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Editorial.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN.

Those of us who can remember the isolation both of individuals and of training-schools twenty years ago find in the keen interest exhibited by nurses in the forthcoming International Congress of Women at Berlin a striking instance of the benefit of professional journals. In no other way could either the knowledge have been imparted, or the interest aroused, which will make the presence of nurses from many different countries so marked a feature of the Berlin Congress. Years ago such a Congress would have taken place without their having heard of it, much less would the thought of attending it have entered into their minds. But the *BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING*, the *American Journal of Nursing*, and the *Australian Nurses' Journals* have given prominence to the interest of the Berlin gathering, and the seed thus sown has borne fruit. From Great Britain and the United States goodly contingents of nurses are to be in Berlin during the Congress week, while from Australia and elsewhere individual members of our profession will be present to confer with their colleagues. This is no small a result to have achieved; for nurses are neither a well-paid nor a leisured section of the community, and the fact that they take so great an interest in international organisation as to be willing to spend not only a considerable amount of money but also a portion of their brief annual leave in its furtherance, proves that the cause is one which they have sincerely at heart. The benefit of international conference as regards nursing matters, for which opportunity is provided in the Congress programme, is undoubted. The principles underlying the practice of nursing are the same all the world over, the difficulties with which its organisation is confronted are the same also, and unquestionably it will be effected on the best lines and with

greater uniformity than would otherwise be attainable if at the present time leading members of our profession in all lands take counsel together as to the curriculum of nursing education desirable, and the best methods of obtaining legislation having for its object the recognition of such a standard by State enactment.

Nor must we overlook the benefit accruing to the profession at large from that greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose which the International Council of Nurses which will hold its first Quinquennial Meeting in Berlin desires to promote.

"We nurses of all nations, sincerely believing that the best good of our Profession will be advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose, do hereby," says its Constitution, "bind ourselves in a confederation of workers to further the efficient care of the sick, and the honour and interests of the Nursing Profession."

Surely such an object may well prove an inspiration to nurses of all creeds and colours, for its realisation would enable them to stand before the world as members of an honourable and dignified calling, whereas, at present, our unfortunate want of unity is our chief source of weakness. That the desire of the International Council of Nurses for "greater unity of thought, sympathy, and purpose" may be furthered by its deliberations at its forthcoming meeting is the earnest wish of all its members, and we do not doubt will attain to some degree of fulfilment.

The Council, which is just five years old, already numbers amongst its members representative nurses in the United Kingdom, in the United States of America, in Germany, Holland, and Italy, in India, in the Dominion of Canada, in the Commonwealth of Australia, in New Zealand, and Tasmania. It is much that in all these countries the International Idea should have taken root. In due season we shall see the fruition of the present organisation.

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