

MISS M. H. WATKINS.

MISS MARY H. WATKINS, who is present at the Congress, is a State registered nurse and midwife, being one of the first nurses registered in Cape Colony, which country enjoys the distinction of being the only one which has, so far, passed a Bill for the legal registration of nurses. The registration of trained nurses is carried out by the Colonial Medical Council. Miss Watkins holds the certificate of the Kimberley Hospital, which she entered for training in 1883. The Superintendent of Nursing was then Sister Henrietta, who has done so much for the nursing profession in Cape Colony, and for whom Miss Watkins has a warm admiration and regard. Speaking of her first meeting with Sister Henrietta, she says: "Some years ago, I was at Southampton, saying good-bye to a brother on board one of the mail steamers bound for South Africa. A Sister of Mercy was sitting on the deck with whose face

I was so struck that I found out her name. I little thought then that it would be my happy lot some years later to be trained by that Sister in the Kimberley Hospital, and to work with her for so many years, but so it was." The Kimberley Hospital, at the time Miss Watkins trained, afforded plenty of experience. There were then no Compound Hospitals for natives, and, consequently, all accidents and diseases of all kinds were sent there. As there was no

medical school attached to the Hospital, much of the work done by students fell to the share of the nurses. Sister Henrietta had the faculty of attracting earnest workers, and, under her control, a spirit of thoroughness pervaded the work of the Institution, and was carried into all the details of nursing.

During the time that Miss Watkins was training, much work was accomplished for the improvement of the standard of nursing, and in 1892 the Act for the registration of nurses in Cape Colony was passed—to a great extent as a result of Sister Henrietta's efforts—and over twenty of her nurses immediately registered.

When Sister Henrietta left Kimberley Hospital to take up work at St. Michael's Home, Miss Watkins went with her, and for the last four years has been head of the District Nursing Department, in which capacity she has been responsible for the training of midwifery pupils in connection with the Home.



MISS M. H. WATKINS.
A State Registered Nurse.

As one of the pioneers in nursing matters in South Africa, Miss Watkins has carefully studied the whole nursing question. Her presence at the International Nursing Conference is, therefore, most opportune, and it will be most interesting to hear from her her opinion of the result of legal registration of nurses, as it has now been in force in Cape Colony sufficiently long to allow those who have observed its working to form an adequate opinion of its effect.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)