

profession, and that it would increase their sense of fellowship and help them to realise that every nurse, no matter to which branch of the profession she belonged, could do something to further the interests of her calling.

MISS HUXLEY'S ADDRESS.

Miss Huxley, who was very cordially received, in the course of an interesting address, said:—

Madam, Ladies,—Our President, Miss Hampson, desires me to congratulate you on the step you are taking to-day in forming a branch of the I.N.A., and Miss Hampson hopes the members will avail themselves of the opportunities afforded them of comparing, expanding, and expressing their opinions, so that their united opinions may have just influence in framing public opinion and lead to a right understanding of the subjects which concern the standard, the education, the responsibilities, and the privileges of their profession. Miss Hampson hopes any members of the Ulster branch visiting Dublin will make themselves known to our secretary and use our reading-room and attend our meetings.

I will begin my remarks by quoting the inspiring words of Mrs. May Wright Sewell addressed to the International Council of Women held in London in 1899, she said:—

"There was a time when the fragments of the world stood apart, isolated, separated each from all the rest by ranges of mountains, by stretches of desert, by boundless seas, by unbridged rivers, over and through which no pathway had been made. The skill, the ingenuity, the enterprise, the invention, and the industry of man have bridged all the chasms which once separated the fragments of the world, and now by tunnel, by bridge, by railway, by trans-oceanic ship, by electric cable, all of the geographical fragments have been brought together into a physical unity. To what end should the several countries of the world be joined if not to the sole end that their physical union should make the spiritual union of their people possible? It is the spiritual union of the peoples of the world which is at the heart of what we have come to call the Council idea. It is for the spiritual unity of all the nations of the earth that the International Council stands."

Now the Nurses' Societies forming the International Council of Nurses are, through their National Councils of Women, incorporated with the International Council of Women. The Constitution of the International Council of Nurses says:—

"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 bind ourselves in a confederation of workers to further the efficient care of the sick, and the honour and interests of the nursing profession."

The Irish Nurses' Association is affiliated with the International Council of Nurses, and I congratulate you on the inauguration of the Ulster Branch of the Association with an object that has proved an inspiration to nurses of all creeds and colours, enabling them to stand before the world as members of an honourable and dignified calling, with principles frankly Christian and appealing powerfully to

all that is noblest and best in the human race. One of the most difficult things in the world is to get women to take united action. Men have learnt the lesson long since. It is the breath of their public school, and later of university, life. Those who enter commercial life learn its paramount importance from an industrial standpoint, and the artisan classes have now learnt that the only method of making their views and influence felt is by means of organisation through their trades unions. Individual voices may be raised in ineffective protest, they are drowned in the noise of the world. The voice of a great mass meeting, or of a trade union is listened to with respect by the employers of labour. The day of the individual has gone past, and combination and co-operation are essential to success.

What evidence have we that the lack of unity in our profession has been evil? Take two recent examples. First, the inadequate and harmful rules for nurses drafted by the Local Government Board, who ignored, or were badly informed of, the welfare and best interests of nurses. The Local Government Board's Qualified Nurse with her two year's training is qualified to work in Union Infirmaries only, she is not qualified to work in either the Naval or Military Services, and however suitable she may be by nature to fill the highest positions, her initial training proves a barrier, and it is almost impossible for her to rise in the profession by ordinarily accepted methods; on the other hand, the title "Qualified Nurse" is both misleading and confusing to the general public. When the L.G.B. started this second-class nurse there was no central authority on nursing matters to whom they could apply for information. Can we blame them for starting a class of nurses who are not fully trained and yet can lay claim to be nurses qualified to attend on sick people. Secondly, the injustice to Irish-trained midwives in the Midwives' Act. It is true the training in your Maternity Hospital, the Rotunda, Coombe and Holles Street Maternity Hospitals is now recognised, but there is not an examining centre in Ireland, and midwifery pupils are compelled to go to England for examinations. Why is this? Simply because midwives have omitted to band themselves together, and do not realise the importance of organisation, of self-government, or of unity; they have not awakened to the duty of nurses to understand and manage their own affairs, and they certainly had not realised the benefits to be derived from mutual intercourse, had it been otherwise they could have demanded an examination to be held in Ireland, and I venture to say such an arrangement would be a saving to them of both time and money.\*

\* The Midwives' Act only applies to England and Wales, not to Scotland and Ireland, but had Irish Midwives been organised they could have brought pressure to bear so that the Act might have been extended to Ireland. In regard to the Nurses' Registration Bill, Irish nurses are asking that it shall be applied to them, and the fact that all the leading Matrons, backed by the Irish Nurses' Association, support it, has given confidence to Irish legislators, and been of material assistance to those who are working for this legislation in England.—Ed.

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