

A very highly equipped and efficient organisation with similar aims was already in existence in London under the League of Red Cross Societies, and steps were taken to investigate the possibilities of amalgamation and co-operation. A small Committee, representing the National and International Councils of Nurses, the League of Red Cross Societies and the British Red Cross Society, met together and decided that whilst the Foundation aimed at should be of an international character, each nation should form a National Memorial Committee in its own country and appoint delegates to a Grand Council which would meet annually and would elect an executive body under a Trust which would deal with the financial side. She had that morning received a letter from Mlle. Chaptal, President of the International Council of Nurses, which read as follows:—"We have decided to start a French National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee, and to find funds for at least one scholarship to begin with."

Mrs. Fenwick concluded her speech by emphasising the value of education. "The principles of Miss Nightingale's teaching are as true to-day as when she advanced them seventy years ago because they are the fundamental laws of health. The great nations of the future will be the people who love knowledge—no ignorant nation will stand in the fierce economic struggle. Let us therefore adopt an educational scheme to make more efficient the trained nurse, the nucleus of which we have already organised in the International Students' Training Course, a scheme in which nurses from all over the world can participate and which will educate them in the higher branches of administrative work and public health. We have come together to-day for co-operation, amalgamation, and progress, to found not a museum or memorial of stone, but a forceful and useful organisation, in constitution simple and yet effective whereby all humanity may benefit."

After saying she did not propose to speak on finance, Mrs. Fenwick expressed confidence that the necessary money would be forthcoming for so valuable a cause in spite of economic depression.

SIR ARTHUR STANLEY'S SPEECH.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, G.B.E., C.B., LL.D., Chairman of the Executive Committee of the B.R.C.S., then put forward the point of view of the B.R.C.S. and the College of Nursing as follows: He explained that some years ago the League of Red Cross Societies came to the conclusion that what was badly needed was a course for post-graduate Nurses, to give them training in the higher branches of nursing, and such courses were arranged at Bedford College in conjunction with the College of Nursing. He pointed out that for the past twelve years many students had come from all parts of the world, and that this had formed a bond of affection between this country and many others.

These institutions, he said, would continue the Courses for another year, after which the National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committees would be responsible for their continuance. It was considered that no foreign country would be disposed, during the present economic depression, to send large sums of money to be spent in this country, even if their Governments would allow them to do so, and, therefore, the way the Council would have to work would be to ask the different countries of the world to provide scholarships of some £250 a year, which would pay for one of their scholars to come here. In that way the work would be kept going and every country would feel that it had its own personal interest in the scheme. He expressed confidence that in this way enough funds would be secured to keep going the Students' Hostel at 15, Manchester Square.

The foundation upon which we were building the International Foundation was a National Committee in every country. He hoped that every country would come into the

scheme and would form a National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee, and also that Great Britain would be in the forefront of the Movement.

He said that he would ask the Meeting to elect a President and Vice-Presidents, and also a small executive Committee which would start the activities outlined. He ended by saying that he thought it appropriate that this Meeting should be held in a room in Florence Nightingale's own school.

Owing to an unfortunate accident, Mlle. Chaptal was unable to be present, and Mlle. Hellemans, President of the National Federation of Belgian Nurses, addressed the Meeting in her place.

Mlle. HELLEMANS' SPEECH.

Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen—

In the absence of Mlle. Chaptal, President of the International Council of Nurses, which we all deeply regret, it is a great honour to me to address you in her place—but I must ask your indulgence.

We are all still under the charm of our pilgrimage to the grave of Miss Nightingale to offer real international homage, love and gratitude, and we thought when walking through that magnificent garden at Embley Park that once was hers how the love of beautiful Nature brought her to the love of other beauties and raised her soul so high.

She wanted to do good, to save life, to make people happy, and leaving all the joys her family would give her, she went to meet difficulties, contradictions, sufferings of all kind.

Miss Nightingale knew that nothing great is done without suffering. She did not fear but faced her difficulties and overcame them. Florence Nightingale became an international figure.

Her principles of education of nurses made their way through the world. All modern schools adopted them. But once the first rudiments of education were introduced it became necessary to introduce graduate training for selected nurses, and we are gathered here to-day to greet, with joy, the idea of founding a Memorial to Florence Nightingale on these lines. This means perpetuating the work to which she gave her whole life. Representatives of countries which have already had the benefit of international teaching are here to prove the benefit received. We have now studied the scheme, each of us will now go back to our own country to consider the possibility to be of use there in forming a National Memorial Committee. I know the financial difficulties are great throughout the world, but I do not see why the funds for so beautiful a work could not be found. Let me now repeat an old Belgian motto that we must now make ours:—

"They wanted what was right and got what they wanted!"

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Sir Arthur Stanley then reminded those present that this was an inaugural meeting called to establish the National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee in Great Britain, and welcomed all those who had accepted his invitation to serve. He stated that the Duchess of Devonshire, who, unfortunately, was unable to be present, had graciously consented to be President of the Committee, and he now further proposed that the following be elected Vice-Presidents: The Dowager Countess of Airlie; Mary, Countess of Minto; Mrs. Bedford Fenwick; Dame Sarah Swift; and Miss Lloyd Still.

The above were unanimously elected.

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Sir Arthur then pointed out the advantages of a small working Committee and proposed that such a Committee

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)