

A Chat with the Secretary of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association.

Year by year as the officials of the various Societies of Nurses in other lands visit this country we are afforded an interesting opportunity of obtaining information as to the latest developments in nursing organisation in various parts of the world. Until comparatively recently if a nurse from a foreign country or one of our colonies visited Great Britain she had no facilities for exchanging ideas or of getting into personal touch with her colleagues. Now this is all changed. The professional journals of the various nursing associations have made us acquainted with their work and with the personality of the prominent members of the nursing profession in each country. Consequently when we meet, we are in touch with one another's aims and aspirations, and we readily turn to the discussion of questions which are of mutual interest.

The presence in this country of Miss M. E. Garran, the Secretary of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, affords a welcome opportunity of obtaining first-hand information as to the progress of this Society. Miss Garran is keenly interested in educational matters as well as in organisation, and the Association with which she is connected is evidently prospering. The aim of the Association is to gather within its ranks, by means of branches in each State, all the trained nurses of Federated Australia. The good work accomplished by the Association in New South Wales, and by the sister society in Victoria, which has established a basis of reciprocity with the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, is well known. Now the work is extending, and Queensland has already its own Branch, which is practically self-governing, while paying a certain percentage of its subscriptions to the parent society in consideration of the advantages received from affiliation. Representation of the Branch in the management of the Association is obtained by giving *ex-officio* seats on the Council of the latter to its officers. South Australia is also considering the formation of a Branch, and there is every hope that eventually the nurses throughout the continent will be federated in a great Association.

During the short time which has elapsed since its inauguration, the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association has done wonders in systematising the standard of nursing education in New South Wales. As our readers are aware, it maintains a voluntary Register of the nurses trained in the Colony, a system which will no doubt culminate in the registration of nurses by the State, and the subject is already receiving the attention of the Council of the Association.

Meanwhile, however, Miss Garran explains, every hospital which acts as a training-school, if its nurses are to be eligible for Registration, is required to furnish the Association at regular intervals with information as to the subjects included in its curriculum, the number of lectures given, the names of the pupils attending these lectures, with the number of attendances, as a pupil must have made four-fifths of the possible attendances for a course to count to her credit. By this means, any falling-off in the system adopted, or any neglect of a special subject, is at once observed, attention is drawn to it by the Association, and the point rectified. The Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, and the Sydney Hospital, the leading training-schools in the Colony, set an excellent example by at once conforming to these regulations, thus stimulating the smaller schools to do likewise.

Another means by which the nursing standard is maintained is by the Government requirement that any nurse appointed to a Matron's position in the State must be on the Register of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association. As the hospitals are subsidised by Government to the extent of cent per cent for the voluntary support they receive, it is possible to enforce this rule. It will be seen, therefore, that along voluntary lines splendid progress has been made by this vigorous Association.

In addition to Queensland, South Australia is also considering the formation of a Branch. It thus only remains for Western Australia and the Northern Territory to enter into affiliation with the Association for the whole of this great continent to be covered with a network of nursing organisation.

Miss Garran speaks warmly of the valuable work in the cause of nursing done by Miss McGahey, President of the International Council of Nurses, in Australia. Miss McGahey will always, she says, be a recognised force in the nursing world there, and her opinion on nursing matters counts for much. Now that Miss McGahey no longer holds the arduous position of Matron of the Prince Alfred Hospital, we hope that nursing organisation may make greater demands than ever upon her time. We know already how keen is her interest in it.

Miss Garran speaks of her hard and willing service in connection with the foundation of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association. We hope it will be fruitful in result, and that one of the results will be that, as President of the International Council of Nurses, she may have the happiness of seeing the National Council of Nurses of Australia affiliated to the International. We know both from the Journal of the Australasian Association and from Miss Garran herself that considerable interest is already aroused in the question.

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