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Florence Nightingale, O.M.

THE FOUNDRESS OF MODERN TRAINED
NURSING.

The passing of Florence Nightingale deprives nurses, not only in the United Kingdom, but wherever modern nursing has been introduced, of the foundress of their profession, of the woman of genius, of action, of wise counsel, whose magnificent labours in relation to nursing are the heritage of humanity, and it is with a sense of personal bereavement that they have learnt of the quiet ending of her life so fruitful in good to her generation.

The name and fame of Florence Nightingale are associated chiefly in the public mind with Army Nursing Reform, as the result of her splendid efforts during the Crimean War, but it is because she realised and enforced the truth that nursing is not only a technical handicraft but a science that we owe her an inestimable debt. She has given to the nursing world practical, tangible laws; in her broad-minded and unanswerable works on nursing and hygiene she has laid down the principles of nursing too clearly to be refuted; she founded a school for the training of nurses in connection with St. Thomas's Hospital, with the nation's gift to her of £50,000, and led the way from the maze of good intentions to the clear path of practical usefulness, instituting nursing as a profession, on a scientific basis, peculiarly adapted for women.

It is rare for those who lay foundations to see great results from their work, but Miss Nightingale has lived to see not only Army nursing initiated on a sound foundation, but the uprising of training schools for nurses in this and many countries, the inauguration of nursing in the homes

of the poor in which, both in Liverpool when inaugurated by Mr. William Rathbone, and later in connection with Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute she took a deep interest; the improvement of nursing in workhouse infirmaries had her sincere sympathy and support; the training school at the St. Marylebone Infirmary was for many years in touch with that of the Nightingale school at St. Thomas's Hospital, and it will be remembered that Agnes Jones, who laid down her life during her effort to introduce trained nursing at the Brownlow Hill Infirmary, Liverpool, was one of the earliest Nightingale probationers.

As all the world knows, Miss Nightingale has been for many years a confirmed invalid, but to the last she retained her deep interest in nursing, and to her sick room were taken many nursing problems for solution. When we consider the secret of her success we must admit that fate was kind to her in giving her position, culture, and wealth. But these were incidental aids. Her work was permanently successful because of the period of stern preparation which preceded it. She spared no pains to make herself efficient, and when opportunity came to her it found her equipped and ready. She demanded thoroughness of others, but she imposed it first on herself; and added to this were a clear grasp of fundamental principles, and the power of translating them into action. Her determination enabled her to compel circumstances instead of being compelled by them; her genius enabled her to surmount difficulties and to establish order where chaos reigned, so that she stands out to-day as the most notable, as well as the best beloved, personality of the Crimean War.

To her bier the nurses of the world bring homage. Time will but add lustre to her fame, which is imperishable.

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