

## Bookland.

### WHAT TO READ.

"From the Memoirs of a Minister of France," by Stanley Weyman. (Cassell & Co.)

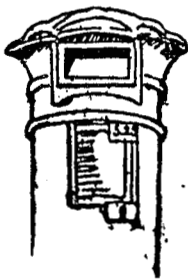
"Ivan the Fool; and Three Other Parables," by Count Leo Tolstoi. (Walter Scott, Limited, Paternoster Square.)

"Napoleon's Last Voyages." Being the Diaries of Admiral Sir Thomas Ussher, R.N., K.C.B. (on board the Undaunted), and Sir John R. Glover, Secretary to Rear-Admiral Cockburn (on board the Northumberland). (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Paternoster Square, E.C.)

"The Little Plain Woman; and Others," by Lilian Street. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Paternoster Square.)

"The Stark-Munro Letters," by A. Conan Doyle, author of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," &c. (London: Longmans, Green & Co.)

"Pages from the Day-Book of Bethia Hardacre," by Ella Fuller Maitland. (London: Chapman & Hall, Limited.)



## Letters to the Editor.

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

*Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.*

### OUR PIONEERS.

*To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."*

MADAM,—In the pleasing notes in your issue of August 24th about the "old style Nurse," and about Nurse Bullock in particular, your correspondent, after commenting upon those good old days when self-conquest and untiring devotion to duty (why "according to lights"?) and abstemious self-restraint were only matters of course, goes on to speak of Miss Nightingale and the Crimean Nurses, and asks, "Is there a Nurse amongst us who can rescue from oblivion one of the twenty or more of those noble women?"

The writer who so vividly and kindly remembers Nurse Bullock must also, I think, remember Nurse Mackin, who was contemporary with Nurse Bullock, and was the head Nurse of the Women's Surgical division, number two in the Manchester Royal Infirmary; she was with Miss Nightingale in the Crimea. Nurse Mackin's individuality and personality were as remarkable as Nurse Bullock's. I think I see her now, a large woman with erect, soldier-like bearing, decided in manner, capable, cheerful, and kind—a woman whose presence in the ward was felt from end to end, and in whom the patients and their friends had confidence. One of her favourite sayings was, "We must be like soldiers, ready and obedient." At the end of 1879 Nurse Mackin was "pensioned for ten years." This decision of the authorities came upon her suddenly, and was a death stroke to her. She said, "My heart is broken, I shall not want the pension ten years." She died about two years after this.

These women, and others whom I could mention, who seem remarkable now were not considered remarkable then. It was a matter of course that a head Nurse should be a person of individuality, and capable and devoted to duty. Her wards were almost her sphere of life—certainly not second to anything else. Her work—well, it was just simply her work, to be done with every power of her mind and

body. She expected neither praise nor notice. When she went out for recreation in off-duty hours she dressed soberly in ordinary attire; she no more thought of walking out in her ward dress, nor in the apron that she would wear when attending to her patients, than a Nurse now would think of walking out in her ward cap. And as for jingling chatelaines, they were not. A useful belt held scissors and dressing forceps, a pincushion hung suspended from the belt, and in the dress pocket were the ready thimble and cotton.

I would not imply that there are no Nurses of strong and grand parts now, but I, with your correspondent, deplore the present day "foolish depreciation of heroic service" on the part of many of the good "old style Nurses."

I am, yours sincerely,  
A. D.

### DO NURSES TIGHT LACE?

*To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."*

MADAM,—I have been reading with the utmost pleasure and interest the address on Physical Decadence, by Dr. Kellogg, in which he so ably deals with the terrible results on woman's health, of constricted dress. I am the more interested in these articles of Dr. Kellogg from personal knowledge of him and the great work he has done in advocating "dress reform." In the Sanitarium at Battle Creek, Michigan, of which he is the Superintendent, the first commandment to patients and Nurses alike is "you shall take off your stays." Many of the Nurses strongly object to this regulation, but the training is so good that they consent to sacrifice so much artificiality and so many inches to the search for professional standing. It is decidedly a novelty to see a whole training school minus "waists," and it is a novelty I should like to see introduced into every training school in the United Kingdom. Hospitals exist and have their being for the curing and combating of disease. Therefore the first law should be the worship of Nature. But, go into any Hospital you choose and you will find some 75 per cent. of the Nursing staff suffering from corsets far too tight. The unnatural size of the waists of a large percentage of Sisters, Charge Nurses, and Probationers leads one to ask if lectures on Physiology and Anatomy are of the slightest practical value, and to wonder whether the horrible object lessons constantly before them in the wards and out-patient rooms of disease and displaced organs, disordered livers and digestions, nearly all resulting from corsets, are all thrown away.

That "tired feeling" we hear so much about from Nurses is frequently the result of stays. The backaches and dyspepsias can too often only be traced to waist constriction, and yet, in spite of all that Hygiene can teach there has never before been a season of such exaggeratedly small waists and distortion of the human figure, as the one we have just passed through. In a paper which commented most favourably on the articles by Dr. Kellogg in the RECORD—a statement was made that tennis and cycling and outdoor sports were banishing tight-lacing. Unfortunately they are doing nothing of the kind. They may, in time, evolve a worship of Nature and her beautiful lines, but out-door and tailor-made women have more unnatural waists than any other type. It is the artistic woman who refuses to adopt the "hour-glass" model. I should like to have some views expressed in the RECORD on this subject. Would it not be better for Nurses during their training to discard the unhealthy disease-producing corset, and allow their lungs, muscles and organs to follow Nature's plan. I must confess I was very much impressed by the universal adoption at the Battle Creek Sanitarium by the Nursing staff of the rational dress, and was struck by the standard of health and physique thereby attained. The percentage of illness among the Nurses at this Sanitarium is phenomenally small. I shall be grateful to any readers of this RECORD who will give us the benefit of their views.

Sincerely yours,  
A LOVER OF HEALTH AND BEAUTY.

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