

THE OPENING SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NURSES.

The Great Hall of the Salle Pleyel was a wonderful sight from the platform at the Opening Session of the Congress on the morning of July 10th, crowded as it was from floor to ceiling with an audience of the world's nurses. M. Daniélou, the Minister of Public Health, presided at this inaugural meeting, and was supported by the following speakers: Mlle. Chaptal, President, I.C.N. (in the Chair), Dr. Jules Renault, the Marquis de Lillers, Professor Leon Bernard, Oberin A. Brandt, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and Miss E. M. Musson and the Hon. Officers and Presidents of National Organisations graced the platform.

MLLE. CHAPTAL'S ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

Mind obliterates *time* as the heart obliterates distance.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, My Fellow Members and Friends, in the name of the International Council of Nurses, I thank you Mr. Chairman for having honoured with your presence, the opening session of the Seventh Congress of the International Council of Nurses.

Founded in 1899 by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, who is still to-day the active President of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, the International Council has for its main objective the progress of the Nursing Profession in every country of the world.

It is no presumption to say this when our association has 29 affiliated nations, to whose numbers, as nurses elsewhere begin to organise, other countries are steadily added.

The Congress in Paris and Brussels has brought together for the first time 42 nations. From recent statistics we learn that on the first of January last, 200,000 resident or visiting nurses certificated in their respective countries—a pacific army, working unremittingly not only to cure, but to prevent, disease—were members of the International Council.

You, Mr. Chairman, know better than anyone the value of social hygiene as it is put into operation by medical science and the work of the nurse. To this task, in furtherance of which no effort is lost, and to that of reducing unavoidable physical suffering, my colleagues constantly devote themselves. Whatever the climate, the race, or the customs, the same scourges beset or threaten humanity, and wherever throughout the world there are those who have given themselves to this cause, progress is registered each day.

To let all know what some have accomplished is one of the objects of our meetings; the professional development of its members being one of the principal aims of the International Council of Nurses. It is in no less degree concerned with the education of student nurses who are the hope and wealth of tomorrow. As sisters we study together the most effective methods of teaching, searching everywhere for useful assistance and knowledge.

Up to now the Congress has been held within the British Empire, in the Scandinavian countries and in North America. In 1929 France was chosen as president of the Council for four years, and has now, in her turn, the great privilege to welcome the delegates whom you see.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, the pleasure of first welcoming you, and to all my colleagues, friends gathered from various climes, may I extend a hearty welcome from the Nurses of France, workers in a country which has the honour to combine the oldest charitable tradition with the methodical cult of the most widely-known science.

From Saint Louis to Pasteur, from Saint Vincent de Paul to Florence Nightingale, there is only a lapse of time which the mind can obliterate, in the same way as there is no distance—as we have proof here—that the heart cannot span.

Mlle. Chaptal resumed her seat amidst loud applause. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick then presented the President with a beautiful bouquet of roses tied with the French colours, and received thanks in the following graceful terms. Mlle. Chaptal, "I thank the Founder of the International Council of Nurses for this delicate tribute to our country." (Applause.)

The speech from the Chair was followed by eloquent addresses by Dr. Jules Renault, the Marquis de Lillers, Professor Léon Bernard, and Oberin A. Brandt. Miss E. M. Musson welcomed the members of the Congress in the name of the Grand Council, and the meeting closed with an address by M. Daniélou, the Minister of Public Health.

MISS MUSSON'S SPEECH ON BEHALF OF THE GRAND COUNCIL.

I have the honour to offer, on behalf of the Grand Council, a hearty welcome to all our colleagues who have come from near and far to join in this Congress of the International Council of Nurses.

We are very grateful for the honour done us by the Minister of Public Health in coming here to-day to inaugurate the Conference. We have listened with much pleasure and cordial appreciation to the addresses of our President, and of the other distinguished speakers, and we thank them most sincerely for their kind and gracious welcome.

We can assure Monsieur le docteur Jules Renault that we also are anxious to emphasize the importance of those small personal nursing points which mean so much to the comfort of our patients.

Our hostess Association—L'Association Nationale des Infirmières Diplômées de l'Etat Française—is one of the younger National Associations of Nurses which form our International Council. It is growing rapidly under the able direction of its founder and President, Mademoiselle Chaptal. But, if the Association is but young, Nursing tradition in France—and also in Belgium where part of our Conference is to take place—is old and noteworthy. Some of the oldest and most celebrated Hospitals are to be found in each country. Many religious Nursing Orders were founded and flourished here during the middle ages, some of which still carry on their nursing work in many countries. Time would not allow me to mention the names of all the French men and women who have helped to make nursing history, but that of St. Vincent de Paul, founder of the Order which bears his name, is known to you all, while to our Canadian Sisters this meeting is of peculiar interest since France was the home of Jeanne Mance, the revered pioneer of nursing in Canada. We know that our work has been

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