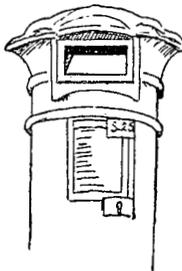


GREAT excitement prevailed lately at Cambridge, when, on the results of the Mathematical Tripos being announced, it was found that Miss P. G. Fawcett had obtained more than four hundred marks above those of Mr. Bennett, the first Wrangler, proving thereby that women can develop as great mathematical genius as the sterner sex—some women, that is, for few of her sex, I fear, could accomplish that feat which the young daughter of the late Professor Fawcett has so recently performed, and that therefore this brilliant achievement of the child of able parents is but the famous exception which proves the rule.

Miss, or, as she prefers to be called, Dr. Belle, Smith has been offered, and has accepted, the appointment of Resident Physician of the Women's Prison, at Sherborn, Mass. This fair American Medical woman is, so rumour saith—but who ever knows the exact age of any lady; they are only as old as they look, if you please—only twenty-three years of age, and is, therefore, very young to have obtained so difficult and responsible a post; but the idea of appointing women Physicians to women's prisons is a good one.

VEVA KARSLAND.



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.

We shall be happy to answer, as far as we can, all questions submitted to us.

Communications, &c., not noticed in our present number will receive attention when space permits.

EVOLUTION OF PROFESSIONAL NURSING; OR, TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

LETTER I.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—Upon ventilating the outcome of a somewhat careful review of the subject aforesaid it has been suggested to me that a letter or two thereon might not be, at this juncture, quite without interest to the readers of the *Nursing Record*. I have, therefore, pleasure in courteously acceding to this request, and beg to submit a short series of four letters herewith.

But owing, doubtless, to "Technical Education" having been hitherto somewhat imperfectly understood by the majority of Englishmen and Englishwomen—for I may as well say at once that I favour this kind of education for both sexes—I have had considerable difficulty in obtaining information relating directly to it, and have had to rely almost entirely on my own opinions; hence any inaccuracies which

may have crept into these letters, or any extreme notions I may set forth, as the case may be. But I am so intensely interested in the subject, and the benefits to be derived from so important a study give me boldness in my object; that is, in bringing the matter before your readers.

In taking up so important a topic, let me say at the outset that I have been struck dumb with astonishment, again and again, at the way in which a vast multitude of my fellows go to work at their respective callings, with never a thought that technology means to them their only way of progress, and the only standpoint from which to view the prosperity of the future. And, paradoxical as it may seem, there are thousands of people in England to-day who are working, year by year, without one single thought occurring to them why such things are not done by a different or more correct method. Passing strange! Stranger still, until 1877 no organised attempt had been made in this country to provide technical education. It is true that technical classes previously existed; but they were few, scattered, and poorly equipped. Notwithstanding this, technical education is (as you will agree) destined to take a prominent place in the practical and industrial training of the coming generations, probably to supplant our "apprenticeship" system, strengthen and develop inventive knowledge, and combine social and recreative facilities.

"In days not far distant," observes some writer, "men found their excitement and filled up their time in violent bodily exercises, noisy merriments, and intemperance. They have now, in all but the very poorest classes, lost their inclination for these things, and for the coarser pleasures generally; they have now scarcely any tastes but those in common with women, and, for the first time in the world's history, men and women are really companions. A most beneficial change if the companionship were between equals, but being between unequals, it produces what good observers have noticed, though without perceiving its cause, a progressive deterioration among men in what had hitherto been considered masculine excellences." Another paradox! Indeed, it seems passing strange that those very people who are so excessively careful that women should not become men, do not see that men are gradually becoming what they had decided that women should be—are falling into the feebleness which they have so long cultivated in their companions. Examine the matter for yourself, and you will see what I mean. And few people, I venture to believe, will seriously question the veracity of those trite words, "Those who are associated in their lives—naturally enough—tend to become assimilated in character." Thus it is manifest that, for obvious reasons, in the present closeness of association between the sexes, man cannot retain his manliness unless woman acquire it; hence my warranty in boldly advocating technical education equally for both sexes.

Let me now stop to consider my text—(1) What is meant by technical education? and (2) its necessity for the Nursing profession. Well, according to the dictionary, the meaning of the term is "instruction belonging to art and not in common or popular use; the theory of a trade or calling, and the science of correct manipulation." And it is essential, I would maintain, to definite evolution and progression that every child of Adam should have a distinct vocation in life; and our "educational codes" should, if needs be, be readjusted to meet this requirement. It is technical education which enables an engineer to bore through a mountain from either side and meet in the centre. Technical education assists men to construct such bridges as the Forth Bridge in Scotland; it has helped men to make compound locomotives, like George Stephenson's "Rocket," which have revolutionised the world; it has made the watch, by which we learn to mark the rapid flight of time; and it has constructed the Suez Canal; in fact, it is our one beacon-light, the only ray of progress left open to us. And, undoubtedly, the sooner we realise the immense value of technical education for ourselves, and

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