

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

310, CEDAR STREET,
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT.
October 29th, 1940.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President,
The National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, and
Founder of the I.C.N.,
19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, England.

DEAR MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK,

I have been thinking of you so much during the past few weeks, and wishing that I might have the opportunity to get letters to you more often.

A really new interest seems to have arisen in the United States with reference to the International Council of Nurses, and both Miss Banwarth and I have been invited to speak about the Council and the Florence Nightingale International Foundation.

I have just returned from the West, where I spoke about the I.C.N. at three separate meetings, and I am sure it will make you happy to know that the nurses of the country are kindled with enthusiasm as they hear of the past achievements of our organisation.

At one of the meetings I quoted these words from your address on "The Celebration by Trained Nurses of the New Century"—"The Old Century is dying; let it die; be thankful that in it you awoke to a sense of personal and professional responsibility—that in it you saw the dawn of a new day. Gird up your loins, be up and doing. The beautiful Twentieth Century is at hand; your work lies before you. Neither yesterday, nor to-day is of account; wipe them off the calendar. It is with the glad to-morrow you have to do—to-morrow is yours and to-morrow and yet to-morrow."

I followed these words with the remarks that the spirit of the British nurses was never daunted, and, looking ahead, I could hear them say: "It is with to-morrow that we have to do. Let us wipe the past off the calendar and celebrate to-morrow with hope and confidence."

This embodies the spirit as I see it of the nurses who are members of our great International Council. We are hearing from many of our member associations and they tell us that they are going on as well as they can, admitting students to their courses, carrying on in the schools and holding State examinations wherever possible, and looking forward to the time when we can again meet together in another great Congress, where unhappiness will be forgotten and our watchword "loyalty" will reign supreme in our hearts.

Miss Banwarth was also at a State meeting in Illinois, and presented a very interesting talk concerning the F.N.I.F., which she illustrated with pictures taken at Manchester Square and on the continent during her observation trips while a student of the Foundation. She has also made some very splendid slides in order to demonstrate the defence work in England—these pictures she has reproduced from nursing magazines, in order to give the nurses in this country a more vivid idea of what is happening. Miss Banwarth has other engagements of similar nature—the State Associations pay all of the expenses, consequently it is possible for us to offer this service even though we are not prepared to pay for travel.

Miss Elsie M. Lawler is going to South America for a trip when she retires from the Johns Hopkins Hospital early this November, and she has kindly consented to represent the I.C.N. at the Fourth Pan-American Red Cross Conference to meet in Santiago de Chile on December 5th, 1940. Miss Banwarth is preparing a report for her to read and we are very happy indeed that the Council will be represented at this important Red Cross meeting.

I am writing at some detail as I know the members of your Council will be interested to know of even the few activities in which we are able to engage. We are fairly busy with these, and the correspondence which is considerable, particularly since the acting secretary also does all of the clerical work with the exception of the circular letters and reports which are mimeographed.

Again, let me assure you that you are constantly in our thoughts, and daily do we wish that our thoughts might be translated into works.—Very faithfully yours,

EFFIE J. TAYLOR, *President.*

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

DEAR DEAN EFFIE TAYLOR,

You will see by the address heading this paper that I am at the seaside. The truth is that after twelve months' intensive war work and *B.J.N.* in London, I have had a rather serious illness and am here to help restore health—not to be wondered at at 84!

The past year has been one of great sorrow and tragedy, as you can imagine.

I have to thank you for two kind letters which are appearing in the *B.J.N.*, as many of our Members of the National Council are deeply interested in the work of the I.C.N., in U.S.A. and are thankful to know so much interest is being maintained by you and the American Nurses' Association, but frankly we have little time or feeling to spare for any other interest than saving humanity from enslavement by guilty men, as we as a nation are practically alone in this Crusade.

To begin to tell you of the horrors we are facing and of the glorious courage with which the British people are doing their duty, would take pages—enough that our Nurses are in the front line of defence and salvation. Already many of them have died at their posts of duty—a shining example to our profession the world over; some of their tragic deaths do not bear thinking about, yet it is for our dear country and for mankind that their lives are offered willingly.

This most brutal and devastating warfare exceeds the barbarism of past ages—we have read of the agony of the rack, the clutch of "The Maiden," the crackle of faggots, and of burial alive. All these mortal agonies our people are being called upon to endure; we have but one consolation, we realise this martyrdom is not in vain, that it would be impossible for us to fail in courage, duty, and sacrifice for the ultimate salvation of humanity.

I cannot wish you a Merry Christmas. I feel it would be no compliment to do so, but we do thank you for sympathy, and wish you such happiness as that inevitably secured by generous emotion for the welfare of others.

With very kind regards,

I remain,

Yours very truly,

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

P.S.—You will realise we glory in being the "Chosen People."

THE INFECTIOUS HOSPITALS MATRONS' ASSOCIATION.

In view of the present war conditions, it has been considered advisable not to hold the annual meeting this year.

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