

the Commons, its promoters were not successful in obtaining the necessary facilities for its passage from the Prime Minister (Mr. H. H. Asquith) and the Bill was thrown out.

In 1910 another attempt was made to launch the Bill. A Central Committee for State Registration of Nurses was set up, under the Chairmanship of Lord Ampthill. This Committee was fully representative of the British Medical Association and of associations of Nurses throughout the country. Mrs. Fenwick's fighting qualities, her devastating fluency and her controversial genius kept her mistress of each and every adverse situation.

She worked ceaselessly by day and far into the night for the success of her precious Bill. She and her faithful coterie of co-workers lobbied the Members of the House of Commons on every conceivable occasion, and they strove manfully and persistently against equally determined opposition from most influential persons. When a fair measure of success was in sight, the Great War of 1914-1918 broke out, and, like the patriotic people Nurses are, they promptly buried their grievances, packed away their Bill, and devoted their energies to the needs of their country until the dawn of peace.

After the celebration of the Armistice, the Bill was again brought to the notice of Parliament. Feelings between the promoters and the Anti-registrationists once more ran high, and when a counter-Bill was introduced in the House of Lords, thus wrecking the Bill promoted by the Central Committee for the State Registration of Trained Nurses at the Committee Stage, Dr. Christopher (later Lord) Addison, then Minister of Health, undertook to introduce a Government measure providing for the State Registration of Nurses; this Bill incorporated nearly every section and fundamental principle advocated by the Central Committee.

The titanic efforts of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and her supporters were eventually crowned with success, and to their great and abiding joy the Bill received the Royal Assent on December 23rd, 1919, and the Nurses' Act was placed upon the Statute Book, thus becoming law.

Great celebrations were held in honour of this flattering victory, and Mrs. Fenwick's claim to lasting fame was assured.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Forty-eight years ago Mrs. Fenwick was inspired to form the International Council of Nurses, as a result of her visit to the World's Fair in Chicago, U.S.A., in 1893.

On July 1st, 1899, she laid her mature plans before the Annual General Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain (which she herself also founded in 1894). Her plans were enthusiastically and unanimously approved, and an Executive Committee was immediately formed, and work upon the new Council was begun without delay. So quickly and easily did the spade work develop that, in 1901, at Buffalo, U.S.A., the Constitution for the International Council of Nurses was approved and adopted, and the first Honorary Officers were elected. The aims of this new Council were "Self-government of Nurses in their Associations, with the aim of raising ever higher the standards of

education and professional ethics, public usefulness and civic spirit of their members."

By a postal vote, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was elected its first President; Miss Lavinia L. Dock (U.S.A.) was a happy choice as Hon. Secretary, and Miss Agnes Snively the Hon. Treasurer. Plans were then laid for the International Council of Nurses to meet in Berlin in 1904.

In this same year the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain formally became affiliated to the International Council of Nurses. The National Council of Nurses was composed of all Associations of Nurses and of the individual Leagues of Nurses formed within the various Training Schools for Nurses up and down the land.

In order to obtain funds for the National Council of Nurses, small *per capita* fees were levied on each Association, and the officers all worked in a voluntary capacity.

In England, small Congresses of the National Council of Nurses were held in the large cities, which were brilliantly successful, and which advertised the Profession of Nursing far more persuasively than our present-day methods.

When the International Congress of Nurses was held in Berlin in 1904 only three countries were affiliated: they were Great Britain, America and Germany. To-day the nurses of thirty-two countries are in full affiliation, and many other countries are setting their affairs in order so that they may apply to join this great confraternity of Nurses at the forthcoming International Congress of Nurses to be held in Atlantic City, U.S.A., next month.

The gathering in Berlin was a tremendous success.

Thereafter, International Congresses of Nurses were held at least every four years in the various capitals of the world. Mrs. Fenwick attended each one, which were brilliant functions, marked by Royal and Civic approbation, and by the reception of many honours in recognition of great work magnificently executed. The prestige of British Nurses soared by leaps and bounds, and the last I.C.N. to be held in London in 1937 was a masterpiece of genius and organisation.

Some day, no doubt, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's life will be written in great detail, for such a wealth of achievement must not be lost to history, for the honour of British Nurses. When this is accomplished, details of the wonderful Congresses will appear (they are all safely stored in back numbers of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING); but in this sketchy outline we must be content with merely mentioning them.

In 1904, the International Congress of Nurses was held in Berlin, in 1909 it came to London, and in Cologne in 1912. The proceedings were always enlivened by gracious speeches of welcome, and the presentation of lovely flowers. The stately music of the National Anthem of each country added dignity and fervour, and valuable papers were read and educational discussions took place. Great and abiding friendships were formed between members of the different countries, and the Profession of Nursing received valuable stimulus.

San Francisco had the honour of entertaining the International Council of Nurses in 1915, and in 1920 it was held in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1925, Helsingfors,

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