

young woman of decided character, and very keen over her profession, and we raced each other neck and neck in the examinations of our year. When I visited Miss Nightingale in the summer of 1880, she asked me who was the best probationer of the year, and I proudly replied—'Isla Stewart.' Then I left St. Thomas', and was a year at Edinburgh, and when I returned to take charge of a medical ward, Isla Stewart was in charge of one of the best surgical wards. She was a despot in her ward, but a most kindly one as far as the patients were concerned, but she had no patience with stupid or slow probationers. She was greatly liked by all the doctors, and those she had to work with at St. Thomas's; and Mrs. Wardroper was greatly annoyed when she left to take charge of the Darent Small-pox Camp. There were a thousand patients and several hundred nurses, men and women, and she got the whole place into as good order as possible. It was certainly the work there, hard and rough as it was, that gave her the experience of organisation and government that proved so helpful to her afterwards at St. Bartholomew's, but at the same time, I believe, it accounted for a certain brusqueness of manner which never quite left her in after life." It was during her twenty-three years' work at St. Bartholomew's Hospital that we find Miss Isla Stewart maturing and developing in the most extraordinary way, and I think we ought to note here one of her most striking characteristics, as it is one that left perhaps the greatest mark on her work of later years. That was her wonderful power of growth—I mean the growth and development of all her higher powers and faculties. Even in the early days of her work, her thirst for knowledge was one of the most striking things about her, as one of her old friends said to me: "She sucked you dry, no superficial knowledge satisfied her, she must get to the bottom of her subject, master it in all its details."

Later on in her life this characteristic developed into the most remarkable power of growth. She never stood still, she was always growing and developing on all sides of her character—from the books she read, from the friends she associated with, from the professional women she made it her business to meet from all parts of the world, as they visited our England. She was one of those women—and how rare they are!—who threw open the doors and windows of her mind and soul, to let God's light flow in from all sources, whether close at home in her own hospital, or from influences from distant lands across the seas. As we look at Miss Isla Stewart's work during her twenty-three years at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, it

is well to bear this striking characteristic of her in mind, since it throws a great light on what we may truly say was the international nature of her work for our profession.

Which of us realises all that has been established for the nursing profession during these twenty-three years? How out of the chaos of twenty-five years ago, gradually, step by step, order has been established, until we stand today on the threshold of the open door through which surely we have a vision of our profession, organised and protected by the State in the very near future.

Through all these stages as we look back, we find Miss Stewart always occupying a leading position in the front ranks of the battle.

#### INFLUENCE ON THE NURSING PROFESSION.

Now that we have a sketch—though but a brief and incomplete one—of Miss Stewart's life's work before us, we ask ourselves what impression, what influence has it all left on the Nursing Profession? Well, I am not sure that we who stand on the threshold of the closed door, are perhaps in the best position to judge of the extent of this influence. Personally, I have no doubt whatever that the generations who follow us, when they speak of Florence Nightingale as the pioneer, the woman who created the trained nurse, will also speak in the same breath of Isla Stewart, as one of the first fruits of this work, and point to her as one of the most celebrated women, who built up, developed and established our profession on the foundations laid by our "Lady of the Lamp." And I feel sure, too, that in our day—here and now—there will be no dissentient voice, when I say that Miss Isla Stewart has left her mark for ever, as one of the greatest educational and most International Leaders of our work that we have ever known.

No sketch of this life would be complete without a brief note of one or two personal touches, which it is well to take before we try to see by what special process Miss Isla Stewart managed her people, and surely we shall all want to find some mention first of her social qualities.

After describing her charming and generous hospitality, and mentioning her beautiful needlework, "almost priceless in perfection," the speaker continued:—

And now as we reach the end of our sketch, we must ask ourselves what was the secret of Miss Isla Stewart's power of managing her people and directing her hospital. Not by rules, for rules were almost unknown—not by a system of suspicion and tale-bearing, for the woman who tried to carry tales to Miss Stewart learnt her lesson by sad experience, and never

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