

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,355

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1914.

Vol. LII.

EDITORIAL.

WAKE UP, SOUTH AFRICA.

Throughout the world the trained nurses in many countries have during the last quarter of a century united themselves in societies and associations for professional purposes, realizing that union is strength, and that only by association with one another, and with their colleagues in other countries, can they become either articulate or forceful.

Great Britain and Ireland, the United States of America, Germany, Holland, Finland, Denmark, Canada, India and New Zealand have all their National Councils of Nurses, linked together in the International Council of Nurses, which has been fruitful in establishing friendly relations between the nurses of the world, and in the promotion of objects in which all have a common interest. Other countries, *i.e.*, the Commonwealth of Australia, Norway, Sweden, Nova Scotia, Cuba, China and others, have all strong organizations of nurses, a notable exception being the Union of South Africa, which is the more remarkable, as the registration of trained nurses was first enforced in Cape Colony. Yet South Africa has no association of nurses which can unite with others in the International Council of Nurses, and it is represented only by an Hon. Vice President, Miss J. C. Child, who is appointed to represent it until a National Council of Nurses is formed.

Miss Child urges the formation of a Trained Nurses' Association, in the South African Press, "to bring about a better status of nursing in South Africa." She suggests that the Matrons of the principal training schools should take the initiative; and this would be following the procedure adopted both in the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, where, in each instance, the Matrons first formed their own organiza-

tion, and then, through its means, helped the nurses to unite.

The South African Nursing Record supports Miss Child's proposal, and states that, from the tone of the letters it has received, it is convinced that if some definite scheme were formulated, and put into action, the idea of the organization of the profession would soon become very popular, and, while it realizes that the great distances in South Africa are a difficulty, it instances Australia, where there is a powerful Nurses' organization, and where distances are even greater than in South Africa.

Our contemporary draws attention to the disadvantages of lack of organization by instancing the statement that the American, Canadian, Australasian, and Indian Nurses Associations are uniting to support the Nurses' International Memorial to Florence Nightingale to take the form of a Chair of Nursing in London, for which contributions will be made at the San Francisco Conference, and says "The notable absentee is South Africa. Surely this is a disgrace, that South Africa's name should not figure on the list in such a splendid idea. That in itself were reason enough for us to organize, and prove to the world that we are not going to be left in the attempt to prove that the interests of nursing are as keenly protected in this Colony as in any other."

The other important point which it instances is that South Africa has no representative at the Nurses' Congresses held in various parts of the world. "We have," it says, "the feeling of being out in the cold at present."

Surely it is time for South African nurses to wake up and to adopt a form of organization through which they can enter into affiliation with the nurses of the world at the forthcoming meeting of the International Council of Nurses at San Francisco. We very much hope South Africa will, with Australasia, be welcomed into it next year.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)