

Re-organization of The Florence Nightingale International Foundation
within
The International Council of Nurses.

In order to understand the present position of the Florence Nightingale International Foundation it is necessary to review the past and particularly to recall the events of recent years.

Past History.

The Florence Nightingale International Foundation was established in 1934 as a permanent memorial to Florence Nightingale. From the first it was intended that this memorial should be international in character and that it should take the form of an endowed Trust for post-graduate nursing education. The International Council of Nurses and the League of Red Cross Societies have always been jointly represented on its governing body, and the Foundation has derived most of its support from its National Committees. These Committees have usually been composed of representatives of the National Nurses' Association and the National Red Cross Society in each country which has agreed to support the objects of the Foundation.

Between 1934 and 1939 approximately one hundred students studied in London under the aegis of the Foundation. Between 1939 and 1945 most of this work was inevitably in abeyance; but later an attempt was made to revive the activities of the Foundation, so that from 1945 to 1949 a certain number of students have been accepted each year for a period of post-graduate study in those countries which could best meet their needs.

Recent History.

In 1946 when the Grand Council of the Florence Nightingale International Foundation met in London a Study Committee was appointed to study the organization and functions of the Foundation and charged with the duty of reporting back to the Grand Council at its next meeting.

The Study Committee appointed Professor H.R. Hamley, Ph.D., M.A., M.Sc. and Dr. Muriel Uprichard, Ph.D., M.A., to conduct the Study, the results of which are contained in the pamphlet entitled "A Study of the Florence Nightingale International Foundation, 1948". The Committee presented an Interim Report to the Grand Council in New York in 1947; and a Final Report together with the completed Study was considered by a Joint Meeting of the Grand Council of the Florence Nightingale International Foundation, and the Board of Directors of the International Council of Nurses, held in London in September 1948. At this meeting the Plan which was incorporated in the Study (Appendix VIII, page 45) and which envisaged that the F.N.I.F. should henceforward function within the I.C.N., was agreed in principle by both groups, subject to the acceptability of the final administrative details.

A Joint Planning Committee was accordingly set up consisting of representatives of the I.C.N. and the F.N.I.F. and this Committee was charged with the working out of these administrative details and with the added proviso that it should present a Report to meetings of the Grand Council F.N.I.F. and the Board of Directors I.C.N. in 1949.

In Stockholm, Sweden, in June 1949, the Joint Planning Committee having completed its work, presented a Report first to the Grand Council of the F.N.I.F., which body accepted it with certain amendments; the amended Report was then considered by the Board of Directors of the I.C.N. which also accepted it and at the same time recommended that certain amendments be made to the I.C.N. Constitution and By-Laws. Finally, the Report was approved for action by the I.C.N. Grand Council.

Accordingly the F.N.I.F. now comes within the I.C.N. as a "legal entity". It retains its own Trust Deed and its own Trust funds. The Trust deed of the F.N.I.F. in which is set out its Objects and its Management will appear as an Appendix to the I.C.N. Constitution.

Organization and Management.

The F.N.I.F. is, as heretofore, to be governed by a Grand Council, but this will in future comprise the persons composing the Board of Directors of the I.C.N. In this way the two organizations will be linked as closely as is possible. The Board of Directors of the I.C.N. (acting as the Grand Council of the F.N.I.F) will meet in separate session to consider the affairs of the Foundation. The Board of Directors are charged with the setting up of a Florence Nightingale International Foundation Council which will consist of not less than seven and not more than nine members, including the chairman, at least five of whom shall be nurses. One member of the Council will be nominated by the League of Red Cross Societies; two are to be appointed on the basis of their qualifications to direct educational activities. The members of this new Council were nominated in Stockholm by the I.C.N. Board of Directors and it is hoped that the first meeting will take place in March 1950. The Council will be empowered to appoint a Director to implement the objectives of the F.N.I.F. in an educational programme.

Activities and Objectives.

As hitherto, therefore, the activities of the Foundation are to be of an educational nature. Its principal objectives will be to promote research, to create a centre of information on educational facilities, to establish and stimulate the award of scholarships and to develop a section of the Library of the International Council of Nurses dedicated specifically to Florence Nightingale. It will, in fact, assume the responsibility for the "long-term" educational activities of the International Council of Nurses, and in so doing will endeavour to benefit not only those countries which are affiliated to the International Council, but also those not yet in membership. National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committees will as hitherto (or so it is earnestly hoped) co-operate in the general scheme of the Foundation by promoting its objects, making its work known to the public and to the nursing profession, and raising funds for its support. Florence Nightingale Memorial Committees are to have representation on the Grand Council of the I.C.N.

Next Steps.

A Joint Meeting of the Committee of Management of the F.N.I.F. and the Headquarters Committee of the I.C.N. will take place in London on November 12th, 1949, after which the Florence Nightingale International Foundation will become the responsibility of the I.C.N. and the I.C.N. will assume the following new title :-
"The International Council of Nurses with which is associated the Florence Nightingale International Foundation".

Conclusion.

It must be remembered, that whereas the I.C.N. is a Federation of National Nurses' Associations, the F.N.I.F. is an endowed Trust for post-graduate nursing education.

In coming within the I.C.N., the F.N.I.F. inherits the protection and strength of an organization which has been prominent in international nursing affairs for the past 50 years. The F.N.I.F. on its part brings with it valuable assets of accomplishment and tradition. This should not provoke a conflict of loyalties; it means, in fact, that two international organizations in the field of nursing and nursing education have united, and such fusion should bring strength and unity of purpose.

In the Report presented by the Executive Secretary of the I.C.N. to the I.C.N. Grand Council meeting in Stockholm, the last two lines were as follows :-

"There is no doubt that the I.C.N. which already holds a unique position in its relationship to the profession, is facing a future of almost unlimited possibilities. With the continued encouragement and support of all our members, I am confident that we shall be able to meet all demands and to accept each new and challenging responsibility." The re-organization of the F.N.I.F. within the I.C.N. provides exactly such a challenge and such a responsibility; and these have been accepted by the I.C.N. on the assumption that both organizations will be willing to merge their interests and their loyalties for the ultimate good of the profession and all whom it serves.