

## The Nursing Record "At Homes."

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MISS G. M. THOROLD AT THE MIDDLESEX  
HOSPITAL.

IT is always a difficult matter to know at which hour of the day it is most convenient to call upon a very busy woman, but I was fortunate in choosing the middle of the morning for my visit to Miss THOROLD. I found the presiding genius of the Middlesex Hospital in her own cosy little room on the first floor, where she can, at rare intervals, seize a few moments of repose surrounded by all her favourite photographs, books and china. On the centre table are scattered several of Mudie's latest additions, there is Besant's "Suffering London" amongst others, and very soon you find yourself discussing books and their authors. Miss THOROLD says she is very fond of history, and she mentions Lecky, Hallam, and Millman in particular.

"I am also very partial to polemical works," she adds, "and I suppose I should be, for my grandfather and father were both clergymen, and my cousin is the present Bishop of Winchester."

"I suppose you have always been fond of nursing and Hospital work, Miss THOROLD?"

"Yes, I have; when I was a little girl I used to have my dolls as patients, many a broken limb have I put into splinters and bound up, in my kingdom of dolls, and I think I was never so happy as when I was allowed to attend to my mother when she was ill."

I cannot refrain from asking this most thoroughly capable and energetic lady her opinion on the "Advanced Woman" question.

"Well, to tell you the truth, I have no time to go into any of these problems of the day; my own avocations are work enough for me. I do, however, believe in woman's rights to a certain extent, and I am glad that there are so many of our sex who are able to devote their time and talents towards furthering the cause."

"And, now, will you tell me how far you approve of the development of Medical education for women?"

"I approve of it entirely. With such a field as India before us, we cannot do too much to qualify ourselves for the work, but I do not think there will ever be much demand for lady-doctors in our own country."

"And Nursing; what of it?" The pleasant intelligent face lights up at this question.

"Nursing is one of the best and decidedly the greatest outlet for the energies of capable women. By

all means, let women adopt it as a profession, it is theirs by right, there and there alone, are we on our own ground; it is the profession *par excellence* for our sex."

"But it is hard work? Do you not think that a woman should be specially and certainly physically suited to it?"

"Certainly, it is hard work, but then it is not a calling anyone should follow from compulsion. The 'Ministering Angel' should be a voluntary one; and I think, as a rule, she is. Women are not all born Nurses, but there are some who are, and for these there is no other vocation which will satisfy them."

Miss THOROLD then kindly enlightens me as to the way her day is spent.

"Well, to begin with, I am a very early riser, winter and summer. I breakfast at eight o'clock."

"Then," I interrupt, "you surely go to bed in good time?"

"That I do not," rejoins my hostess, "it is generally in the small hours of the morning. Well, to continue with my daily routine: after breakfast, I receive the reports of the night Superintendent, and of the sister who is in charge of the

Institute for Trained Nurses. Then for about three hours I am in the wards. I always try to speak to each of the patients myself, and to make enquiries as to their cases. Between twelve and one, I am in here as you find me; I have numbers of business callers, and candidates for training—by the way, I thought you were one—then I hope there comes an interval for lunch. "Ah, here it comes," I exclaim, as an eat waitress brings in the luncheon tray, "I will not detain you."

"Oh, but you must hear the rest of my programme first; in the afternoon I attend any operations there may be in the theatre, and I go round the wards with the doctors. Mondays and Thursdays I am 'At Home' to the ladies who come to read to our patients. At half-past six we dine, and I generally go to prayers at half-past nine in the Nursing Home. After that I go round the wards again, and at eleven I see the Night Superintendent and give her a report of the day's proceedings, and tell her what cases require especial care during the night. At midnight, I am free to do my correspondence and to read."

"And here I am wasting a few minutes of your precious leisure. Please have your lunch at once, and in eating it, try and forget, if you cannot forgive, my lengthy intrusion."

Miss THOROLD walks with me as far as the staircase, from one of the windows of which I see, what seems to me an infinitely sad picture. Under the trees of the Hospital garden, two dozen beds are placed on which some of the sufferers are reclining and enjoying such air as may be had this warm July morning. A few minutes more and I am out in busy Mortimer Street, in which this large Hospital stands. And I find myself thinking very often, during the next few days, of Miss THOROLD and her work amongst the suffering inmates of the Middlesex Hospital.

L. A. S



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