

Irish Nursing News.

On Friday evening, 10th inst., a most successful gathering of the members of the Ulster Branch of the Irish Nurses' Association was held in the Deaf and Dumb Mission Hall, College Square, Belfast, to hear an address given by Mrs. Kildare Treacy, President of the Irish Nurses' Association, on the State Registration of Trained Nurses. Lady Hermione Blackwood, who was in the chair, gave a hearty welcome to Mrs. Kildare Treacy on behalf of the members, and said how grateful they felt to her for coming all the way from Dublin to address them, and also how pleased they all were to see Miss Lamont, Superintendent of the Irish Branch of Queen's Nurses, amongst them.

The following is the gist of Mrs. Kildare Treacy's most able address:

MADAM PRESIDENT AND LADIES,

I must say, first of all, that it gives me very much pleasure to find myself amongst you, a visitor to this great city of Belfast, which has been, for long, in the very front rank with regard to Education, Culture, and the Progress of Women. One is, therefore, quite prepared to find you all keenly alive to the many questions arising in these days, respecting the education and well-being of Nurses also.

When your President did me the honour of inviting me to meet you here, I may confess that I felt very much alarmed at the idea of addressing you, and that Lady Hermione had asked the impossible of me! But, with my Irishwoman's privilege of a second thought, I began to realise that I should like to come very much, and perhaps meet again some of those kind friends who were at that never-to-be-forgotten, delightful Conference in fascinating Paris! Also that I might congratulate you upon being now firmly associated with this charming club-room as a centre of your own, and that you would, perhaps, allow me to have a little informal talk with you upon matters which are of real importance to us nurses, that is to say, upon Organisation, and, what I regard as its certain result, Registration, or, as it really would be, protection by the State.

This movement of organisation is a modern growth, especially so far as nurses are concerned. I am old enough to remember the dawn of Trained Nursing in Ireland. I have been intimately associated with its history for more than 20 years, and I know that until the Matrons and Nurses of the different hospitals began to associate with each other, there was no effort at organisation, or combination. We all remained busily occupied, within the walls of our own Institutions, endeavouring to organise them, as perfectly as possible, completely absorbed in our own rules and duties, and hardly aware of who we all were! For this reason, mainly, there was no real progress for Nurses as a body, because there were no

opportunities for meeting each other, or for friendly comparison and emulation, which are such aids to combined forward movement in any profession, and especially in that of Nurses.

This state of things continued, in Dublin at all events, until the visit of her late Majesty Queen Victoria, to Ireland, in 1900, when it occurred to some of us that we should like to offer an Address to her Majesty.

I happened to be one of those who made a hospital to hospital visitation on that occasion. There were about 30 Matrons to see, and a great many unattached Private Nurses as well, and not nearly all, even of the Matrons, were known to me! But I shall never forget the spontaneous pleasure with which all welcomed the project, and during the meetings that followed, in the arrangements for the Address, one felt how pleasant it would be, if we could keep permanently in touch with one another. How much we should all gain by friendly communion over our own affairs.

The same idea seemed to occur to all; and we found that the nurses were quite eager to further any project which would aid us in creating and supporting sympathetic association. Consequently before many weeks had passed we found ourselves established in a couple of rooms in a central position, with a Secretary (one of the first necessities, by the way), and having as our first President Miss Huxley, who is well known to many here, and to whom we in Dublin are much indebted, for able guidance in this, and other matters. We now have a wide membership. The Association rooms are a centre for Lectures upon professional and other subjects, and for Meetings, and the discussion of any project.

Within the Irish Nurses we have the Matrons' Association, which is invaluable to both; for instance, when any matter touching Nursing interests is brought under notice, the Matrons can act, at once, in a way impossible for the Nurses, who are fully occupied elsewhere, and such action is always in the interests of Matrons and Nurses, equally.

This is a rough and ready sketch of the organisation of our Irish Nurses' Association, and brings me to its result, which is, as I have said already, State Registration.

As any body of people becomes numerous, it appears to be a vital necessity that the members should associate or bind themselves together, for mutual help, or, it may be for self-government and defence. This is particularly so with Nurses, who, from the nature of their occupation, have little time to give to the care of their own affairs. Perhaps it is for this reason that outsiders seem to be so very anxious to undertake the management of us, and of our affairs; without even "by your leave," or consulting any member of the Nursing Profession. Is it that they consider Nurses and their affairs fascinating? Or, is it that they consider Nurses simple and careless, and withal so occupied, in doing the duties that lie in their hands, that they will never notice if the care and management of their affairs, be taken out of their hands. Now I want you to

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