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CHAPTER IV

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND NURSING IN THE CRIMEAN WAR

THE general dissatisfaction with the nursing of that day, the abortive attempts of many good people to give training to nurses, and the success of the Deaconess Order all paved the way for the coming of a woman whose ability should be equal to the task before her. Florence Nightingale can hardly be considered a product of her time, since she was far ahead of and beyond it, but she found the time ripe for her genius as the *founder of modern trained nursing*.

The nineteenth century produced a group of people, practically contemporaries, who in fifty years did more than all those who came before them to change and improve the practice of medicine and surgery, of nursing, and of the whole trend of care of the sick.

Pasteur and Koch in bacteriology, Lister in surgery, Semmelweis and Holmes in obstetrics, the inventors of anesthetics in Britain and America—these were the outstanding men whose work dovetailed into that of Florence Nightingale. They invented new technics; she produced women who could carry out those technics. They changed nursing practice; she gave them a new type of nurse.

State of Medicine and Surgery in the Early Nineteenth Century.—If the nineteenth century dawned upon a dark age in nursing, so also did it find medicine and surgery in a state of stagnation. There were few medical schools, and the majority of doctors were taught by means of the “apprentice” system, being hostler and janitor to the man whose medical library they were allowed to read, and picking up such knowledge as they could by observation.

Medical works described diseases very carefully, but doubted the possibility of curing them. Anatomy and physiology were in an undeveloped state; chemistry was young in practical value; bacteriology was unknown and unthought of. Most doctors believed in the "spontaneous generation" of disease, *i. e.*, certain living organisms grew of themselves from nothing. Acute disease was invariably treated by "lowering" measures—starving, blood letting, large doses of mercury, antimony, opium, etc. The clinical thermometer did not come into use until about 1850; before that time physicians and nurses guessed at temperature by feeling the patient's skin. In short, medicine, surgery, and nursing were all largely guesswork, and exact methods in any of them were practically unknown.

By the end of the century the whole picture had changed. Bacteriology, surgery, and certain phases of medicine had emerged from the darkness of empiricism into the light of science. Nursing, guided by Florence Nightingale's hand, accompanied this advance and gave to these developing sciences the alert minds and skilled hands to aid, apply, and watch results.

Florence Nightingale was born about the same time that these eminent scientists were. Her parents were well-to-do English people, cultured, remarkable for their sincerity, high ideals, and deep mentality. Florence, the youngest of two daughters, was born May 12, 1820, in Florence, Italy, and was named for that city. When she was five her parents returned to England. Her father advocated a wide education for his daughters, a thing almost unheard of at the time. She therefore studied the classics, spoke Italian, French, and German.

When a small girl she nursed sick animals. At the age of nine she expressed her wish "to be useful to sick persons." In her teens she visited and nursed the poor of her neighborhood and was always ready if a relative was ill.

Her Wish to Be a Nurse.—Soon after she was twenty she asked her parents to permit her to go into a hospital and learn to be a nurse, so that she might care for the poor people of her own neighborhood. They knew something of the dreadful conditions then existing in hospitals—that the majority of nurses were of a low, rough class—and could not bring their minds to the thought of their daughter do-



Fig. 17.—Florence Nightingale when a child.

ing such a thing. She would not go without their consent, and the situation grieved her greatly. She believed that an earnest life must express itself in work for humanity, and that "the service of man is the service of God." She longed for the chance to be helpful in a large way. She was always deeply religious. She once told her sister, "I look to thirty as the age when our Saviour took up His work. I am trying

to prepare myself to follow in His footsteps when I am as old as He was."

Her Family's Continued Opposition.—By the time she was twenty-four she had definitely decided that she ought to undertake the work of nursing. Her family still did not sympathize with her thought of service to the world, but tried to make her see that her place was at home in the ordinary rounds of woman's life. For years they tried, by



Fig. 18.—Florence Nightingale's home. (Courtesy of Lakeside Publishing Co.)

travel and social life, to distract her from her purpose. She had long trips on the Continent, studied music in Italy, played, and sang. She met many prominent persons and many brilliant ones. She was introduced in Paris society by the famous Madame Recamier. For years she tried to interest herself in these things and to bring herself to the viewpoint of her parents; but she never succeeded in getting away from what she felt was a call from Heaven.

Her Personality.—She was a student of deep and difficult subjects. It is reported that Sir Henry de la Bèche said of her, "A capital young lady that, if she hadn't floored me with her Latin and Greek." While not actually beautiful,



Fig. 19.—Florence Nightingale in her early years (about 1858). (From a photograph by Goodman.)

she was attractive.¹ Julia Ward Howe said of her, "She was elegant rather than beautiful, tall and graceful of figure, her face mobile and expressive." Mr. Osborne describes her as follows: "She is just what you would expect

¹ There are 20 portraits of her in existence.

of any well-bred woman of her age. Her manner and face are prepossessing. Her face is not easily forgotten, pleasing in its smile, with an eye betokening great self-possession, and giving a quiet look of determination. Her general demeanour is rather reserved; still I think she has a lively sense of humour. She speaks on matters of business with a grave earnestness one would not expect from her appearance. She has a mind disciplined to restrain under action every feeling which would interfere. She has trained herself to command, and learned the value of conciliation and self-restraint. I fancy she is a strict disciplinarian."

Her Plan.—In her trips on the Continent she had visited and studied hospitals in France, Germany, Belgium, and Italy. She had also seen those of Great Britain.

She had in mind to establish a sort of Protestant Sisterhood, not unlike the Deaconess Order, in which educated women should devote their lives to the relief of sickness. She had heard of Kaiserswerth and Fliedner's work, and longed to go there for training. While at home she studied medical and sanitary matters and political economy. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to graduate in medicine in America, was her confidante and encouraged her to persist in her vision of service.

Training at Kaiserswerth.—In 1850, when she was thirty years old, she was able to stop at Kaiserswerth for a two weeks' visit; the opportunity gave her great joy. The next year she was allowed to go there for four months' training. She realized then for the first time her wish for practical instruction in nursing, though the training which she got was inferior to that which she later developed in her own classes. While not satisfied with it, she felt that it was the best to be had and was very happy there.²

² Fliedner told her frankly that he feared she would not like the work; told her that the nurses scrubbed floors, etc. She replied, "Just try me," and did her share of the scrubbing.

When she left Kaiserswerth she spent some time in the hospitals of Paris, doing actual work with the Sisters of Charity, seeing the work of brilliant French surgeons, and learning much of value. In 1852, she tried to arrange for three months' training with the Irish Sisters of Mercy, but they would not take her unless she would enter the order.

Her Start in Her Career.—The following year, when she was *thirty-two*, she persuaded her family to let her take her life into her own hands. They despaired of her marrying and felt that further opposition to her wishes was useless. Her father made her an independent allowance of about \$2500 a year. Afterward her people were very proud of her, and her mother acknowledged, "You would have accomplished nothing had you not resisted me."

It was this year she wrote in her diary, "I had three paths among which to choose. I might have been a literary woman, or a married woman, or a hospital sister." In a sense she became the first, since all her life she wrote much and well. She might have chosen the second path, as she had many admirers and some serious love affairs.³ She felt, however, that God had called her for a special work, which could not be done if she married.

Her First Executive Position.—In August, 1853, she took charge of the *Establishment for Gentlewomen During Illness*, in Cavendish Square, London. She was eminently successful in the position, both doctors and others being impressed with her ability. With great tact she managed a situation at which she was most impatient. Her Board was

³ A young cousin fell in love with her, but was refused. A very fine man, for whom she really cared, tried for some years to persuade her to become his wife. It was evidently hard for her to refuse, but she felt that she had other work to do. When she started for the Crimea he wrote her, "I hear that you are going to the East. I am happy that it is so, . . . and hope you will find satisfaction in the work. You can undertake *that*, when you could not undertake me. God bless you, dear friend, wherever you go."

intolerant and could not see that the comfort and welfare of patients were more important than petty rulings; but her diplomatic methods achieved results without giving offense.⁴

Dr. J. P. Maxwell says: "She grew up as a member of the ruling class, and in a belief that she was one of those who were put there to govern. This was the key to the driving force which she possessed. It also explains her main fault, inability to see the other person's point of view."

Not long after, King's College Hospital approached her and asked that she become their superintendent of nurses. She was preparing to accept this offer and had begun to plan work there when the call to the Crimea came.

The Call to the Crimea.—Russia was at war with the combined forces of England, France, and Turkey. Russia and France had religious sisters with their armies, but England had only untrained men to care for her sick and wounded. In the fall of 1854 it became apparent that the medical system of the British Army was utterly inefficient. Division of responsibility, official red tape, and lack of nurses made the condition of the wounded after a battle a

⁴ She wrote to her family with a keen sense of humor: "My Committee refused to let me take in Catholic patients, whereupon I wished them 'Good morning.' Now it is settled that we are to take all denominations and allow them to be visited by their respective priests, providing that I will meet the obnoxious animal at the door, escort him upstairs, and bring him down again in a noose. To this I have agreed. Amen. From Committees, Charity, and Schism, from the Church of England, and all other deadly sins, from philanthropy and all deceits of the devil, . . . good Lord, deliver us.

"I do all my business by intrigue, which I resolved I never would. I wrote out a series of regulations, and presented them to the Committee, not telling them from whom they came. They passed them. I showed them to the medical men; they had them up in two meetings and approved them, thinking they were their own."

national disgrace. The facts became known and public appeals were made for help and supplies.

Miss Nightingale read the appeals and they came to her as a call from God. This was what she had been waiting for so many years, a field worthy of her powers. She wrote to Sir Sidney Herbert, Secretary of War, whom she knew personally, and offered her services. She began at once to arrange a plan for financing the sending of nurses and supplies, using her own money and getting pledges from friends.

Meantime the Secretary of War had settled upon Miss Nightingale as the one who should undertake the organization of a band of nurses to go to the Crimea and care for the wounded. He wrote her: "I know of but one person in England capable of carrying out such a thing, yourself. Upon your decision will depend the success or failure of the plan. Your own personal qualities, your knowledge, your power of administration, your rank and position in society give advantages which no other person possesses." With rare insight he added, "If the work succeeds, an enormous amount of good will be done now; and a prejudice will have been broken through which will multiply the good to all time."

His letter passed Miss Nightingale's in the mail, and both had their answer.

Miss Nightingale Starts for the War.—Five days later Miss Nightingale had received her official recognition and instructions from the government. Two days after, on October 21, 1854, she set out for the Dardanelles with 38 nurses.

Her nurses were Roman Catholic and Anglican sisters, lay nurses from St. John's House, and others. Some of them were not a success and returned after a brief service. She herself regarded only about half of them as efficient.

More nurses went out later, until the number was about 125.

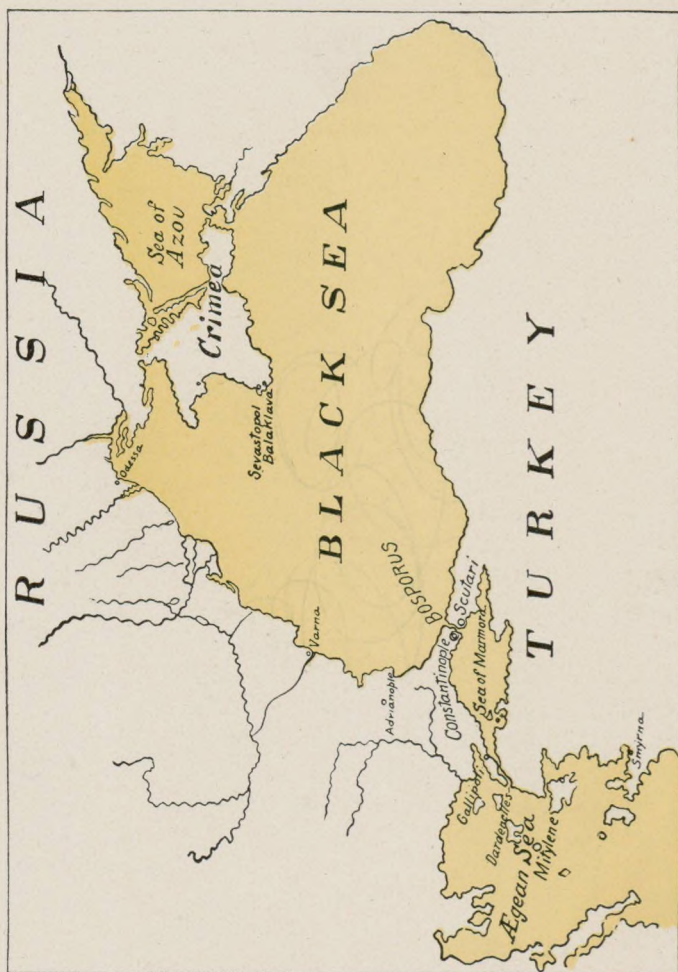


Fig. 20.—Map of the Dardanelles and the Crimea.

Establishment of the Nurses at Scutari.—The nurses arrived at Scutari, just across the strait from Constanti-

nople. Here, in one of the most beautiful situations in the world, were 4 large hospitals. The Barracks Hospital was

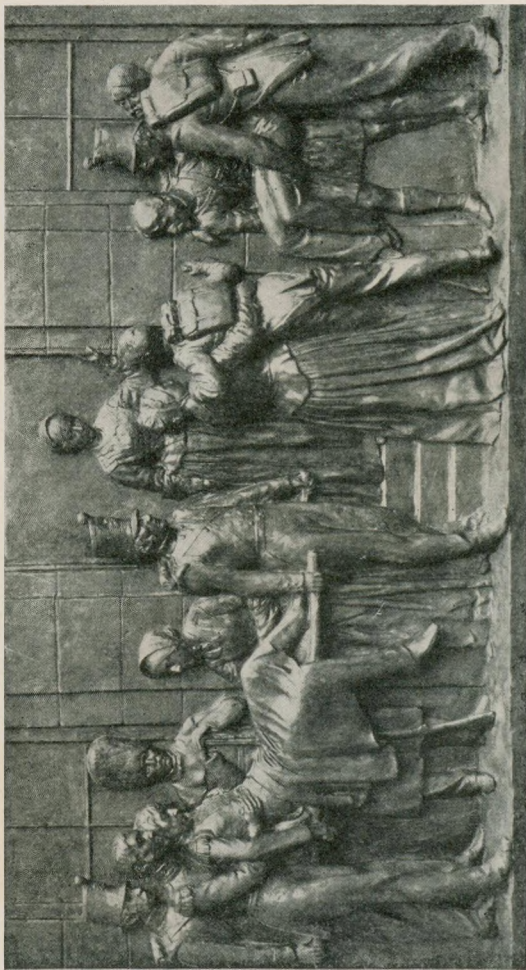


Fig. 21.—Florence Nightingale and her nurses at Scutari. (Courtesy of College of Nursing, London.)

given to Miss Nightingale and her nurses. (The Irish Sisters of Mercy were in another.) It was supposed to accom-

moderate 1700 patients, but at that time there were between 3000 and 4000. There were *four miles of beds*, set 18 inches apart. Miss Nightingale was given charge of 1500 patients.

The nurses' quarters were very small, dirty, and swarming with rats and vermin. Five and six nurses roomed together, using the same room for their meals.

Hospital Conditions.—The wards, badly crowded, had no proper ventilation, and were dirty and unsanitary beyond description. Water was scarce, and there were no

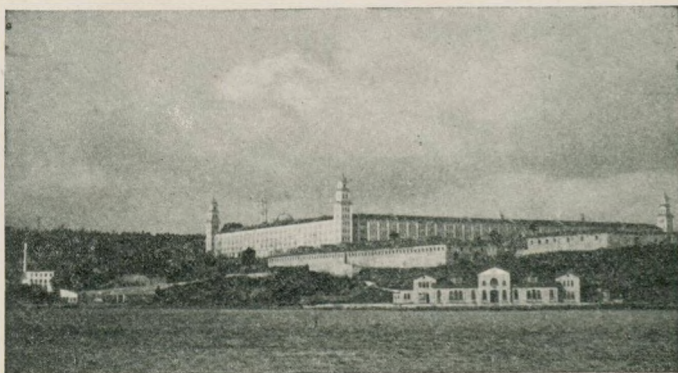


Fig. 22.—Nightingale Barracks Hospital at Scutari, as seen from the American Hospital, Constantinople, 1927. (Courtesy of International Council of Nurses.)

basins for washing. The toilet accommodations and the plumbing were as bad as could be. The beds were mostly of straw, and many were laid directly on the floor. The few sheets to be had were of canvas, and so rough that the men begged not to have them used. Practically no laundry was being done;⁵ there was no hospital clothing, and the patients were still in their uniforms, stiff with blood and covered with filth. There was no soap, nor towels, nor

⁵ An official report showed that 6 shirts had been washed during the month.

basins, and very few utensils of any sort. Every place swarmed with vermin.⁶

There were no knives or forks, and the men ate with their fingers. The food was badly or half cooked, and the very ill patients had practically nothing which they could eat. It took four hours to serve a meal.

There was a great deal of cholera and contagious fever. Fully as many of the soldiers died of disease as of wounds. The death rate was *42 per cent* of the cases treated, an appalling state of affairs.

Cause of the Difficulties.—Miss Nightingale had been officially assured that there were plenty of supplies on hand. She found that some of them had been sent to the wrong port or were buried under munitions and could not be got. There were 8 distinct departments concerned with military affairs, little cooperation, and an amount of official red tape that made it nearly impossible to secure supplies which were in store.

Only part of the army officers and surgeons were friendly to the idea of introducing women nurses. The nursing had been done by untrained orderlies and soldier-servants whom the doctors considered as good as need be. They felt that the women were interfering and troublesome.

Miss Nightingale's Reforms.—"What was needed was bold initiative. This Miss Nightingale supplied. She boldly assumed responsibility, and did herself the things which she could find no one else to do. She applied an expert's touch and a woman's insight. She is popularly thought of as a gentle nurse. Those who knew all the facts spoke of her as a commanding genius."⁷

When she could not get official help quickly, she used her own funds. She fitted up a laundry and employed

⁶ One of Miss Nightingale's first requisitions was for 200 scrubbing brushes.

⁷ "Life of Florence Nightingale," by Sir Edward Cook.

soldiers' wives to do the washing. She opened 5 diet kitchens in different parts of the building, so that the sickest patients might have proper nourishment. She reported the condition of the buildings to the authorities at home, and repairs were quickly made.⁸

She directed her nurses to work only with doctors who wished their services, and to do nothing for the patients of other surgeons. She knew that they must win their way by

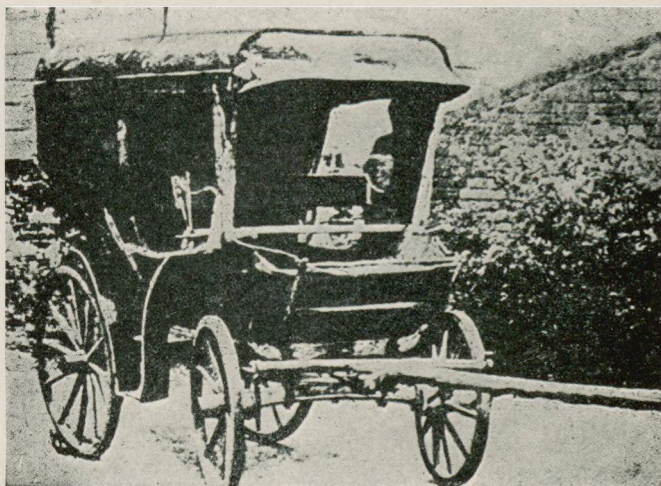


Fig. 23.—Florence Nightingale's ambulance. (Courtesy of Lakeside Publishing Co.)

patience and good work. She insisted upon strict discipline among her nurses.

Her nurses were far from being well trained, and made her realize every day the need of proper instruction for them. She writes of some of them, "They are excellent, gentle women, more fit for Heaven than for a hospital.

⁸ A committee had been appointed to investigate the buildings. Miss Nightingale had them repaired before the committee's report was even in.

They flit about like angels without hands, and soothe souls while they leave bodies dirty and neglected."

She kept the less efficient nurses under her own eye, putting the better ones in places of responsibility elsewhere. She speaks in keenest appreciation of those whom she regarded capable: "Mrs. Roberts is worth her weight in gold, . . . she is one of the most important persons in our expedition. Mrs. Shaw Stewart, . . . without her our work would have come to grief. Mrs. Drake is a treasure. Rev. Mother Moore, . . . far above me in fitness for the General Superintendency."⁹

The Good Results.—In two months Miss Nightingale had transformed the hospital. In six months she had reduced the death rate to 2 *per cent* and had won over most of the surgeons. She fitted up at her own expense a dissecting and autopsy room for the doctors, which was considered the nucleus of the later Army Medical School. Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-chief, gave her his cordial support and spoke of her as an auxiliary general.¹⁰

The Irish Sisters of Mercy had heard of the soldiers' sufferings, and had asked their archbishop to send them to the scene of action. A group of 15 went out to Scutari about the same time that Miss Nightingale did. They had found (January, 1855) similar conditions in their hospital at Scutari. "The hospital consists of long corridors as far as the eye can reach, with beds at each side; also poor soldiers, both wounded and frost-bitten, lie on the floor. . . . The men had only thin linen suits for a Crimean winter. . . . We are in the wards early and late; when we go to take two hours rest, we groan at the thoughts of what we leave undone."

⁹ Sir Edward Cook's "Life of Florence Nightingale," and the "History of Nursing," by Misses Dock and Nutting, give excellent descriptions in detail of her work in the Crimea.

¹⁰ Sir Sidney Herbert, Dr. Sutherland and Miss Nightingale were referred to as "the Little War Office."

An epidemic of cholera added to the horrors of the situation. Many died in five or six hours after being taken ill. "The Medical Staff did their best and hourly risked their lives. At last everyone seemed to become paralyzed—the orderlies indifferent to life or death."

The Sisters had enormous difficulty in getting stores and proper food for their patients. They also speak of their own quarters, crowded and swarming with huge rats.

A doctor wrote: "One night I went into a hospital hut about midnight; there I saw by the light of a wretched little lamp a tall hooded figure, one of the nuns, gliding from bed to bed, like Bulwer's *Lucretia*."

A War Office report says: "The superiority of an ordered system is beautifully illustrated in the Sisters of Mercy.¹¹ One mind appears to move all, and their intelligence, delicacy and conscientiousness invest them with a halo of extreme confidence. The medical officer can safely consign his most critical cases to their hands."

The Soldier's Love for Miss Nightingale.—With all her fearlessness in the use of authority and all her attacks upon bad administration, she was still the womanly, gentle nurse. Two famous quotations describe this aspect of her work.

One of the soldiers wrote home: "What a comfort it was to see her pass! She would speak to one and nod and smile to many more. She could not do it to all, you know, for we lay there by hundreds, but we could kiss her shadow as it fell and lay our heads on the pillow again content. Before she came there was such cursing and swearing, but after that it was as holy as a church."

MacDonald, war correspondent of the London Times, said: "When all the medical officers have retired for the night and silence and darkness have settled down upon

¹¹ At the close of the war, one of these Irish sisters, Mary Aloysius, was given the Royal Red Cross.

those miles of prostrate sick, she may be observed with a little lamp in her hand making her solitary rounds. As her



Fig. 24.—The Lady of the Lamp. Derby memorial to Florence Nightingale. Erected in the Grounds of the Royal Infirmary, Derby, England.

slender form glides through the corridor, every poor fellow's face softens with gratitude at the sight of her."

These night rounds and Longfellow's poem, "Santa Filomena," originated the name by which she has come to be known, "The Lady of the Lamp." Two stanzas of the poem are:

Lo, in that house of misery,
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

Estimates of Her Character.—Sir Edward Cook says: "The popular impression of Miss Nightingale is that of a girl of high degree who, moved by a wave of pity, forsook the pleasures of fashionable life for the horrors of the Crimean War; . . . who retired after it into private life, varying her seclusion only by good deeds to hospitals and by sentimental pieties.

"This legend is remote from the truth. The real Florence Nightingale was greater. Her life was built on larger lines, her work had more importance.

"Her earlier years show a girl of high natural ability feeling her way to an ideal. She had already served her apprenticeship when the call to the Crimea came. It was not a call to sacrifice, but to the fulfilment of her dearest wish for a life of active usefulness.

"A certain man who knew intimately some of the greatest intellects of the time said of Miss Nightingale that hers was the clearest brain he had ever known in man or woman.

"Her character was stronger, more spacious, and, I feel, more lovable than that of the Lady of the Lamp."

Mrs. L. Seymer, in her nursing history, calls her "One of the most remarkable figures of the nineteenth century, one of the outstanding women of all time."

Her Illness.—In the summer of 1855 the work was lighter, and she, accompanied by three of the Catholic sisters, was able to make a tour of inspection of the hospitals of Balaclava in the Crimea. She went over them carefully, planning changes and improvements. One evening she complained of being tired, and it was found that she had contracted Crimean fever.

She was desperately ill, and came very close to death. The soldiers wept when they heard of her illness, and all England waited the outcome in anxious suspense. In a few weeks she was better and, refusing to take more rest, went back to Scutari.

Close of the War.—Early in 1856 peace was concluded, and the nurses' work became lighter. The hospitals were closed one by one, and the nurses went back to England. Miss Nightingale left last of all, returning in July, 1856.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS

Florence Nightingale may be considered the founder of modern nursing. She was born on May 12, 1820, in Florence, Italy. That day is celebrated all through the United States as National Hospital Day.

She was unusually well educated, well bred, well-to-do, had an excellent social position, and was attractive.

She was deeply religious and had a passion for helpfulness.

Her family opposed her idea of a life of work for others.

She had a choice of three careers—literature, marriage, and nursing. She chose the latter.

She studied hospitals and nursing in several countries.

She was finally permitted to take the deaconess training at Kaiserswerth, which was a great satisfaction to her.

She became superintendent of a private hospital in London in 1853, and was shortly afterward offered the position

of superintendent of nurses at King's College Hospital. She was considering this when the call to the Crimea came.

The failure of the government medical service in the Crimean War became a call for a person of unusual ability and character to handle the situation. Sir Sidney Herbert, Secretary of War, chose Miss Nightingale almost at the same moment that she decided to offer herself for the work.

She went to Scutari in October, 1854, with 38 nurses, Catholic and Protestant.

A group of 15 Irish Sisters of Mercy went about the same time to another hospital at Scutari, where they did a work similar to Miss Nightingale's in its efficiency.

She found thousands of sick and wounded soldiers suffering from lack of nursing and supplies, with dirt and chaos rampant.

With remarkable initiative and insight she succeeded, in a short time, in reducing the hospital work to order, getting supplies, establishing sanitation, and reducing the death rate from 42 to 2 per cent.

The high authorities upheld her, but the lower officials made things hard for her.

The soldiers adored her. Her night rounds in the hospital gave origin to the poem "The Lady of the Lamp."

In 1855 she had Crimean fever and barely escaped with her life. She returned to England in July, 1856.

CHAPTER V

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S LATER WORK

The Heroine of the People.—Miss Nightingale became the popular heroine. Despite her retiring disposition and her efforts to escape publicity, all sorts of honors were done her.¹ Before her return to England public meetings were held in her honor, but she would not allow them afterward.

The Meaning of Her Work in the Crimea.—Her work in the East had been far more than the mere setting right of great hospitals and the organizing means to secure comfort for thousands of wounded soldiers; it had broken through the prejudices of ages, and had put all womankind on a higher plane of life and work. She not only opened up a new profession for women, but also gave the world a new conception of woman's place in the world. The effect was both immediate and far-reaching.

The Nightingale Fund.—While she was still at work in the Crimea a movement sprang up in England to honor her in some permanent manner. Sir Sidney Herbert, who knew her so well, suggested a fund which should be used to provide training for nurses, and for their living and protection. To him must be given the credit of devising means for founding the training of nurses with proper prestige and efficiency.

The idea was in line with the spirit that was stirring in England, with an awakened social consciousness. The experience of the Crimean War had roused a patriotic pride, all sorts of reforms were being advocated. Doctors were

¹ Queen Victoria had sent her a great brooch set with diamonds, which she sometimes wore to please the soldiers; the Sultan of Turkey had given her a diamond bracelet and a sum of money for the nurses.

developing a scientific approach to their work, and the so-called "woman movement" was under way. Miss Nightingale sensed these things and felt that the time was ripe to *do* something about them. She saw in nursing an important step in the great program of woman's work.

Many prominent persons contributed largely to the "Nightingale Fund," and it soon amounted to £40,000 (\$200,000), one tenth of it being given by the British Army.



Fig. 25.—St. Thomas' Hospital in 1860. At founding of Nightingale School.

Miss Nightingale deeply appreciated what was done, as it accorded with her dearest wishes. She accepted the task of administering the fund.

The Nightingale School of Nursing.—The long strain of work and responsibility had undermined her health so that she never again worked with any physical vigor.² Upon her

² Had she taken a long rest at this time her future health might have been saved. "The history of her case points to dilatation of the heart and neurasthenia. The former yields to drugs and rest; the latter, an atonic condition of the nervous system, to complete rest."—Cook, "Life of Florence Nightingale."

return from the East she took no rest, but went at once to work upon what seemed to her the two most vital matters—army reform and the establishment of trained nursing.

St. Thomas' Hospital, London, was selected as the place for the experiment of training nurses in a new and systematic way upon a nonreligious basis. This was the first endowed school of nursing and long the only one in the world. (See page 316.)

As was nearly always the case in other pioneer efforts along this line, most of the doctors on the hospital staff

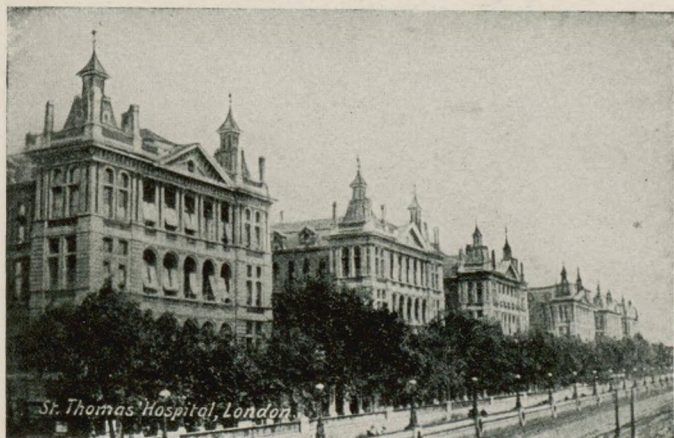


Fig. 26.—St. Thomas' Hospital, London.

opposed it. Of 100 physicians whose opinion was asked, only four favored it. They felt that the nursing at St. Thomas' was very good as it was and saw no need of change. They themselves had given the nurses what little training they had received, and said, "Nurses are in much the same position as housemaids, and need little teaching beyond poultice-making and the enforcement of cleanliness and attention to patients' wants." One doctor said publicly,

"A nurse is a confidential servant; but still only a servant. She should be middle-aged when she begins nursing; and if somewhat tamed by marriage and the troubles of a family, so much the better."

Only a few took the opposite view and understood what the movement meant. One physician wrote, "A trained and educated nurse would soon become most popular and trusted. She would co-operate with the physician in a most



Fig. 27.—Miss Nightingale and her nurses, St. Thomas' Hospital, London, 1867. (Original in possession of St. Thomas' Hospital. Published in cooperation with the "Nursing Times" and with the approval of Dame Alicia Lloyd-Still, in charge of the Nightingale School.)

efficient manner, her presence would inspire the patient with confidence, and she would be the means of restoring peace and order to a distracted household."

It had been hoped that Miss Nightingale would take personal charge of the school, but her health would not permit it. She was not even able to go to the opening exercises. Mrs. Wardroper, a woman of strong personality and previous executive experience, was chosen for the posi-

tion, but for years Miss Nightingale acted as chief adviser on every detail of the work.

In June, 1860, 15 selected probationers were admitted for training at St. Thomas'. They worked alongside the old-style nurses, whom they only gradually replaced. The course of training was only one year, though nurses were required to remain in the hospital for three years. It was long before the time of training was increased.

The Nightingale nurses were designed less for private duty than for executive positions in hospitals. They became the pioneer heads of training-schools over all the world. Scotland, Canada, United States, Australia, and even Germany obtained heads for many of their early training-schools from among the Nightingale nurses. Up to 1890, during its first thirty years, the school trained 1005.

Miss Nightingale herself selected most of the candidates for training. She was especially keen at character reading, and almost unerring in her judgment of people.³ Those who saw the early Nightingale nurses were struck with "the bright, kindly, and pleasant spirit which seemed to pervade them." She always called the nurses her "daughters."

With Miss Nightingale as instigator of all details and methods, the work proved a success. The doctors were one by one convinced of the superiority of the new method and gradually came to voice their approval. They found

³ Some of Miss Nightingale's comments upon candidates for admission indicate the keenness of her intuition:

"Miss A., flippant, tituppy, pretension-y, ambitious, clever, not much feeling, talky, underbred, no religion, may be persevering from wish to excel; takes the thing up as an adventure.

"Miss B., seems a woman of good feeling and bad sense, much under the control of anyone who will try to persuade her.

"Miss C., a most capable little woman, no education, but one can't find it in one's heart to regret it; she seems as good as can be.

"Miss D., more cleverness than judgment, more activity than order, more hard sense than feeling.

"Miss E., as poor a two-fisted thing as I ever saw."—Cook.

their own work lighter and their field broadened, because they were able to do things which they had not before attempted on account of incompetent help. The fame of the school spread quickly through all countries.

Work for the Army.—Miss Nightingale's chief work, aside from the establishment of the school for nursing, was for the health and betterment of the British Army. While she was at Scutari she had established reading rooms, amusements, lectures, cafes, etc. for the soldiers; she had an obstetric ward for the wives of soldiers who were with the army. She had seen their sufferings in the Crimea, and she found that in time of peace the army death rate was twice that of civilians. She often called the soldiers her "children" and said, "No one can feel for the army as I do. Nine thousand of my children are lying, from causes which might have been prevented, in forgotten graves. But I can never forget." She was anxious that the lessons taught by the recent war should not be lost, but that permanent and radical reforms should be made. She had the ear of the government, and pushed her advantage.

She took up the matter of army reforms in a large way, and after many months of painstaking work put before the Queen and her ministers a remarkable document—"Notes Affecting the Health, Efficiency, and Hospital Administration of the British Army." It has been called "one of the most valuable contributions ever made to hospital administration in the time of war."⁴

It is a significant fact that the methods which she recommended were those which were later adopted by the Japanese with such marked success. In their Russian and later campaigns they had the lowest death rate and the highest standard of health that any army had ever attained.⁵

⁴ Dr. Henry Hurd of Johns Hopkins Hospital.

⁵ "The soldier, when leaving home, was made to understand that should he become disabled by any preventable disease he would be

Miss Nightingale always considered this her most important work, calling what she did in the Crimea "mere child's play" in comparison.

Her Seclusion.—From about 1860 she rarely went out, and for many years did most of her work from her bed; but she worked with a vigor and efficiency that few well persons do. She lived in London with only her servants and her secretary, who was always a man. She saw many people, but only on business. She is known to have refused to see queens and princesses when they came for social calls, though she always admitted anyone who came in the interests of the army or of nursing.

Her Work for India.—After her work for the army was well under way she took up the enormous subject of sanitation in India, and for forty years devoted much time to it. The work was planned and carried out through a Royal Commission, and her connection with it never appeared, though it was she who made the plans and saw that they were carried out.

She worked out a health program for all the millions of India's population, and much of it has been put into force, with far-reaching results. Probably no woman, and few men, have, in the world's history, planned such a masterly undertaking.

Her Political Influence.—She was personally acquainted

looked upon by physicians and by the public as a discredit to himself, his family, and his country. He went to war to obey orders.

"He was given a package of antiseptic dressings, told to guard it carefully, and instructed how to use it when wounded.

"He was told to take a bath and to put on clean underclothing before going into battle.

"He was told to keep a supply of boiled water or tea in his canteen, and to drink no water when on the march except from wells or springs previously labeled as safe by the sanitary officer."—"Medicine in Japan," by Dr. John Berry.

not only with the Queen and most of the cabinet, but knew every Prime Minister of her time, the royalty of other nations, and such men as John Stuart Mill, Benjamin Jowett, Gladstone, Spurgeon, etc. These men came to her

Address
35 South Co.
Park Lane W.
Oct 17/74

My dear Sir

I need scarcely tell you how thankful I am for this appointment to Madras.

Please God great things will come of it. Shall you think well to introduce into your scheme the diversion of sewage from the River Cooum: & to arrange the works that there will always be water in the river at a suitable level: ~ that the banks shall be planted with trees?

It is however quite an impertinence for me to direct your attention to points of importance.

But the point of almost greatest importance of all is:

that your presence in India should be utilized for inspecting & reporting on the improvement of the more considerable Stations

Your St Petersburg paper is our
 Advertisement which I hope will bear fruit
 as you deserve.

As you understand sanitary work so thoroughly,
 & are now on your way to aid the Madras
 Government with your advice regarding
 one station where there are British troops,
 it is possible that it might be arranged for
 you to give other large stations the benefit
 of your advice, reporting on the sanitary
 works required for these stations. And so for
 the first time we should have an account
 of their real condition.

God speed you:

May believe me
 ever yours most faithfully
 Florence Nightingale

W. Clark Esq

Fig. 28.—Copy of autograph letter of Miss Nightingale concerning Indian sanitation.

for advice and deferred to her judgment; and she never failed to measure up to their confidence in her.⁶

⁶ She was an advocate of equal suffrage. She said: "I am convinced that political power is the greatest that it is possible to wield for human happiness, and I can neither approve of women who decline the responsibility of it, nor of men who would shut them out from it. Until women do wield it, in an open, direct manner, I am convinced that the evils can never be satisfactorily dealt with."

Adviser to the World.—Besides her controlling interest in the Nightingale School, she gradually came to be adviser-in-general to the whole United Kingdom upon everything pertaining to hospitals and nursing.

She was called upon to criticize plans for new hospitals, to advise in every detail of construction, equipment, management, and question of policy. She helped in the starting of many schools of nursing, and wrote thousands (literally) of letters upon nursing subjects.

Every new phase of nursing was brought to her for criticism and approval. William Rathbone consulted her before he began the workhouse and district nursing in Liverpool (see Chapter VI); those who organized some of the early training-schools in America came to see her before starting them; when the matter of state registration for nurses came up in England she was the leader of the opposition and the chief cause of its defeat. In short, throughout her whole long life, there was hardly a move made of any importance to the nursing world in which she did not have a part.

Her Writings on Hospitals and Nursing.—Her "Notes on Hospitals," published in 1858, is considered the most valuable work of the sort that has ever been produced, and it revolutionized hospital construction. Before her time hospitals had beautiful and imposing buildings, but they were sadly lacking in all things pertaining to the intimate care of patients. Her practical mind and deep sympathy made her hammer away at details, necessary if uninteresting, until she convinced at least a part of her generation that the comfort and welfare of the patient is really the chief consideration, and that sanitation is more important to a hospital than architecture.

Her "Notes on Nursing," published in 1859, always has had an enormous sale, and was still, fifty years after, a standard work—"an immortal classic." *The Lancet*, the great British medical journal, said of it, "This is a very

remarkable book. If it should produce one half the good which it ought to, Florence Nightingale will have conferred a greater benefit on her kind and have achieved a higher claim to their gratitude than any woman of her time." It was one of the first textbooks on nursing, and is one of the best books ever written on domestic sanitation. Every nurse should become familiar with it. A few quotations from it will serve to illustrate its sound sense:

"The sufferings generally considered to be inevitable and incident to the disease are very often not the symptoms of disease at all, but of the want of fresh air, of light, or of warmth, or of cleanliness, or of quiet, or of punctuality and care in the administration of diet.

"Volumes are written upon the effect of the mind upon the body. . . . I wish that a little more was thought of the effect of the body upon the mind. Believe me, almost any sick person who behaves decently well exercises more self-control every moment of his day than you ever will know till you are sick yourself.

"Merely looking at the sick is not observing. To look is not always to see. It needs a high degree of training to look so that looking shall tell the nurse aright. . . . A conscientious nurse is not necessarily an observing nurse, and life or death may lie with the good observer.

"The matron should be one whose desire is that the probationers shall learn—a rarer thing than is usually supposed. . . . The nurses must really be the matron's children. A training-school without a mother is worse than children without parents. . . . In disciplinary matters none but a woman can understand a woman."

"Nursing should not be a profession. It should be a *calling*.

"The art is that of nursing the sick. Please mark, not nursing sickness. . . . This is the reason why nursing proper can only be taught by the patient's bedside and in the sickroom or ward. Lectures and books are but valuable accessories."

Her published writings number over 100, nearly all on hospital, nursing or sanitary topics.

Her Statement of the Principles of Training.—While Miss Nightingale was but human, it seems likely that she was nearly infallible in matters pertaining to the training of nurses. Her rare union of head and heart qualities, her

ability to keep sight of minutest details without losing her grasp of the fundamentals, and her wide knowledge and long experience fitted her to speak with almost supreme authority.

Miss Nightingale's philosophy of nursing was: (1) it requires a special "call"; (2) there must be an underlying basis of religious ardor; (3) it is an art, and must therefore continually progress; (4) good nursing always has a definite moral influence.

She characterized the *essentials* of a nurses' training-school as two:

First, That nurses should be technically trained in hospitals organized *for the purpose*.

Second, That they should live in homes fit to form their moral lives and discipline.

Very few schools in the world have followed out this first principle.

She insisted that the matron (superintendent of nurses) be in full control of her school.

She proclaimed her *purpose* in training nurses to be that they might know how to give proper *care to the sick*. Most of our modern hospitals announce that they organize a school of nursing "to provide trained *nursing for the hospital*." If these two purposes are analyzed, they will be found fundamentally different. The difference is at bottom economic, and we have not yet found the solution.

She always actively opposed state registration for nurses. She felt that the qualities which make a good nurse are so largely personal that an examination of any sort cannot test nor record them. She favored a plan by which the nurse should furnish recent credentials.

It is said of her: "Her chief contribution to the inheritance of the race has been that, besides demonstrating in action the full protection of the allied arts of nursing and sanitation, she has left in her writings a philosophy of

nursing, together with an intellectual demonstration of the scientific and natural basis of hygiene and its practical application, and has laid down once and for all their essential underlying principles with a clarity, a logic, an originality, and a depth of reflection that mark the genius and place her work among the classics."⁷

Her Later Years.—Sir Edward Cook, who had access to intimate family records which no one else had, says of the latter part of her life: "For a few years after she was seventy-five she was able to enjoy life; then her powers gradually failed. . . . She had outgrown the weakness of heart and nerves of her middle life, and though she still kept her room, she now [1900] made an impression of vigorous and robust old age. She had worked actively up to this time. . . . For the last fifteen years of her life she seldom left her room. Her eyesight failed, her power of writing went. In 1902 she was persuaded to have a companion, who was really her private secretary.

"Two Royal decorations for her services in the army and elsewhere were bestowed upon her in 1883. The crowning honors of her life, when in 1907 King Edward conferred upon her the Order of Merit,⁸ and in 1908 granted her the Freedom of the City of London, came to her when memory and apprehension were failing.

Death and Burial.—She died in August, 1910, aged ninety years and three months. Her family was asked to allow her to be buried in Westminster Abbey, but they knew her wishes and refused. She was laid in the family plot at East Wellow, near Romney, in Hampshire, and the only mark upon the grave is a small cross with her name and the dates.

Public monuments to her have been set up in Florence,

⁷ "History of Nursing," by Dock and Nutting.

⁸ The highest honor bestowed by the British Crown. She was the first *woman* to receive it.

Italy, in Derby, Milbank, and London. There are beautiful ones at St. Thomas' Hospital, St. Paul's Cathedral, and in Calcutta, India.

The Fundamentals of Her Character.—Let us think of Florence Nightingale, then, not merely as a self-sacrificing heroine, but as a woman possessed of the twofold gift of a



Fig. 29.—Florence Nightingale late in life. (From a photograph by Miss Bosanquet, 1906.)

mind masterly and virile enough to formulate and carry out the world's great enterprises, and of a mother heart which took into its tenderness the whole British Army and the whole sisterhood of nurses, besides every human being who was sick and suffering.

Her sympathies were broad and deep, her feelings intense,

and they always immediately translated themselves into action. She could not conceive of one feeling sorry for a person or a condition and doing nothing about it. For a whole lifetime she sacrificed her personal happiness and devoted herself to the slow, difficult, and painful processes of the reformer in the realest, truest, and best sense of that term.

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1820 Florence Nightingale born.
- 1851 Took training at Kaiserswerth.
- 1854-56 In the Crimean war.
- 1856 The Nightingale Fund.
- 1860 Founded the Nightingale School at St. Thomas.
- 1910 Died.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS

Upon Miss Nightingale's return from the Crimea she found herself a popular heroine.

The Nightingale Fund was established at the suggestion of Sir Sidney Herbert to provide for the training of nurses. St. Thomas' Hospital, London, was selected as the home of the Nightingale School, which was established in 1860.

Mrs. Wardroper was head of the school, but Miss Nightingale was really in control and remained so for most of her life, though her health did not permit her to do active work.

Her labor for betterment of health conditions in the British Army was one of her most important pieces of work, and occupied several years.

Her planning of proper sanitation for India, which was done through a period of forty years, was probably her greatest work, but is least known.

She wielded a marked political influence.

She became adviser-in-general on all hospital and nurs-

ing topics for the whole United Kingdom and for other countries.

She wrote much. Her "Notes on Hospitals" is regarded a classic. Her "Notes on Nursing" was, even after fifty years, a standard work.

The principles which she laid down for the training of nurses are still considered correct. They have never been improved upon.

She opposed state registration for nurses.

She worked actively up to about 1900, and after that failed in mind and body. She died in 1910 at the age of ninety.

Her greatness was due to her remarkable combination of qualities. She had intense and loving sympathy with suffering, but her emotion was always displayed in action of the most vigorous sort, planned by a mind with a master grasp.