

In the following sub-editorial, headed "Making Progress," the *Nursing World* congratulates American Nurses on the proposed National Organisation, and welcomes the proposed Union of the Nurses trained in the United States and Canada.

"The recent meeting of representative Nurses at Manhattan Beach Hotel, a report of which we published in last issue, gives promise of large results. The movement of a national association of graduate Nurses has, through this meeting, taken an additional impetus, and there is every reason to believe that the day of complete organisation is near at hand.

The matter now rests largely with the Alumnæ and graduate Nurses' associations throughout America. It is for them to respond to the plans and suggestions made at this meeting, to discuss ways and means for promoting the interests of the movement, to engage the attentions of Nurses in sister cities and show them the necessity of local organisation, and to be ready to advise and suggest in future deliberations.

One pleasing feature of the contemplated organisation is that it is to be continent-wide, as of course it should be. It is gratifying to know that in one sphere of human activity at least, nationality and political creeds are buried out of sight. We cordially welcome our Canadian friends to a union embracing the entire American continent, which has for its aim the advancement of a profession which challenges the attention and admiration of the civilised world."

SISTER ANNIE WARD, of the Melbourne Hospital, writes as follows to *The Age* on the agitating subject of the eight hours day, and no doubt numbers of devoted English Nurses will sympathise with her views:—

"SIR,—Some correspondents who have written to you on this subject, calling themselves 'Nurse' and 'Scalpel' have charged the Melbourne Hospital Nurses with not having sufficient spirit to give their views, and with being 'sat upon.' I would not trouble to answer anonymous writers who talk so large, but to whose letters they dare not append their names, were it not that the subject of eight hours for Nurses is being generally discussed in the community, and that there is a general impression abroad that the Hospital Nurse is dissatisfied with her lot. As a Nurse of very many years' experience, I would say that this impression is quite incorrect. The true Nurse's ideal is Nursing, and for her profession and the success of her case and eventual recovery of her patient she will sacrifice time, money, everything. Supposing a Nurse were required to work only eight hours a day, that would mean that for sixteen hours she must abandon her patients to other hands, and what sixteen hours' time can produce in a patient, only those who are closely connected with the medical profession can properly estimate. I do not like to speak about myself, but in this connection personal experience is the best argument, and I can say that many a time I have stayed on beyond my time, at my own desire, at a critical period.

I believe the new law would make the eight hours compulsory. If it were compulsory for me to leave my duties at the chime of a clock, I would give up Nurs-

ing at once. Nursing cannot, like an unfinished boot or a factory garment, be taken up and put down to order. The subtle influences that go on in the human frame and make for life or death in the patient, are not bound by the Factories Act, 1896, or any other statute of Parliament. Another thing I would like to say, that the present arrangements, brought into existence lately by our Matron, fully and fairly meet our requirements for recreation and rest. Each Nurse now has the privilege of one day's holiday a week, and can also get off the night before, totalling a spell of thirty-two hours; and in addition we have three hours and a-half per day for meals and recreation, and three weeks' holiday a year. Also a system of paying pupil Nurses is to be instituted, which will further relieve us in many cases, without further expense to the Hospital. Our work, therefore, totals ten and a-half hours for six days a week, and sixty-three hours is not too severe a strain. I, at any rate, do not find it so.

When one considers how two very reasonable proposals to help us, viz., by the adoption of Mr. Godfrey's proposal for a tennis court, and of Dr. Springthorpe's suggestion for a lift at the Hospital have fallen to the ground, I am rather surprised at the unusual interest, both in and out of Parliament, taken in the Melbourne Hospital Nurses. If our sympathisers would show a little self-denial in the direction indicated, we might find less sentimental public vapouring and fewer letters on behalf of "our noble cause" written to the papers. These good people might then learn to treat the private Nurses who come to their households with more consideration, and give them reasonable hours of work and fair treatment. If they did their own duties well they would not make such outcry about reforming large public Institutions, which do better without their attentions. I have reason to write thus, as I know that one gentleman who is loudest in urging the eight hours' system for public Nurses, overworked in a shameful manner one private Nurse, who bravely stuck to her duties days and nights consecutively to her honour and to his disgrace. If there is any abuse in the Melbourne Hospital, let your correspondents come into the open and attack it; but for us who are happy and contented with our hours and our lot, we only ask to be allowed to do our duties as we will and to be let alone."

THE *Magnet* is responsible for the statement that "Nurses of the most novel type are employed in Siam. These are elephants, which the Siamese women entrust with their children, and it is said they get quite attached to their little charges, and have never been known to betray their trust."

An appreciative Mayor recently spoke in flattering terms of the services of a district Nurse, "whose visits must be like angels' visits, notwithstanding that they had been so many, and angels' visits were said to be few and far between." This gallant Mayor appeared to think that the Nurse was superior even to the angel, in that her attendance was so regular.

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