

1933.

In November, 1933, invitations were issued to the Nurses' National Organisations and to the National Red Cross Societies throughout the world, to form together a National Committee, to which we have had in six months' time most gratifying response. Already National Memorial Committees have been formed in 15 countries, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Irish Free State, Canada, South Africa, and India. Other countries, including the United States of America, are in process of organisation. Thus a majority of the countries affiliated in the International Council of Nurses have taken action. The growth of so beneficent and world-wide a movement cannot be forced. We must give it time and space for evolution, yet surely the Spirit is moving on the face of the waters.

The following gifts have been sent to the Endowment Fund:

The National Council of Polish Professional Nurses	£40	0	0
The Danish Council of Nurses	44	12	10
The Icelandic Nurses' Association	20	0	0

for which thanks.

In respectfully submitting this Report of the participation of the Nurses of the world in this great movement, I have only incidentally alluded to the indispensable work of the League of Red Cross Societies, Sir Arthur Stanley will emphasise that. I may, however, congratulate you on the complete harmony which has inspired the deliberations of your Provisional Committee, and made possible such wonderful progress in so short a time, so that in a few days the inauguration of the Florence Nightingale International Foundation will take place, with illimitable possibilities for the advance of nursing education throughout the world, and the dedication of knowledge acquired to the health and happiness of man.

I can conceive of no policy more potent for the civilisation of mankind than the psychological penetration of the health missioner.

Progress from the point of view of the British Red Cross Society and the League of Red Cross Societies.

Sir Arthur Stanley reported progress from the point of view of the British Red Cross Society and the League of Red Cross Societies, and said that Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's clear and lucid exposition of the Foundation left him little to say. Its establishment would have been impossible but for Mrs. Fenwick. Although proposed as long ago as 1912, it took no shape until recently, but they all knew that once Mrs. Fenwick took hold of anything it had to be done. He was pleased in that home of the Nightingale School to report that he had received a message from the Chairman of the Nightingale Fund (Mr. R. Collett Norman), who was unable to be present, saying that the Committee of the Foundation seemed unusually wise in choosing as its object the award of scholarships year by year. The Fund was providing a Scholarship of £250 for 1934-1935, and hoped to do so annually.

When it was decided that the Memorial to Florence Nightingale should take this form, it was estimated that it would be necessary to raise the sum of £200,000. At the present time this was impossible. It was decided, therefore, to carry on by raising £6,000 to £7,000 a year for scholarships and working expenses, and it was calculated that 17 scholarships of £250 each would be required to make the scheme self-supporting. He was pleased to announce that scholarships had already been awarded by this and other countries, and payments had been made personally by students to make the Course for 1934-1935 secure. Sir Arthur reported a letter from Mr. Swift (Secretary-General

of the League of Red Cross Societies), stating that he had just received a cable from the American Red Cross saying that it was taking up the matter vigorously, and that Mrs. Draper had set out to raise 100,000 dollars (£20,000) for the Foundation. It offered two scholarships for the ensuing year, but as the seventeen students were already secure, he asked leave, and it was agreed, to hold over one scholarship until the following year.

The announcement of donations received made in the Report presented by Mrs. Fenwick was wonderful. The speaker raised a laugh by saying it was the first time we had not had depression from Iceland.

The question of officers and a staff for the Foundation would have to be considered, so far these had been provided by the British Red Cross Society.

It was very satisfactory that at this first meeting of the Committee so large a proportion of the members were present.

A Student of Florence Nightingale.

Sir George Newman, who stated that for many years he had been a student of Florence Nightingale, said that he had watched with great interest this movement for the establishment of scholarships for nurses.

Paraphrasing the words, "Let us now praise famous men," he said that we were not here only, or even primarily, to praise Florence Nightingale, but to plan how to carry on in a larger and international way the work which she so well began. The nurses at St. Thomas's Hospital were called by her her daughters. Why did we to-day desire here to promote the present proposal for the endowment of nursing education? Because this hospital was the true home of Miss Nightingale's endeavour; in this institution was her enduring home and her fulfilment. The Nightingale Home was anchored in this great hospital, and this particular place was the home of her spirit. Anyone who knew the history of this marvellous person knew that it was the only possible way of adequately commemorating her at the close of the Crimean War. It was the gift of the English people to Miss Nightingale, an endeavour to pay back to her somewhat of their irredeemable debt. It was difficult to realise what Florence Nightingale was in those years, 1854-1856—the greatest Englishwoman of the age. She accepted the gift and wanted it to last for ever; she had given to nurses a most beautiful inheritance, and she begged those she called her daughters to carry on her dreams so that they in their turn might become founders. She knew she was a founder all right. Most assuredly from here the present movement in honour of Florence Nightingale should go forth.

What did we now come to commemorate in regard to Florence Nightingale? Her devotion? The mass of work done with her own hands? Yes; but what were the things that endured for ever? It was suggested to commemorate her in a new aspect of her own endeavour. Because of the training of Embley and of Lea Hurst, this extraordinary phenomenon in English history was being educated for her future life's work. Miss Nightingale was not a highly trained nurse; she had for many years to live down prejudice and opposition and then to get trained. Yet it was the use she made of the training she did receive that enabled her to succeed in the Crimea, to successfully overcome the opposition and inertia of the War Office. "Think of it," said the speaker, turning to Sir Harold Fawcus, formerly Director-General of the Army Medical Service, who was present, "we meet together not to fight the bird, not to kill the bird, but to offer reverential homage to our heroine."

Military Nursing, Sanitation, Red Cross Work—with all of which Miss Nightingale was associated—each has come into its own in our time, largely owing to her inspiration.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)