

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The great event of the month in the Nursing World has been the reassembling of the Grand Council of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain after quiescence for the six years of war.

The meeting was held at Riddell House, St. Thomas' Hospital, and the Founder of the Council, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, S.R.N., was in the Chair; every arrangement for the good organisation of the Meeting having been made, to say nothing of a garden of roses around a realistic statuette of Florence Nightingale.

Notice of Meeting.

The Notice of the Meeting having been read, the Chairman rose and said :—

"Before we proceed to the official business on the Agenda, may I ask the audience to stand in memory of our devoted colleagues who have died since we last met—Margaret Breay, for 20 years Hon. Treasurer, and Susan A. Villiers, Hon. Secretary—whose years of service to the Nursing Profession, including the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain is inestimable."

Upon the delegates resuming their seats the following business was transacted :—

Minutes.

The fourteen columns of Minutes were, after an explanatory report, agreed and signed.

Correspondence.

The following telegram was reported from Koebenhavn :—

"Danish Nurses send thankful thoughts to England and hearty greetings to our English colleagues.
Maria Madsen, Danish Council of Nurses."

It was agreed to respond to this welcome message with warm thanks.

Communications were reported : (1) from the National Council of Women of Great Britain *re* the Annual Meeting.

(2) From Mrs. L. Wilkinson, O.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service in response to a suggestion that it should join the Council, desiring that the matter be brought forward.

It was agreed that this should be done at a meeting of the appropriate Committee, as the Constitution made provision for the affiliation of naval and military nurses, who, so far, had not taken part in the work of the National Council.

Further correspondence was reported.

Short Report from the Executive Committee.

It is now six years, owing to conditions of War, since the Grand Council of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain met on November 9th, 1938.

A short Report during its quiescence is necessary.

War was declared with Germany in September, 1939, and the whole energy of the Nursing Profession was at once required at home and abroad and should have been available.

Great Britain was attacked from the air, and the Government advised that large meetings of persons should be avoided.

An official communication was therefore sent from the office of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain to the Affiliated Associations composing it, inviting their opinion as to whether meetings should be discontinued, no terms being specified.

The majority of replies were in the affirmative, the experienced Hon. Officers continuing the routine business at infinitesimal cost, and investing the surplus funds with very satisfactory results. The Audited Accounts were rendered annually to each Affiliated Association.

It will be remembered that at this crisis a Sub-Committee was in session drafting amendments to the Constitution for the consideration of the Grand Council. The Committee was composed as follows :—

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President ; Miss M. Breay, Hon. Treasurer ; Miss S. A. Villiers, Hon. Secretary (*ex officio*) ; Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C. ; Miss B. M. Monk, C.B.E., R.R.C. ; Miss H. McLoughlin ; Miss G. V. L. Hillyers ; Miss E. Brodie ; Miss I. Macdonald ; Miss R. E. Darbyshier, R.R.C. ; Miss M. M. Ingman and Miss A. M. Bushby.

The reference to the Sub-Committee was to make recommendations to still further modernise the Constitution, when almost concluded, this work ceased in 1939. The fact that the majority of affiliated delegates might be on active service, many of them overseas, and unable to attend meetings to alter the Constitution was realised as a sound reason for postponement.

Later, danger to life, night and day, from bombs and rockets until a recent date, it appeared unnecessary to risk life for no apparent advantage for the nursing profession, or the sick.

Upon enquiry of the Affiliated Associations in October 1944, if they wished to reassemble, 22 replied in the affirmative, and 25 did not reply.

Meeting of the Executive Committee.

A Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain was summoned to be held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Wednesday, May 9th, 1945, which was later officially announced as Victory Day, too late for the postponement of the Meeting.

There were present :—

Dame Ellen Musson, D.B.E., R.R.C., LL.D., Vice-President ; Miss G. Le Geyt, Miss Helen Dey, O.B.E., R.R.C., and Miss H. McLoughlin, Directors ; Miss A. E. Merry, President, Bradford Royal Infirmary Nurses' League ; Miss G. V. L. Hillyers, President, the Nightingale Fellowship, St. Thomas's Hospital ; Mrs. E. O. Jackson, President, University College Hospital Nurses' League ; Miss C. N. Alexander, President, the London Hospital League of Nurses ; Miss Dorothy M. Smith, President, Middlesex Hospital Nurses' League ; Miss E. Cockayne, President, the League of Royal Free Hospital Nurses ; Miss M. K. Blyde, President, King's College Hospital Nurses' League ; Miss N. Dunkley, President, League of Fever Nurses.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was in the Chair, and presented short Reports on the National and International nursing situations, in which Dame Ellen Musson, Treasurer, the International Council of Nurses took part, when she stated that Miss Effie Taylor, R.N., President of the International Council of Nurses was anxious to visit England for purposes of discussion when travelling facilities permitted.

The International Council of Nurses.

It will be remembered that at the very successful Congress convened in London in July 1937 by the International Council of Nurses that Miss Effie Taylor, R.N., Dean of Yale University School of Nursing, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A., was elected President of the International Council of Nurses, anticipating that the next

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)