

up to women. We believe that the best of women so situated rejoice that others of their sex are less circumscribed than themselves, and can prove that women have power for good in public, as well as in private life.

Men have taken that attitude with regard to their fellows. We see men chained to their desks in the City, or tied to their shops at home, exult in the reflected glory on their sex when a man distinguishes himself. He feels that he is doing that grand deed himself by proxy, because a member of his sex is doing it; and why should women feel jealous when a woman, or a body of women, earn a place in public estimation? Not all do so. Many amongst us feel proud whensoever a woman does a noble act, or executes a good and clever work. They feel their sex is raised and elevated thereby.

We are not claiming any unusual virtues for the Nursing profession—women have done equally well in other branches of work or of philanthropy; but just now there is a feeling manifested by correspondents to the press that, because most of the work that is done by women is thought slightly of, and is ill-paid, therefore Nurses are not to expect to be better off; and they seek to belittle the art of Nursing, and to lower it to a branch of domestic economy that is simple enough for any woman to practice.

One does not mind seeing these views in the periodicals that take such titles as "Woman's Tea-Talk," "Fireside Chit-Chat," "Parlour and Pantry," and twaddle-journals of that description—one expects no better. But one is pained and surprised to see a writer in the *Daily Chronicle*, who is manifestly ignorant of her subject, allowed to lay down the law on Nurses and Nursing, and to depreciate both.

Signing herself "One who knows," the writer advocates the extension of the scheme started by Miss C. Wood for supplying Nurses to make short visits daily, or as required, to patients who cannot afford to have, or are not ill enough to need, the entire time of a Nurse. This is a scheme that recommends itself as far as it can be recommended, and so far we approve. It is when the writer presumes to discuss at large the training and position of private Nurses, and the whole ethics of Nursing, that we call her to order. For example, she objects to a Nurse asking fees of two guineas a week, and she "cannot see why their fees should be completely out of proportion to all other branches of women's work." It is also possible she cannot see that women whose work is miserably ill-paid would gain nothing by Nurses' salaries

being cut down. But if she had studied the subject she would know that a Nurse's professional life is a short one and a risky one, and that that fact alone would be a reason for her services not being underpaid.

With regard to the art of Nursing this lady is of opinion that "a less highly-trained person than the modern Nurse could undertake the average cases of pneumonia, typhoid, or rheumatic fever, or bronchitis." If she knew at all what she is writing about we would ask her what she means by an "average" case, and who is to determine that any case of illness will run a normal and satisfactory course, if that is what she means by "average." She thinks, moreover, that "these young women might be drawn from the humbler classes, and their training directed to such illnesses as influenza, diphtheria, rheumatic, and typhoid fever, and the slighter surgical ailments, an adequate knowledge of which could be obtained in a shorter period than is now necessitated for the equipment of the highly-trained expert." (!!!)

It is a long paper, occupying a column and a half of the *Daily Chronicle*, and it is very solemnly written, otherwise one might think she was making mockery of her subject when this lady chose rheumatic and typhoid fevers together with diphtheria as typical cases that a young woman of the humbler classes, with a smattering of training, might efficiently nurse. It is a very sorry jest, and the matter is not one for flippant generalities. Indeed, we would venture to point out a strong element of danger in an irresponsible person being permitted to write as *one who knows* on a subject so vital as sick-nursing in a paper so widely read and deservedly popular amongst women as is the *Daily Chronicle*. An editor of a daily paper has enough subjects to grapple with without going into the intricacies of a woman's profession, but we submit the opinion that professional matters should be dealt with by an expert, and none other.

A LECTURER is always pleased to see the class taking notes of his lecture, but the following extract is not one that a teacher of hygiene would congratulate himself upon:—

"This evening Dr. — delivered the first of a series of lectures to the Nurse-Probationers on Hygiene in a stuffy room, without a single open window. Asked a Nurse to breathe, by means of a glass tube, into a bottle of lime-water, and when she was tired made another Nurse take *the same tube* into her mouth to relieve the first. What about Bacteria? Note transition from the salubrious atmosphere of the well-ventilated ward to a stuffy, unventilated lecture-room to hear a lecture on Hygiene."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)