

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

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No. 2163. Vol. 96.

OCTOBER, 1948.

Price Sevenpence.

EDITORIAL.

"NATION SHALL SPEAK PEACE UNTO NATION."

A bulwark in the progressive course of the International Council of Nurses has always been in the cause of peace, in which the courageous words of the late Founder, delivered at the International Congress of Nurses in Helsingfors, 1925, are vital to-day.

"Moral force must ultimately subdue the lower instincts in the human race, and the Little Sisters of Sympathy, federated in the International Council of Nurses, have a lovely part to play in the inevitable evolution of Peace with Honour.

"In the tangled politics of the world, trained nurses hold a specially privileged position, inasmuch as down through the ages their occupation has been the humanitarian work of the prevention and cure of disease. Wherever in peace or in war we find sickness and suffering, there it is our duty to endeavour to heal and to comfort, be the patient friend or foe."

During the past month, there has been much happy excitement in this country, aroused by the meetings of the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses, at their headquarters in London, when this body, representative of nurses throughout the world, met in preparation for the Congress, which is to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of the International Council of Nurses, to be held in Stockholm, June 12th to 16th, 1949.

Nurses may be justly proud of its progress, although it is difficult to realise the magnitude of the work of this great organisation since its foundation in the year of grace 1899.

The event brings us to refresh our memory of its history during the last 50 years, which we note was founded on the spirit not on the letter of the law—as the Founder expressed at the International Congress of Nurses, held in Buffalo in September, 1901: "In making our Council mechanically perfect, let us remember that the vital force is of the spirit and not of the letter of the law. In a society which would be worldwide, which would include members of every race and creed, we must, while maintaining inviolate certain broad general principles which form our common bond of union, permit, nay foster, individuality in detail, authorising each country to apply these principles in a manner best suited to its own needs.

"In like manner every National Council will do well to encourage and develop the individuality of its members, for only so shall we utilise to the full the correlation of our forces and make our Council a progressive power for good. Diversity of opinion is the very salt of life, and we shall do well to encourage rather than deprecate its expression.

"And here let us remind ourselves that the essential essence of nursing is not merely to afford skilled help to suffering and diseased humanity, but something far higher than that. It is to endeavour to appropriate the spiritual force which is the common heritage of our profession, bequeathed to us by many noble men and women, our predecessors, who have served the sick of all ages in every land; a reserve force upon which so long as we walk worthily we may freely draw, a force potent with grace, so that, in helping to heal the body, those to whom we minister may discern the fineness of motive which inspires our service and may be influenced thereby. In a materialistic age it is a nurse's high privilege to exercise and be a living example of heroic qualities—courage—self-control—self-denial.

The many fruitful schemes created, and the convening of congresses, gave immense impetus to the emancipation of trained nurses. Far reaching and undreamed of opportunity, created by the congress perception, brought nurses in professional fellowship and understanding, in touch with leading personalities in organised nursing throughout the world.

Many thousands of nurses who have been privileged to foregather at most, or some of these great congresses, must look back with delight on their experience of travel in lovely places, of civic welcome and hospitality extended to them, in some of the most famous cities and the most beautiful countries in the world.

Under the progressive Presidency of Miss Gerda Höjer, just elected member of the Swedish Parliament, and the indefatigable energy of the Executive Secretary, Miss Daisy Bridges, R.R.C., it is with great expectations that nurses of many lands are looking forward to the Congress to take place in the lovely city of Stockholm, the Venice of the North, which will mark another milestone in the steady progress of the great work of the International Council of Nurses towards the goal—when all nations shall rejoice in the common good and "nation shall speak peace unto nation." A.S.B.

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