

**THE**  
**BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING**  
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED  
**THE NURSING RECORD**  
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,455

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1916.

Vol. LVI.

**EDITORIAL.**

**TRAINED WOMANHOOD.**

"It is fitting that your Majesty, on behalf of English womanhood, should unveil this monument."

The nursing profession will, with one accord, endorse the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the speech which we quote below. Whose hand but that of the Queen of these Realms should unveil the memorial to the incomparable genius of the founder of the science of nursing in the crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral?

On the arrival of the Queen the Archbishop said:—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,—

It is my privilege as spokesman of those who are here, and of very many who are not here, to ask Your Majesty to unveil a monument of beauty and importance in itself, with a significance enhanced tenfold by the circumstances which in the nation's life surround this hour of its unveiling. More than half a century has passed since the dark and anxious winter of 1854, when under the clear eye, and the firm hand, of a lady whose vision and capacity were on a par with her splendid devotion, chaos and mismanagement began to disappear from our Army hospitals, a new era of nursing was inaugurated, and the name of Florence Nightingale was on every lip.

In a few short weeks the puzzled curiosity, and the half adulatory, half critical surprise with which her enterprise was greeted, had been merged into universal acclaim of gratitude and praise, and into the modern life of 'this troublesome world' a new benediction had been born.

For half a century we have thanked God for what Florence Nightingale has wrought and taught, but we did not know its range, or its greatness, until now. So it is fitting that your Majesty, on behalf of English womanhood, should unveil this monument in a year when, in the nation's need, tens of thousands of women are, with a persistency of 'quiet devotion, and a ministry of steadily increasing skill, following the paths wherein 'the Lady with the Lamp' was pioneer.

It is easy, or rather it is not easy, to measure what the difference might have been, had that pioneer been a woman of unbalanced enthusiasm, however eager, or of mere plodding devotion, however praiseworthy; the lead so given might easily have been discredited, and therefore fruitless of result; but when to a buoyant faith, a courageous hope, and a large love, were superadded the gifts of penetrating judgment, of potent personal influence, and of almost unrivalled administrative skill, the fruitfulness of the leadership was immediately secure.

England, and through England the whole world, know now, to a degree they never knew before, in camp and hospital, on land and sea, the priceless value of the gentle deftness, and the tender skill of *trained* womanhood, both in peace time, and when the horrors of war are at their worst.

We do well to set here, in our Cathedral, among our warriors' tombs, the monument of one to whom we owe so much, and I ask your Majesty to make visible to all of us a beautiful and enduring reminder of the lessons of her life."

Her Majesty then said, "I have great pleasure in unveiling this memorial," and there was revealed the marble bas-relief, in an alabaster frame, depicting Florence Nightingale holding a cup to the lips of a wounded soldier. Above the plaque the words, "Blessed are the merciful," and below, "Florence Nightingale, O.M. Born May 12th, 1820. Died August 13th, 1910."

Above in the Cathedral a vast congregation, including members of the nursing staffs of all the principal hospitals and Services, convalescent soldiers, and a contingent of 100 sailors, awaited the conclusion of the service, which was held under the dome, when the words read by the Dean were singularly appropriate:

"These were honoured in their generation and were the glory of their times. There be of them that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported; and some there be which have no memorial. . . . Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)