FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

LAVINIA L. DOCK, R.N.

THE SWISS NURSES' ASSOCIATION

A cordial greeting to the international committee in Atlanta came from Oberin Ida Schneider, on a letter-head of the Swiss Red Cross at Berne. Miss Schneider said in part:

The "*Swiss Nurses League*," comprising the whole of Switzerland, upholds the same principles as the "International Council of Nurses," the chief features of which are: a three years' professional training in hospital nursing, combined with an examination and Swiss diploma.

From Switzerland, that island of peace amidst the tempest of the World's War, numberless threads have been spun to all countries, and we are proud to see the profession of nurses called upon to become one of the strongest ties intended to reunite the hostile nations. Is not the humane task of the nurses destined to remove geographical barriers and political prejudices?

May their work in the interest of mankind therefore be a blessed one! We are with you in our thoughts, and send you the heartiest
The Swiss Nurses League."

The League here spoken of is not, however, a self-directing nurses' association in our sense. It is chiefly guided by men, and includes medical women. Its president is Dr. C. Ischer, and Miss Schneider is vice-president. Indeed, some nurses tell us that they almost doubt whether Switzerland will ever have a purely nursing association, for there are more obstacles now to such an idea than ever before. But although the form of the Swiss Nurses' League is not adapted to full membership in the International Council, we cordially invite and welcome it as a fraternal delegate to share in all our meetings and doings.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT ENGLAND

Some of the most admirable and prominent of American nurses who have worked abroad during and since the war, and have had important parts in health conservation plans, think this Department has presented too much the ideas and point of view of one section, only, of the nursing world of England, and that there is much that is excellent and admirable in other sections that we do not notice. This is quite true, but there is a good reason for it. This Department, being written by the secretary of the International Council—a union based on the principle of self-government for the graduate nurse in

associations of her own making—has tried to help and stand by those nurses in foreign countries who have met such great difficulties in gaining what we have here,—freedom to organize professionally and to manage our own affairs.

In going about and meeting people in foreign countries, we have invariably applied this test: Does their influence help or hinder professional freedom? If it hinders, then no matter how charming, fascinating or able in general nursing affairs, we had to list them with the enemy, for this struggle has been a bitter war, and one where the odds were often very uneven.

But now the little David is winning over Goliath, and we may become more mellow and sweet—who knows? Perhaps even to Mr. Burdett!

RECOLLECTIONS OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

BY LINDA RICHARDS

In May, 1877, through the influence of Miss Nightingale, I was invited to visit St. Thomas's Hospital Training School for as long a time as I wished. I went to the School and was made most welcome and comfortable for two months. I was given every advantage for observation in everything concerning the school and gained much valuable knowledge.

I had been in the School only a few days when Miss Nightingale invited me to call upon her in her home. I went and was taken by the maid to Miss Nightingale's room,—a large square room in which was a bed so placed that one could go around it without touching it. Upon the bed, dressed in black silk with a pretty lace cap upon her head, was Miss Nightingale. What I noticed particularly was her beautifully shaped head and her clear blue eyes which looked straight into mine. She extended a small, delicate hand which gave mine a very friendly grasp; a chair was placed for me by the side of her bed, and for one hour we talked all about our own and English hospitals and training schools.

While I was there a dainty lunch was served me. Miss Nightingale took particular interest in my work in London, and Edinburgh, advising me regarding the best hospitals to visit, and through her influence I was admitted to King's College Hospital as a visitor and also to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

She invited me to visit her at her country home in Lee Hurst, where I spent several most enjoyable days, seeing Miss Nightingale some time each day and gaining much from her in every way. She questioned me carefully concerning our methods and the making of our young schools, and when I left her she said, "May you outstrip us that we may in turn outstrip you."

To have had the honor of meeting Miss Nightingale I esteem as one of my greatest blessings.