

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

CONFERENCE ON "THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE FOUNDATION."

At the half-yearly meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, held at 39, Portland Place, London, on April 14th last, it was agreed, on the recommendation of the President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, to organise a "Nightingale Week" in London early in July, to which the Presidents (or responsible representatives) of National Organisations, who have accepted office on the International Florence Nightingale Committee, should be invited to attend as guests, so that they might confer personally with us on the draft Scheme proposed for the organisation of a "Florence Nightingale International Foundation," and be given every facility to see and enquire into the work which has been carried on so successfully by the League of Red Cross Societies in connection with the education of international Students at Bedford College for Women, and the College of Nursing, and to take part in various ceremonies which might be arranged in their honour. A few days later the invitations were issued, although it was realised that the time was limited in which to make arrangements and that owing to the fact that the International Council of Nurses is to meet at Paris-Brussels in July, 1933, our guests might not be as numerous as we could wish. Replies received soon proved that our colleagues from abroad who were able to attend, would form an influential group whose experience in international affairs qualified them as observers capable of forming responsible opinions on the proposed Scheme for the Nightingale Foundation.

Invitations were accepted by Mlle. Chaptal, President, I.C.N., and Miss C. Reimann, Secretary, I.C.N.; Mlle. Hellemans, President, National Federation of Belgian Nurses; Sister Bergliot Larsson, President, the Norwegian Nurses' Association; Miss Venny Snellman, President, National Council of Nurses of Finland, and following delegates were officially nominated: Miss G. M. Fairley, Canadian Nurses' Association; Miss M. Serton, The Nosokomos, Holland (the Dutch Nurses' Association); Miss Inge Funding, Danish Council of Nurses; Miss Nicodimova, the Bulgarian Nurses' Association; Miss F. Kenyon, The Trained Nurses' Association of India; Mrs. Maynard Carter, Chief, Nursing Division, League of Red Cross Societies; Mrs. Strong, President, Scottish Nurses' Association (a member of the National Council of Great Britain), together with Miss Méchelynck, of Belgium (President of the Old Internationals' Association, students who have completed the International Courses); and Mlle. L. Odier, member, International Council, Red Cross Society, Geneva.

Miss Nan Dorsay represented Miss Elnora Thomson, President of the American Nurses' Association, informally, throughout the proceedings.

Arrangements were made by many eager hostesses to entertain the Guests, and the United Nursing Services Club, The Royal British Nurses' Association Club, The Cowdray Club, the Pioneer Club, and 15, Manchester Square, all extended the warmest welcome to them as they arrived, and realised the honour of entertaining them.

The great disappointment of the week was the sad news from Brussels that Mlle. Chaptal had slipped and injured her foot, and instead of being the Guest of honour during Nightingale Week, she was being cared for in a nursing home!

THE CONFERENCE.

The Conference opened at 11 a.m., at 39, Portland Place, London, on Monday, July 4th, and was held in the beautiful "Flaxman" Lecture Hall, the floral decorations (fresh from Covent Garden) greatly enhancing its beauty. The lovely statuette of Florence Nightingale on the high mantel behind the Chair commanded the Hall, and the admiration of all those who gazed on it.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was in the Chair, with the Vice-Presidents of the National Council—Miss H. Dey, R.R.C.; Miss A. Lloyd Still, C.B.E., R.R.C.; Miss Cochrane, R.R.C., and Miss S. Villiers, J.P., Hon. Secretary—to right and left.

All the International Delegates (with the exception of Miss Fairley, whose boat had not arrived) were present seated in the front rows of chairs—supported by the Hon. Officers of the National Council, Miss R. Cox-Davies, C.B.E., R.R.C., Miss Bushby, Miss H. L. Pearse, Miss E. L. Macaulay, O.B.E., R.R.C., Miss R. Darbyshire, R.R.C., Miss E. T. Bickerton, R.R.C., and a large number of delegates from the nurses' organisations. The sun shone brightly; it was a lovely day and the gathering of earnest women evidently anticipated interesting discussion on a subject near to all their hearts—How best to honour and keep for ever green the fragrant memory of Florence Nightingale, the greatness of whose personality is now only slowly evolving from the saintly shadows.

THE CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH.

On rising, the Chairman said: "The first word is Welcome, welcome to England, and thank you for coming to confer with us on the proposal to organise the Florence Nightingale International Foundation. There is no agenda before the meeting, but every delegate has been provided with a copy of the draft Scheme and a copy of International Courses, session 1932-1933, Division of Nursing, League of Red Cross Societies. We wish this Conference to be entirely informal and without prejudice; we want you to study the Scheme, to meet all concerned in drafting it, and see the scope of the work of the International Students. We want you to come into touch with what remains of the environment of Florence Nightingale during life and form unbiased opinions on what you see so that you may report faithfully to the organisations whose representatives you are. No Resolutions will be submitted at this Meeting."

Mrs. Fenwick proceeded to give a brief history of the Florence Nightingale Memorial Movement since 1912. "Would that this Meeting could recapture the pre-war Nursing spirit when at the meeting of the International Council of Nurses at Cologne the proposition was first made by myself, seconded by Miss Adelaide Nutting, at a banquet in the beautiful gold and white ballroom of the Hotel Disch, on August 7th, 1912, that steps should be taken to institute an appropriate international memorial of an educational character to Miss Florence Nightingale—who was above all nationality

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