

It was indeed a solemn moment. We all came quietly away and passed out of the "house of treasures" full of tender thoughts and gratitude, the very humble worshippers of stupendous Genius.

Gathered together in front of stately Embley, its gracious owner bid us good-bye. We tried to express to him something of our appreciation of a blessed hour, but sadly failed, we fear, to convey a tithe of what we felt. Life may have many years and the years many memorable days, but this one golden hour is of imperishable memory.

The Goal of the Day's Pilgrimage.

We set out once more for the goal of the day's pilgrimage and soon we were in sight of East Wellow Church.

We entered the graveyard from a country lane and almost immediately our eyes were held by a stone with a small black cross and the letters F. N. beneath this inscribed on the Nightingale family tomb. In silence we gathered round this hallowed place and, as we stood there, time had suddenly become space; spread out before us was the long vista of the years. The broad highway of nursing evolution had many by-paths now, many ramifications bright with the light of preventive progress and the lamp that knowledge has brought to the science of healing. And, from one aspect at least, the simplicity of the last resting place of one of England's greatest daughters did not seem altogether out of place—for death was swallowed up in the victory of a vast achievement. We stood silently, reverently, round the President of the British College of Nurses as, with the words "In homage" she stooped to place some beautiful white flowers below the stone—flowers not brought, via London, from some foreign land but grown in Romsey, the lovely town near to Florence Nightingale's home. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." Under the green turf lay all that remains of the earthly temple of the spirit of Florence Nightingale, she who had brought the candle that was to light again the path of nursing development after the darkness that fell upon it on the Reformation. It was an unforgettable moment this for a few of us as we stood round that other leader who had crowned the work of the founder of modern nursing by bringing the candle that was to light the path that led up and into the ranks of the Professions. Then silently, singly or in small groups, we passed into the ancient church where Florence Nightingale must often have worshipped, on the walls of which a black and white marble tablet is placed to her memory over a portrait in water-colour by Lady Eastlake.

Soon we were packed again into our large and very modern chariot, speeding along to get a glimpse of the antiquities of Romsey Abbey, to drink a friendly cup of tea in Winchester, to peep inside the doors of the great Cathedral there, to start off on a new route home and to watch the dusk of an October night stealing softly over the beauties of English wood and lane and meadow. Just twelve hours there and back, but twelve hours that seemed like a day of beautiful melody, melody falling into a lovely solemn movement there in East Wellow churchyard, twelve hours of memories to shine into long months that will bring their inevitable toll of labour and effort ere summer comes again to clothe the "Ramblers'" broad highway with the beauty that the sunshine draws from this old brown earth of ours.

E. G. F. and I. M.

HOW TO REACH ROMSEY BY TRAIN.

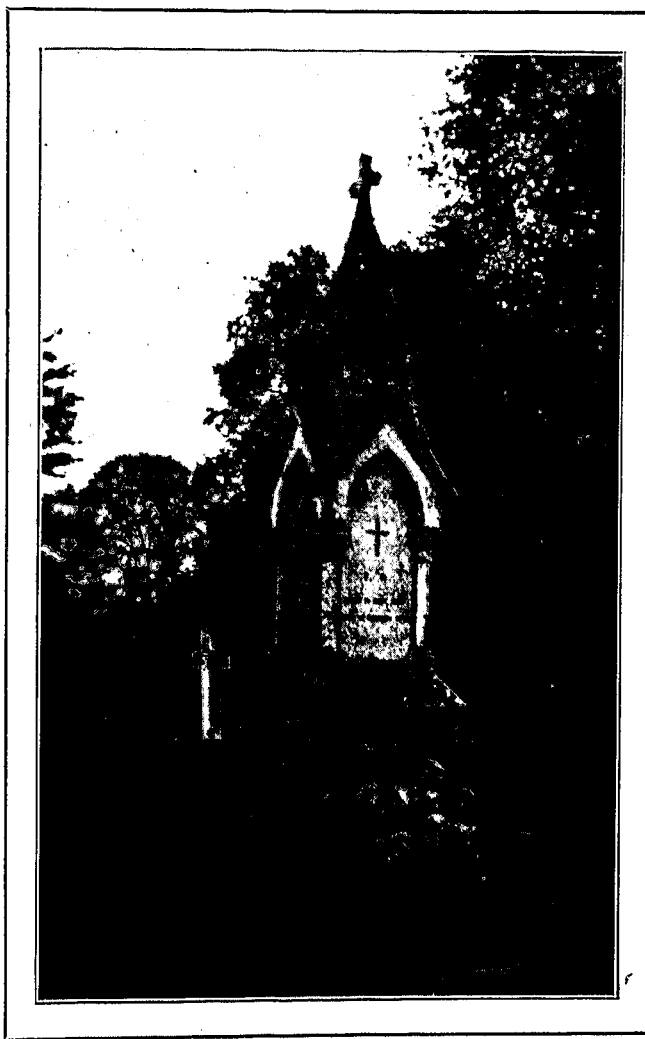
Those who wish to make a pilgrimage to East Wellow can travel by the Southern Railway, from Waterloo to Romsey (about 4 miles distant) in a little under three hours. It is also accessible from Salisbury and Southampton.

Romsey, besides claiming the honour of being the home of Florence Nightingale, is the birthplace of the great Lord Palmerston, whose ancestral estate (Broadlands) adjoins the town, and also Embley Park. Lord Palmerston, and his wife are both buried in Westminster Abbey, so the little town of Romsey, of some 4,000 inhabitants, had already sent forth into the world one found worthy of the greatest distinction which can be conferred on the nation's dead—sepulture in Westminster Abbey—before that honour was offered to and refused by the Executors of Miss Nightingale on her behalf.

Of Romsey and its wonderful Abbey, dating back 1,000 years, its lovely river the Test, famed for its salmon and trout fishing, and of the beautiful country surrounding the town this is not a place to speak now, but those who wish to pay a visit to Wellow could not do better than make Romsey

their headquarters for as long as possible. They will find much to interest and please them.

A more secluded spot could scarcely be found than Wellow. It is well that the shrine of the Founder of Modern Nursing should be in so remote a spot. It can never become a place visited by the sightseer and the curious, but must always be the Mecca of devout pilgrims, like the grave of Charles Kingsley, at Eversley, where there is no need to point the way to strangers, for it is indicated by the tiny path in the turf trodden bare by hundreds of reverent feet.



TOMB OF THE NIGHTINGALE FAMILY,
EAST WELLOW CHURCHYARD.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)