Miss Holt and in due time deposited at "Journey's End" after a lovely and invigorating drive. Regarding the detailed organisation with detachment from a distance we realise vividly the stupendousness of it all.

At Headquarters everything had been planned for the comfort and convenience of the Congress members, including Rest Rooms for the different nationalities, each with its appropriate label. In the Central Hall, where registration took place, information was given, letters received and distributed, and many helpful duties undertaken, and the resources of the busy staff must at times have been strained to the utmost, especially when some 3,000 American nurses arrived simultaneously and descended upon it. Yet their courtesy never failed, and the very special thanks of the Congress members are due to their colleagues who undertook so cheerfully these essential routine duties.

The Congress was very alive, General Sessions in the great Forum, the Sectional Meetings and the Round Tables were all thronged with eager crowds. One thing is certain that the title of Round Table has become a

misnomer at International Congresses, and that some more suitable title will have to be found before another. To go to the appointed place prepared to discuss the question in hand, seated round a table, as happened to more than one Chairman, and to find oneself faced by an audience of 600 or more persons, is distinctly disconcerting. Moreover, the term becomes meaningless.

Again there is one lesson which it seems Congress authorities will never learn, which is that Programmes are too overloaded, and papers so lengthy as to leave little or no time for the discussion of problems which some nurses have travelled hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of miles to have solved, to their deep disappointment. We said it at Helsingfors, we said it at Geneva, and, including the Committee on Programme, we are saying it again after Montreal.

A question which proved unexpectedly difficult of solution was the definition of the term "trained nurse." The Education Committee, after studying it, presented a definition to the Grand Council, which it was agreed should be circulated. Later the new Board of Directors accepted the Education Committee's definition provisionally, and that Committee was instructed to continue its study of the subject.

Two very important questions which cropped up again and again during the Congress in various relations were (1) Mental Nursing, which indeed complicated the definition of the term "trained nurse," and (2) Midwifery, both in relation to training, and particularly in connection with the influence of the Midwife on the reduction of maternal mortality.

Lastly, it was clear that the International Council of Nurses, in establishing a Foundation, through which the nurses of the world meet in professional, social and friendly intercourse, and form enduring friendships, has made a very real contribution to the cause of world-wide peace.

In the name of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain we tender to the Committee of Arrangements of the Canadian Nurses' Association, and especially to its President, Miss Mabel F. Hersey, our grateful thanks for its splendid hospitality, and our admiration for the way in which it organised the 1929 Congress and brought it to so successful an issue, in spite of the fact that it had only two years in which to carry out the arrangements, and that the death of the President, Miss Flora M. Shaw, who had conferred with the International Officers and Board of Directors in Geneva in 1927 on the scope of the Congress, created a difficult situation.

We congratulate also Miss Nina D. Gage, who so successfully discharged the duties of President, and wish happiness and success to the new President, Mlle. Chaptal, in that office.

previous page

next page