

After tea all present adjourned to the Board Room of the Registered Nurses' Society, where Mrs. Bedford Fenwick welcomed the South African guests of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland on its behalf, saying that she hoped to put before them its point of view on nursing matters of current interest, and to hear theirs.

She spoke of the pleasure of meeting members of the South African Trained Nurses' Association in London, where she had the honour to propose the foundation of the International Council of Nurses, with which it is in affiliation, in 1899, in a resolution seconded by the late Miss Isla Stewart, and supported by Miss M. Huxley and by Mrs. May Wright Sewall, of the United States, Founder and President of the International Council of Women.

Trained nurses were then getting so influential in connection with the health of the whole world, that she realised they required a world-wide federation of nurses to give free expression to their professional ideals and to unite and press forward high standards of nursing education and health. Since that date the International Council of Nurses, founded on the rock of professional solidarity and free from outside control, had made marvellous progress—following the precedent of other professions.

The first organisation of nurses in this country, and, indeed, in the world, was the British Nurses' Association, which she had initiated in 1887, and in which nurses had associated themselves with members of the medical profession, under the Presidency of the late Princess Christian, and to which her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, granted the prefix Royal and a Royal Charter. Its objective was to obtain the Registration of Nurses, and the organisation of Nursing Education under the authority of the State.

During the "thirty years' war" which preceded the passing of the Nurses' Registration Acts in 1919, an extraordinary amount of work, self-sacrifice, splendid ability, and not less than £30,000 in hard cash, were expended in educating the public in the necessity for legislation.

South Africa was the first country to obtain State Registration of Nurses a reform promoted by the very wise Sister Henrietta of Kimberley, and Americans had gone on ahead, probably because men in the United States appreciated, and made use of the brains of women. Perhaps for that reason some of the women of Canada with the finest brains—women such as the late Mrs. Hampton Robb and Miss M. A. Nutting—trained, and developed their great careers, in the United States. General education in America was far in advance of that in this country, but of the practical training of nurses, from her personal observation there, and in various other countries, where she had studied nursing education, she thought there was nothing to surpass the system in this fine, reactionary, splendid, tiresome, wonderful old country (laughter).

The International Council of Nurses had now formed a golden ring of fellowship of nurses round the world in which were included the National Associations of Great Britain and Ireland, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Holland, India, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, and the United States of America. The Council had drafted a very wide Constitution based on the graduate nurses vote, and embracing all self-governing societies of nurses. This was the only method of obtaining a reasoned self expression, and should the attempt to undermine it succeed, it would be absolutely fatal to all true progress and freedom in international relations in the nursing world.

Mrs. Fenwick explained the difference in the ethical standards of the self-governing and free nurses' organisations in Great Britain and the College of Nursing, Ltd., and hoped the South African Trained Nurses' Association would support professional solidarity in their own National and

International Councils. "Co-operation with all but fusion with none," must continue to be our policy.

Miss Joubert, on being invited by Mrs. Fenwick to speak on organisation in South Africa, said that the Trained Nurses' Association in that country, and she was one of the first members, was founded in 1914. Before its foundation no nurse could take part in anything to do with the organisation of her profession. She was only a drudge in hospital, and could take no part in politics. Now every year their Association had its Central Meeting, which was quite an education, at which those who attended were quite enlightened. Their Association numbered 2,000 members, and it should be realised that the population of the whole Union was no more than the population of London. It was a most striking thing how interest was growing amongst nurses, and how they were joining to make a strong body.

They had great differences with the Medical Council, which controls nursing education. When they wanted an improvement in nursing it took quite a long time.

Nurses could not always see why they should work for reforms in their profession, and her reply was, in such cases, "I fight for what I did not have myself."

One of their members had had to appear before the Select Committee which was considering questions in relation to the conditions of Nurses' Registration. There were years and years before them before the nurses of South Africa had the Government of their profession in their own hands, and she mentioned that the Medical Council had passed a Resolution permitting V.A.D.s to sit for the State Examination.

She expressed thanks to Mrs. Fenwick for her work for nurses, also her interest in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, and said it was very interesting to hear Mrs. Fenwick's views at first hand. In her own name, and that of her colleagues, she thanked her for receiving them that afternoon.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick has since received a letter from Miss Joubert, who writes:—

"Before leaving for the Continent on Saturday next, I must write a line to convey to you my thanks on behalf of myself and party for your kindness and hospitality in arranging for us that delightful afternoon at 431, Oxford Street.

"I can assure you we appreciated it very much, to receive such a hearty welcome from you in your wonderful country. I hope I shall have the honour of meeting you again when I return in July."

The members of Miss Joubert's party present were, Miss F. Van Rooyen, Sister at the Rosebank Hospital, Cape Town (a Government and Training Hospital); Miss H. Van Rooyen, Sister, Johannesburg Hospital; Miss Cooper, Miss Devilliers and Miss Rankin, engaged in private practice and Miss Mariis.

Such meetings are a mutual pleasure, and afford opportunities for the promotion of international intercourse, friendship and goodwill.

#### GUY'S HOSPITAL NURSES' LEAGUE.

The Twenty-fourth Annual General Meeting and the Sixteenth Annual Dinner of the Guy's Hospital Past and Present Nurses' League was held in the Nurses' Home on Friday, May 2nd.

Dinner was served at 7 p.m., but many of the guests arrived soon after 6 o'clock for the purpose of seeing the needlework and photographs sent in for competition, and also to have an opportunity of meeting old friends. The dining hall was filled to its utmost capacity and a table was also laid on the balcony overlooking the hall. The tables looked very bright and charming with their yellow daffodils, orange paper serviettes and glittering glass. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the menu, and the Home Sister and those helping her were to be congratulated upon

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