

the Royal British Nurses' Association, and says, "So, although we [alluding to Asylum Attendants] have not had the magical three years' Hospital Training, we are educated for the work of tending and caring for the insane, and for the sick insane." Now that is the point at issue in this important discussion concerning registering Asylum Attendants as Trained Nurses. I contend that at present the education of these most excellent workers (and I am in full sympathy with their desire to progress) does not fit them to tend and care for the sick insane in the most efficient manner. They can only be fitted for such responsible duties by practical experience of Nursing the sick in a general Hospital, and I am glad to observe that this appears to be the opinion formed by the *British Medical Journal*. Specialism, without a foundation of general Nursing knowledge, is a very dangerous thing for the public, and I can never be sufficiently thankful (when in charge of the sick insane) that I have been fortunate enough to have obtained such general Nursing knowledge. I hope to be at Miss Wingfield's meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A MENTAL NURSE.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Your most valuable Paper was brought under my notice a year ago, and I have been a subscriber for twelve months. It is impossible for me to tell you what a stimulus I have found the NURSING RECORD every week, and how eagerly I look forward to Friday evening, when I receive it. The liberal and progressive policy which it advocates, and the firmness with which it sticks to that policy, will surely—though it may be slowly—accomplish a great work for women as well as Nurses. I write these lines to you at the end of the year, hoping that the knowledge will please you that your labours on our behalf are appreciated, and praying that you may have the health and strength to continue your struggle for right and justice. Nursing progress abroad appears to me most hopeful, and it is probable that 1897 will see immense strides in the organisation of Nursing as a Profession in the States, and in our great Colonies. Wishing you a very Happy Christmas.

I remain,

Yours truly,

ALICE LEE.

[We much appreciate such kindly letters, and shall continue to support in the future, as we have in the past—a liberal and progressive Nursing policy in this Journal. Liberty of conscience and liberty of speech are principles worth fighting for, and must be accorded in the near future to women as they are to men.—ED.]

NURSES' PENSIONS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—In the NURSING RECORD of last week I noticed you complained of the small pension allowed to my comrade, Miss Ashton, on retiring from Middlesex Hospital. Miss Ashton and I were in the same batch at the Nightingale Training School (Agnes Elizabeth Jones), Liverpool, 1868. I have never heard Miss Ashton, or any of the Sisters at Middlesex from our training school complain of the

small pension they expected to get. I am still at work with no prospect of any pension, I should be glad of one even as small as £23 odd.

Both Miss Ashton and myself belong to the working class, and I am glad to say we are satisfied with small mercies. I have no doubt Nurse Ashton, like myself, has saved a little money during her Nursing career, and with her pension of £23 odd, she will be able to live comfortably. To my mind it is better to give a large number of small pensions than a small number of large. The Pension Fund seems no good to Nurses like myself, who commenced in the early period of Training Schools.

Believe me, Madam,

Yours truly,

ELIZABETH ADKIN, R.B.N.A.

[We quite agree with our correspondent that a small pension is better than none; yet at the same time we still think that a Sister who has worked conscientiously for twenty-six years in one Hospital, deserves a retiring pension, upon which she can live in moderate comfort, and we still think that £1 a week is the least that the Governors of Middlesex Hospital should award for such service.—ED.]

HAVE WOMEN SO LITTLE INTELLECT?

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I notice in the review of "Sir George Tressady," in the NURSING RECORD, your reviewer says, "Mrs. Ward is one of the very few women writers of the present day who have intellect enough to see both sides of a question, and with sufficient literary skill to state them clearly and comprehensively." Now, I think your reviewer must be a gentleman with a prejudice against women writers, for I so frequently notice little paragraphs of this kind in his reviews. And I cannot help, in my own mind, contrasting the reviews he gives of men's and women's books; when treating of the latter the criticisms are so much more searching.

With regard to the "intellect" of our women writers, what does your reviewer think of the mental attainments of George Egerton, Lucas Malet, Flora Annie Steel (who is certainly one of the cleverest novelists of the day), Miss Bird, Miss Gordon-Cumming, Mrs. Fawcett, Sarah Grand, and so on *ad infinitum*. I could fill much of your paper with the names of women writers who have "intellect" enough to see every question from every point of view. But it hardly seems worth while to demonstrate facts which are known and acknowledged. The second charge that women have not "sufficient literary skill to state their views clearly and comprehensively" seems rather to belong to the middle ages than to our nineteenth century when we look round the walls of our libraries and pick out our favourite volumes and masterpieces of literature of which at least 50 per cent. are by women.

No, Madam, it is certainly too late in the day to prove that women cannot write. Whatever our other deficiencies, failures, and shortcomings may be, a want of literary skill is *not* included.

Sincerely yours,

A WOMAN'S WOMAN.

[Our Book Reviewer is a lady who is much esteemed in literary circles. We have always deemed it right to allow her to criticise freely, whether her views were in accordance with ours or not.—ED.]

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