

of fellowship, which shall bind together for mutual well-being the peoples of the world. Then the insignia of brute force will be obsolete, and united humanity will march forward to victory under the banner of Knowledge.

There is nothing heroic or commendable in the isolation of nations. Such isolation is necessarily injurious to the national growth and its intellectual expansion, and can only tend to the advantage of privileged classes of persons, maintained in idleness by the ignorance of what are termed in Europe "the lower orders."

Great Britain is notorious for its insular prejudices, but free intercourse with its progressive self-governing colonies and the Americas may prove its salvation. We workers are beginning to voice the necessity for space and light, to claim the right to live and move, and have our being; and, moreover, to realise that the round world and all that dwell therein are but infinitesimal atoms in the universal whole.

#### THE TONGUES OF MEN AND ANGELS.

It was in 1893 that I had the privilege of attending in Chicago the meeting of the International Council of Women, and of hearing the International Idea sympathetically and beautifully explained by Mrs. May Wright-Sewall. I was a charmed listener and grasped the meaning of her inspired oration, the text of which is to be found in the preamble of the Constitution of the Council: "Sincerely believing that the best good of humanity will be advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, we hereby bind ourselves together in a confederation of workers committed to the overthrow of all forms of ignorance and injustice, and to the application of the golden rule to society, law, and custom." Thus is the seed sown! What more natural than that trained nurses—a mighty army of workers ever increasing in every civilized land—should bind themselves together in a confederation for the application of the Golden Rule?

Here in our exclusive little islands, governed by hereditary legislators, and where the idolatry of the Golden Calf scarifies poverty with a relentless knout—what chance of professional self government can there be for the unenfranchised woman worker? What wonder then that British nurses under existing conditions should turn with hope to their colleagues in other and more favoured lands, and invite the help and strength to be gained from international union.

The idea of an International Association of Nurses appealed strongly to me. It proved to be acceptable to others, and the opportune moment for suggesting its formation arrived when the International Council of Women held its quinquennial meeting in London in 1899, and when

Mrs. Sewall—the incarnation of the International Idea—was in our midst. Representative nurses from America and other countries were also in London, and at the Matrons' Council Conference, held during the Congress Week, I had a unique opportunity of suggesting a scheme for the formation of an International Council of Nurses in the following words:—

"I desire to bring before this meeting a question which I believe to be of international interest and importance. The nursing profession, above all things at present, requires organization; nurses, above all other things at present, require to be united. The value of their work to the sick is acknowledged at the present day by the Government of this and of all other civilized countries, but it depends upon nurses individually and collectively to make their work of the utmost possible usefulness to the sick, and this can only be accomplished if their education is based on such broad lines that the term "a trained nurse." shall be equivalent to that of a person who has received such an efficient training, and has proved to be also so trustworthy that the responsible duties which she must undertake, may be performed to the utmost benefit of those entrusted to her charge. To secure these results two things are essential; that there should be recognised systems of nursing education, and of control over the nursing profession. The experience of the past has proved that these results can never be obtained by any profession unless it is united in its demands for the necessary reform, and by union alone can the necessary strength be obtained. This union has been commenced in this country and in the United States. It remains for the nurses of other lands to follow our example, and unite amongst themselves; but I venture to contend that the work of nursing is one of humanity all the world over, and it is one, therefore, which appeals to women of every land without distinction of class, or degree, or nationality. If the poet's dream of the brotherhood of man is ever to be fulfilled, surely a sisterhood of nurses is an international idea, and one in which the women of all nations, therefore, could be asked and expected to join. The work in which nurses are engaged in other countries is precisely the same as that in our own. The principles of organization would be the same in every country, the need for nursing progress is the same for every people, and my suggestion briefly is, therefore, that we should here, to-day, inaugurate an International Council of Nurses, composed of representatives of the nursing councils of every country, a body which shall, in the first place, help to build up nurses' councils in those countries which do not now possess any nursing organization at all, which shall afford to the nurses of all

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