

NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

International Federation.

1929 will soon be here! What are the nurses of the Commonwealth of Australia and of Sweden doing to take their official part in the great International Federation of Nurses at Montreal? The International Council of Nurses longs to have them included in its organisation. We do hope they have the matter under consideration.

It is interesting to realise that Australian Fellows and Members of the British College of Nurses are federated with the International through the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, and are eligible at any International Congress to wear the Purple Ribbon. But better far to come in direct, through their own Australian National Council, as all the other British Dominion Nurses have done.

The I.C.N.

The April number of I.C.N., the official organ of the International Council of Nurses, just received, is extraordinarily interesting to those who study nursing progress and organisation in many countries.

Nursing in Iceland.

Mrs. Sigridur Thorvaldsson, the President of the Icelandic Nurses' Association, writes with authority on nursing developments in Iceland. She tells us that as things are in Iceland at present, nurses cannot complete their training in the country, but must take an affiliated training—eighteen to twenty months—in surgical and obstetrical nursing as well as in communicable diseases in Denmark or Norway, where they must sit for their final examinations.

For several years two District Nursing Associations have worked in Reykjavik. They provide trained nurses for visiting and hourly nursing and for private duty work. One of these Associations maintains at the same time the only tuberculosis centre in the country, as well as a centre for Child Welfare work. The nurse in the tuberculosis centre must have taken some post-graduate work in connection with a similar centre in Denmark.

The Icelandic Red Cross Society was founded four years ago, and has in its service a public health nurse, a native of the country, who, in addition to her training and several years of experience, has recently taken a one-year course at Bedford College, London. This nurse travels round the country in order to give health instruction.

In the early stages of this progressive movement the number of fully trained Icelandic nurses was very small, so a few Danish nurses were appointed to some of the positions. In 1920, a small group of Icelandic nurses, together with a few Danish colleagues who were living in Iceland, united to found the Icelandic Nurses' Association, *Fjelag islenskra hjúkrunarkvenna*, with a modest membership of twelve. At the present time, the Association has thirty-seven active members and twenty-three associate members, the latter group being made up of student nurses.

The first president of the Association was a Danish nurse, Miss Harriet Kjaer, who celebrates her twenty-fifth anniversary as chief nurse of the Leper Hospital this spring. In sacrificing her whole life and energies to the cause of the lepers, Miss Kjaer has made a splendid contribution to nursing in Iceland. Only those who have actually witnessed the course of the disease and the suffering of these poor wretches can have any idea of the spirit of utter devotion with which a young woman of alien nationality must be inspired, to enter upon such work and voluntarily dedicate the entire activities of her life to the alleviation of their misery.

The next president of the Association was Mrs. Bjarnhjedinson, the first Danish nurse to enter the Leper

Hospital, and for a number of years the only trained nurse in Iceland. Mrs. Bjarnhjedinson was the founder of one of the District Nursing Associations of Reykjavik, of which she still remains the leader, and the tuberculosis and child welfare centres also owe their origin to her. She possesses an unusual gift for organisation, and one of her achievements was to have the Icelandic Nurses' Association affiliated with the Nurses' Union of Northern Europe, by which act, no less than by her deep and never-failing interest in her profession, she has rendered invaluable aid to Icelandic nurses. Since the year 1924, owing to the illness of Mrs. Bjarnhjedinson, the office of president has been filled by an Icelandic nurse, Mrs. S. Thorvaldsson.

Last summer, from the twelfth to the twenty-second of June, the Association had the great honour and pleasure of welcoming colleagues from countries of Northern Europe on the occasion of the Annual Executive Committee Meeting of the Nurses' Union of Northern Europe, which was held in Reykjavik. The guests, who numbered fourteen in all, came from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and as this committee meeting offered an opportunity of gathering together a comparatively large group of Icelandic nurses, it assumed the importance of a nursing congress in the eyes of the country. It was the first official visit of nurses from other national associations, associations which have made greater progress than the Icelandic Nurses' Association, and it was felt that the event promised to be of great value to the latter. Perhaps the significance of this will be felt more particularly in connection with the new State Hospital, because it means so much to have had this institution based from the outset upon sound nursing principles and the way thus cleared for the possibility of future progress.

In the autumn of 1925, the president of the Icelandic Nurses' Association was appointed to sit on the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses, as Associate National Representative for Iceland. This was a step of the utmost significance for the Association, because, isolated as it is, it fully appreciates the great support it will mean to be in close touch with nurses of other nations—nurses who have reached a further stage in development and who always have before them the highest and finest professional ideals.

The Icelandic Nurses' Association stands firm for a three years' course of training, and indeed, many of its members are of the opinion that all Icelandic nurses ought to take an additional six months' course in prophylactic work, urging as a reason for this point of view that, within a not too distant future, it is hoped to have a fully trained nurse available for every rural district of Iceland—a prospect which the Icelandic nurses keep ever before them as their goal, knowing that if they continue faithfully at their present work they will some day see their dream come true.

A Letter from China.

Miss E. M. Pye, who recently visited China, and as we have already notified came into touch with Miss Lillian Wu, President of the Nurses' Association of China, wrote when in Peking a letter which makes us realise both why it was impossible for us to meet in that city next year, and what we have lost in not being able to do so. She states:

"There is much more of a sense of terror here than in any place we have been to, among the Chinese. Not of course among Europeans, who seem perfectly happy and on good terms with them. But all the wider minded intellectuals have had to leave, and those who have enough confidence in us to talk freely, tell us that they dare not do anything. We ourselves saw one evening a band of six or eight policemen bearing a queer board with some Chinese characters on it. Mrs. Clark, who was with us, said it was their authorisation to behead on the spot anyone

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