

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NURSES.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7th.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

(Continued.)

THE SOCIAL WORK OF NURSES.

Sister Agnes Karll presiding.

SOCIAL WORK BY COLOURED NURSES.

Mrs. Rosa L. Williams, whose most interesting paper we hope shortly to print fully, said that she brought greetings from the National Association of Coloured Graduate Nurses of North America, and presented a report of the social work done by the nurses of the Association. She said that the phrase social work now so much employed, did not represent a new thing. The Christian negro woman had always been much concerned with the condition of her neighbour. History recorded but few of the sacrifices made by women of her race; these had neither education, money nor influence, but, with their unlimited faith in the power of prayer they gave unreservedly all they possessed to help to make things possible for the uplift of the younger members of their race.

But the coloured races realized that trained negro women were now needed to cope with existing conditions among their people, and with this realization in mind the body of coloured graduate nurses met in New York in 1908 to adopt some plan by which they might, with united strength, help to alleviate the ignorance and suffering among their people. They had high ideals for they could see the needs of their people as no one else could. The expression of interest in the work of the National Association of Coloured Graduate Nurses, which was still in its infancy, on the part of the International Council of Nurses was an inspiration to them, and they looked forward with great hope to that which in the beginning seemed impossible.

Mrs. Williams then outlined the social work being done by the Association in the Southern towns including visiting nursing, preventive work,

work for the reduction of infant mortality and the prevention of blindness, deafness, &c., the relief of destitution, the teaching of hygiene, the institution of a day camp for tubercular patients, and work in schools and orphan asylums.

THE CARE OF SYPHILITIC CHILDREN.

Sister Emma Köberlin said that she would like to describe a most important and recent branch of social work—that of the care of children with hereditary disease. An institution with this object was opened three years ago at Friedrichshagen, near Berlin, by noble-minded doctors and philanthropic friends, on the lines of one inaugurated in 1900 by Professor Welander in Stockholm. The Home, pleasantly situated in a large garden by the Mürzel lake was so far the only one of its

kind in Germany. For the three years of its existence it was possible to present a most hopeful report of this young institution.

Children sypilitically affected were especially to be pitied as the Biblical saying that the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children proved to be true. Sister Köberlin said that she was always filled with great joy and satisfaction when, looking on the little group which played happily about in the garden, she realized that these were all saved human lives, for, without suitable treatment and careful nursing, these children, if they survived, would grow up into

bodily and spiritual cripples, and become a burden to the State and its citizens, adding greatly to the number of the spiritually incompetent and the criminal classes. Also there was constant danger of the infection of healthy children by these diseased children if they associated with them. She therefore appealed for help in this great social work to the representatives of the various countries present. Sin was, said Sister Köberlin, powerful, and these deplorable children everywhere. Parishes and the State would, she thought, soon be convinced that it was to their own interest to take up this branch of social work.

Thank God that medical science was so advanced that it was possible to rear, out of these miserable helpless creatures, perfectly healthy and useful citizens. Up to the present such children had been taken to hospital when their condition was noticed,



MISS J. C. CHILD, DELEGATE FROM SOUTH AFRICA.
A Souvenir of the Cologne Badges.

previous page

next page