

associations in London. This increase does not affect nurses already registered in the past, but all new ones joining since January 1st, 1903. At the commencement of the year the need of a nurses' sick pay and accident fund was forcibly brought home to the Committee by the serious and protracted illness of one of their staff, contracted in the performance of duty. Steps were taken to organise a fund of their own, which would embrace and benefit nurses throughout the Colony, but to their regret the responses from the various public and private hospitals approached failed to justify the carrying out of such a scheme. The Committee thereupon, in the interests of their own nurses, decided to join an insurance company, and accepted the liberal proposal of the Southern Life Association, which now is the recognised medium for insurance against sickness and accidents for the Victoria Nurses' Institute nurses. The nurses realise the benefits resulting from such an arrangement, and are already availing themselves of it.

At the annual meeting, owing to the absence of Lady Hely-Hutchinson, His Excellency the Governor took the chair, and he specially said, in moving the adoption of the report:—"I desire to unite with the Committee in expressing appreciation of its work the name of Miss Damon, the Matron, who has rendered very valuable services. I cannot help thinking that a great deal of the success of the Institute is due to her, and I say this without detracting in any way from the services rendered by the Committee."

Sir Pieter Faure, in seconding, remarked that the Institute was started by only two or three ladies, who worked in such a way that they were complimented and congratulated on the day the Institute was opened. He was glad that the matter had been taken in hand by ladies only, and that ladies had shown that they were absolutely competent to take the lead in this connection and see the thing through properly on a sound and safe basis.

The Rev. A. P. Bender moved a vote of thanks to the Committee. He said that in a city like Cape Town, with newspapers of every colour, one could scarcely say that the world knew nothing of its greatest men, but he thought it did not often know a great deal about its great and noblest women. The good work by the Committee of this Institute was carried out in an unobtrusive and unostentatious manner. In the report of the War Commission there was a reticence observed with reference to the services, handsome in their character, rendered by the women of this Colony and the Victoria Nurses' Institute during the war. He made special mention of the names of Lady Faure, who was an ideal President, and Mrs. Noble, the Hon. Secretary, who had done great services to the poor and sick which would never be forgotten, although they had yet to meet with adequate recognition from a grateful Government.

These sentiments aroused great applause, from all which you will gather that men out here—where life is so much more free—are quite free from that intolerance and jealousy of women's work which are so despicable and extraordinary at home.

I do hope you will find space for this long letter, as South Africans in England will like to read something nice of nursing affairs out here after the reports of matters at the New Somerset and Johannesburg Hospitals. Poor Miss Strickland, the Matron of the Kimberley Hospital, has lately died, quite suddenly,

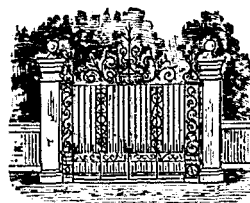
from heart disease, and is very sincerely mourned. Her post is not yet filled, but Miss Jane C. Child has been elected Matron of the New Somerset, a popular appointment, as she had the courage to resign her position of Matron of the Bulawayo Hospital when quite impossible rules were made by the Committee, at the suggestion of a new medical officer, depriving the Matron of just authority in her own department. If more women would resist injustices it would be better for us all. For once, virtue has been rewarded. The B. J. N. is warmly welcomed every week. How splendidly it has stood for State Registration! It is wonderful how its continual dripping has worn away the stones of prejudice walled round this question.

Yours sincerely,

SISTER AFRICANUS.

## Outside the Gates.

### WOMEN.



The statement of the *Daily News* that there are plenty of openings for women as dispensers at a fair rate of remuneration has aroused criticism on the part of the *Chemist and Druggist*, which declares "the openings for women as dispensers are few, and the market is overstocked with applicants for them. The wages they receive from medical men are nearer 10s. a week than £80 a year." The inspiration of articles persuading girls that dispensing is a remunerative undertaking is, our contemporary asserts, traceable to the influence of the coaching schools. But may not some of the articles in the contrary sense be due to self-interest on the part of men whose terror of women obtaining anything but positions where the pay is poor is extreme?

Miss Ivy Williams, of Oxford, who is an LL.D. of London, one of the highest degrees in Europe, intends to apply for admission to the Bar, and says:—

"When I have sufficiently roused public interest in the merits of my case I shall seek admittance to the Inner Temple. If, in the light of recent history, my application is refused, there will be the Judges, and I shall eventually lay the whole case before Parliament. I think the English race treats women in a most unfair spirit. All over Europe we are allowed to practise, but here the privilege is denied us."

We hope that success may attend Miss Williams's plucky efforts.

In this connection it is interesting to note that French women are watching with attention the struggles of their English sisters. Mme. Maria Martin, whose daughter hopes next year to pass the last examination for the *license en droit*, or the diploma which enables her to practise in the law courts, writes to a contemporary:—

"It is really extraordinary that there should be any doubt on such a subject, for brain power is not a question of sex, but of individual capacity, and the best barrister is certainly the man or the woman who has the highest intelligence. You are certainly aware that in France women are admitted to the Bar.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)