

**Black and White.****A PLEA FOR EQUALITY.**

MISS SARA WOODBINE, whose portrait we give on this page, is a native of Buenos Ayres, and her career is an example of what can be done, by determination and courage in spite of many difficulties which would appear to most people insurmountable. Miss Woodbine arrived in this country at the age of fourteen, having been brought over by her father, with the object of becoming a nurse, her desire being to qualify to nurse her own people, who she says, have no one to look after them when ill. The Europeans in Buenos Ayres can obtain trained nurses, but the natives live or die with no one to care for them in sickness. At this early age, naturally, no hospital would admit her as a probationer, but eventually she obtained a post in the linen room at the Western Fever Hospital. When she was old enough she was recommended by the Medical Superintendent at Fulham, to a colleague at the Croydon Infirmary, and in that institution she obtained her three years' certificate, and had the honour of being at the head of the list in her final examination. For the last year Miss Woodbine has been assistant-nurse in one of the Fever Hospitals under the Asylums' Board. She finds it most difficult to obtain a position of responsibility, owing as she says to her colour. She is, however, most anxious to hold the position of charge-nurse, in order that she may have experience in training probationers. She hopes to do this in Buenos Ayres, and "how can I," she says, "unless I have experience of it in England." It is in the hope that, when her needs are made known,



MISS SARA WOODBINE.

some Matron will offer her a post where she can obtain the experience she desires that we have given publicity to Miss Woodbine's aspirations in the NURSING RECORD. She has sketched out a most excellent and comprehensive course for herself, and intends to take the L.O.S. certificate, and to obtain some experience of District Nursing before returning to Buenos Ayres, but at present she is desirous of obtaining a post as Charge Nurse. Her request for this work, it must be remembered, comes

not from one whose suitability as a nurse has to be tested, but from a certificated nurse who has passed her examinations with distinction. We hope that some Matron will be sufficiently liberal-minded to afford Miss Woodbine the experience she seeks, and to prove that Englishwomen can appreciate and sympathize with the patriotic aspirations of this nurse. There is a certain amount of not unnatural hesitation on the part of Matrons towards engaging any but white nurses. British nurses are, they think, the best, and it is their duty to do the best they can for their own institutions. But, those who are in a position to know, speak highly of the capacity of coloured women as nurses. They have, naturally, many of the qualifications which are painfully instilled into many English girls, being quiet and gentle, deft-handed, kind and patient. Not a bad stock of qualities with which to begin a nursing career. We commend Miss Woodbine's wants to British Matrons. She asks for no especial privileges, but only that her colour shall not stand in the way of her obtaining an appointment for which she is qualified. An interview with her would, we think, convince any Matron of the reasonableness of our plea.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)