

NURSING ECHOES.

*** Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are especially invited for these columns.*

THE meeting of the British Nurses' Association, held last Friday, reminds me that there is only one more of these agreeable gatherings in store for us this Session—that on May 17th, when Dr. Collingworth, the Obstetric Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, will read a paper on "Obstetric Nursing." Last Friday the subject was "Woman, and a slight sketch of her history," and was given by Miss Stewart, the Matron of St. Bartholomew's. Though it was an interesting essay, it only referred to Nursing incidentally, and therefore was very unlike the papers hitherto read before the Association. I was glad, however, to hear the reader condemn the objection raised by some few Nurses against doing "menial work," and she gave an extract from one of Miss Nightingale's yearly letters to St. Thomas's past and present Probationers, emphasising the importance of cleanliness in Nursing, and therefore the necessity for Nurses to understand, and if necessary carry out themselves, "housemaid's work."

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AT the conclusion of the paper, Mr. Brudenell-Carter, who was in the chair, said that it was very certain that it was quite superfluous to mention how interesting a paper had been read, and it would be the pleasant duty, later on, for those present to thank Miss Stewart for it; however, in the meantime there were various important issues which she had raised, that it would be interesting to hear discussed.

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AFTER waiting some minutes, Miss C. J. Wood (Secretary) rose and said, that it seemed once more to fall to her lot to have to start the discussion. She commented upon the last few lines of Miss Stewart's paper. She said that she thought that it would be a very great mistake to attempt in any way to separate men and women; together they are as one, as it was meant to be. The man is a complement to the woman, and the woman a complement to the man. The man with his promptness, his decision, his aptness, and his strength; and the woman with her gentleness, her influence, and her forethought, make up together a complete one, the one making up for the other. If the women of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were behindhand, they were themselves much to blame. If women are wrong, it is generally their own fault; her place is marked out, and she should use her good influence upon the man.

It had been rightly said that the man is what she makes him, and it is to her influence that we look. Miss Wood remarked that Miss Florence Nightingale said that Nurses should not seek publicity, but should work on steadily and quietly.

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AFTER several minutes longer, as no further discussion appeared probable, Mr. Brudenell Carter proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Stewart. He said that he had listened with great interest to the paper, and also to the few remarks that Miss Wood had made. In calling attention to George Eliot's "character," Mrs. Poyser, he said that he believed that she was no mere creation of the author's, for he thought that he had had the pleasure of knowing the original of it. When questioned on the subject of women, it might be remembered that Mrs. Poyser said, "Yes, I am not denying women are foolish, but God Almighty made them to match the men." In looking at the gradual female development as portrayed by Miss Stewart, Mr. Carter could not help thinking that these women of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, of whom we hear so much, were in a minority, and were pushed to the front by certain circumstances, and that the great majority were the same loving tender women that we have now-a-days. Mr. Carter drew attention to a work of Samuel Earle, written about the time of James the First, and said that he thought he ran Solomon close with his most exquisite description of the good wife, concluding with the words—that she combines the hand of labour and the heart of love.

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WITH regard to education, although during the last twenty years women have made rapid strides, their capacity for it had been proved before. The present progress of women is sufficiently explained by the numerical superiority of the sex, which is perhaps owing to so many men emigrating to our Colonies. At the last census in 1880 there were six hundred thousand more women than men, and when that is the case, man, as Miss Wood said, being a complement to the woman, if more than half-a-million women cannot find their proper complements, they are obliged to look for something else. This Association was a proof of how well women can work when it is necessary. Women, Mr. Carter thought, should not educate themselves out of their proper sphere, and he was reminded of a little anecdote of an American, who, when asked about the female Doctors in America, said, "Yes, sir, we have female Doctors, and we have female lawyers, and we have female preachers, but what we're most in want of are some more female women." (Great laughter.) Mr. Brudenell-

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