

without even, in many cases, the possibility of contact through correspondence. We were greatly handicapped, at intervals, in carrying on any concerted work, and, therefore, we thought that it might be possible to incorporate a few simple changes to prepare for such emergencies as we have recently experienced. Apart from that no changes were made other than those suggested by the Board in 1939.

"The Membership Committee stated that it was very difficult at the present time to give information to countries who wish to form national organisations, and it was agreed that it would be a good thing to set up a tentative form for a constitution and bye-laws for any national nurses' association which would meet the requirements of the I.C.N. for membership. This is being worked upon now, and it will probably be used by the Membership Committee to assist certain countries, particularly in South America, where there seem to be great difficulties in getting new organisations established in a completely satisfactory manner. This tentative outline must be very simple. I trust that we were helpful in any deliberations which were followed in relation to the constitution and bye-laws.

"I am sure that our meeting was worth while, and although it cost us a little money, it was well spent, and everyone present assured us that they would carry back to their own countries inspiration from the meeting. They all seemed very happy to belong to the I.C.N., and everyone expressed the hope that it would not be long before they would be invited to come to the United States again for a meeting of the Board, the Grand Council, and for a Congress.

"May I tell you now that our office is an exceedingly busy place. We have many nurses and visitors from all over the world who come to us for information. Miss Schwarzenberg has planned special tours for guests to visit schools and hospitals in this country. Recently she arranged a programme for eight Dutch nurses who were here on their way to Australia, where they are to await the liberation of the Dutch East Indies. They are army nurses, and will move in with the troops.

"I believe that the work of the I.C.N. has been greatly strengthened during the past few years, even though we have been living in this war period, and we are happy that it has been our good fortune in America to be free from the agitation and distress which those of our colleagues are enduring who live in other countries. It is for this reason only that we are able to carry on our activities."

We all realise how kind fate was in 1937 to hand the care of the I.C.N. to the U.S.A. for the terrible war years. We in Great Britain are, indeed, grateful for its generosity.

By the same post arrived a large box of delicious chocolate creams, "with love," from "Effie J. Taylor," for which sincere gratitude.

#### NEWS OF OUR HON. PRESIDENT MISS ANNIE W. GOODRICH.

From Miss Annie W. Goodrich, R.N., Hon. President I.C.N., Colchester, U.S.A., we have received a very informative letter, from which we hope to quote anon.

It is sad to realise that she is the only Past-President of the I.C.N., together with ourselves, now alive, all the wonderful pioneers from many countries to whom we owe so much having passed away. Miss Goodrich was our President, appointed at Cologne, from 1912 to 1916, but owing to war the Congress at San Francisco was inevitably postponed. And once again the same misfortune has befallen us. When we do meet in the U.S.A. we prophesy a stupendous gathering, and what a tale the delegates will unfold!

## NURSING POLITICS.

### FEES.

On Thursday, December 14th, 1944, a very important question was addressed, in the House of Commons, to the Minister of Health, the Right Hon. Henry Willink, K.C., M.P. by Sir Waldron Smithers, J.P., M.P. for Chislehurst:—

### NURSES REGISTRATION ACT FEES.

SIR WALDRON SMITHERS asked the Minister of Health whether he will amend Section 19 of the Nurses Act, 1943, so that fees paid by Registered Nurses pursuant to the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, should be devoted solely to the benefit of such Registered Nurses.

MR. WILLINK: No, Sir. I know the intention of the General Nursing Council to be that the part of their work relating to the enrolment of assistant nurses shall be financially self-supporting. No such amendment as my Hon. Friend suggests appears, therefore, to be necessary.

SIR W. SMITHERS: In view of the fact that the Minister did not deny the great injustice, are we to look in vain to Ministers of the Crown to remove it?

MR. WILLINK: No question was asked with regard to injustice. I know of none.

With all due deference we venture to enlighten the Minister of Health.

### NURSES REGISTRATION ACT, 1919.

In the year 1919, after an historic struggle lasting for 30 years, the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses—composed of medical men and Certified Nurses resident in England, Scotland and Ireland—by arduous endeavour, had persuaded the majority of Members of Parliament that justice demanded the legal organisation of the Nursing Profession, and the then Minister of Health, Dr. Addison (now Lord Addison) agreed to bring in a Bill for the Registration of Nurses in England and Wales. Bills for this reform were also presented for Scotland and for Ireland, all three of which speedily became law—in 1919.

These Acts provided that the cost of administration should be paid by the Registered Nurses, no financial responsibility being assumed by Parliament or any other authority.

Thus the very considerable cost of organisation and administration of the Nurses Registration Acts, 1919, have been entirely defrayed by Registered Nurses for a quarter of a century, which has required expenditure to close on *one million pounds* in England and Wales which, as far as we know, no other group of working women has been called upon to pay. Surplus expenditure on the Midwives Act is defrayed by authorities which employ them.

### "INJUSTICE—I KNOW OF NONE."

We regret to note that Mr. Willink, the Minister of Health, has revealed in the House of Commons, in reply to the above questions by Sir Waldron Smithers, M.P., that he is not aware of the keen sense of injustice which inspires groups of Registered Nurses in connection with Regulation 19 of the Nurses Act, 1943, who have the sense to realise its significance, and presumably the considered Resolutions from the Royal British Nurses' Association and from the British College of Nurses, Ltd, sent to him

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)