

### International News.

Miss L. Dock would like it made widely known that it is proposed to hold an interim meeting of the International Council of Nurses at Paris in June, 1907, somewhat on the lines of the Nursing Conference at Buffalo in 1901, so that all interested can attend the meetings. Miss Dock seems to think we might as well be looking forward to this interesting event, as it is well to put our pennies by towards delegates expenses, and as it is hoped a conference at so convenient a centre will be largely attended by European nurses, we must all begin to rub up our French, although English is the official language of the International Council.

Our ambition should be to be ready to take rank with our American and German sisters at that date, that the Provisional Committee shall have accomplished its work of affiliating self-governing societies of nurses, the co-operative membership of which will amount to 5,000, so that we may become qualified to adopt a constitution and thus become a really representative National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland. We are now upwards of 3,000 strong, and with energy and organisation should easily accomplish this aim in eighteen months' time. The American Federation of Nurses is rolling up membership towards 10,000.

To accomplish this, let us realise that every Matron and nurse who becomes a member of any of the Leagues and Societies of nurses who are affiliated together through the Provisional Committee of the National Council of Nurses, adds one more to the number, and thus does her part in building up a representative and reliable National Council.

Also every new League which is formed, and which seeks affiliation with those already organised, adds greatly to the representative character of the Council.

A National Council, to be representative, must be founded on *individual membership* of the rank and file of certificated nurses. Leagues must be composed of them, and the vote of each one must be of *equal value* in the composition of the whole.

Each League elects its own delegates on to the National Council Committee, and thus each member exercises the *power of the vote* and is self-governing.

A thoroughly constitutional form of government, and the only one worth having.

We turn to a letter from a nurse friend in

Paris with hope, although its tone is somewhat pessimistic:—

"To-day is Christmas Day, and it feels very dreary here after England. Nursing matters are in a very sad condition here, and are likely to remain so. I recently visited the 'Hôpital des Enfants-Malades,' one of the largest in Paris, containing 800 beds. I cannot describe to you what it is like. The heat is dreadful and all the windows are kept closed. As the nurses in so many Paris hospitals are quite of the lowest class, the general tone is more than doubtful. I am much afraid that there are not many people who will take interest in the Nursing Conference."

All very depressing no doubt, but where is the true husbandman who does not enjoy turning the sod of virgin soil? Once, and not so very long ago, the *morale* in our English hospitals was of the lowest. We could a tale unfold of its terrible condition less than 30 years ago, and in the sixties the ignorance of hospital managers, doctors, and nurses was incredible. Look on that picture and on this—the condition of our hospitals *now*, and let us realise that it is the result of right-doing and of common sense—with a dash of sentiment thrown in. Our French sisters are just the best business women that ever were. Let us meet together, and show them how our nursing garden grows, and when they see its fruitfulness, the beauty and sweetness thereof, do you suppose that these wise women are going to be content with waste places? No, they will cultivate the land, and we feel sure that in time they will reap a rich harvest.

If Florence Nightingale had feared chaos at Scutari, where should we look for the inspiration of scientific nursing?

Looking "Around My Pekin Garden," Mrs. Archibald Little philosophises over the barbarous condition of China, and writes:— "He who in residence there does not gain a reflected light upon how things used to be in Merry England loses one of the most practical advantages of foreign residence. It is but by looking back into the past one can tell how changes are likely to work out in the future, and the best illustrations of our own past are other countries passing through the same stages of civilisation. It is a little humiliating sometimes to most people to think that once upon a time they too were babies, dangled! But so it was, and nations have to pass through their baby stages."

Nursing also must have its baby stages.

Miss Isla Stewart has received many congratulations upon her inspiring paper, "The

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)