FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK

NEWS FROM DENMARK

AMONG those trained nurses who, after being by marriage or in other ways relieved from constant absorption in their specialty, have devoted their energies to general reform work, none is more hard working than Mrs. Gordon Norrie, of Copenhagen, one of the International Council of Nurses. Mrs. Norrie is deeply engaged in the suffrage movement and in the work of the Danish Women's Council. She has sent us a very interesting report of the "Information Bureau" established by the Council, which we would like to give in full, but must condense for want of space. The Information Bureau was established in 1900, with Mrs. Norrie as chairman and generally responsible. Its object is "to give information on general subjects concerning women, be it from Denmark or other countries, and to undertake research work." The report says:

"We may mention with satisfaction that our assistance has been required for several very important purposes. Questions have been addressed to us from our own country and from England, Italy, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. The problems put before us range from the sphere of the cooking-school to statistics with regard to the number of women in Danish political organizations, pension schemes for teachers and nurses, the training of nurses, midwives, and medical women, and Danish army nursing organization, to the American 'women's rights' movement."

The report goes on to relate in detail the last important movement in which the women of the council have been engaged, viz.: modifying and influencing the passage of legislation in the Danish Congress regulating the work of women and children in factories. Through the efforts of the Information Bureau, the points at issue in the proposed legislation were brought before the working-women of Denmark in mass meetings and by articles in the public press, with the result that the opinion of the women thus elicited considerably modified the proposed laws. It seems that the law proposed would have forbidden night-work to women, regulated their hours in the factory, and rendered it compulsory for them not to work during four weeks after confinement, without, however, introducing any compensatory features. The women contended that as labor is not badly abused in Denmark, "to forbid night-work and to regulate their hours would handicap them in the contest with their male colleagues. As for the pause after confinement, it would be welcomed on the condition that they should be supported during this period without being brought under the poor-law." It was to gain this latter point especially that the women bent their energies, and are hoping for success, the bill being now before the government. The entire report could be obtained from Mrs. Norrie at the Bureau, Norregade 33, Copenhagen, by any one wishing it, also the latest words on this modern problem may be found in the volume, "Women in Industrial Life," part of the transactions of the International Council of Women in London in 1899.