

her remaining in London to work with Mrs. Ranyard as a Scripture Reader—work she loved. At last, in the summer of 1861, Agnes got permission to enter St. Thomas's Hospital as Nightingale Probationer, determined to get all the training then available. To her, nursing was a sacred calling of teaching and healing. She had the same conviction as expressed by Florence Nightingale in her paper on Agnes Jones, published in *Good Words*, June, 1858. "Nursing is an Art: and if it is to be made an art, requires as exclusive a devotion, as hard a preparation, as any painter's or sculptor's work; for what is the having to do with dead canvas or cold marble, compared with having to do with the

attempt had been made to nurse the sick other than by the old inmates.

In a letter written after nearly two years' work there she writes: "I sometimes wonder if there is a worse place on earth than Liverpool, and I am sure its Workhouse is burdened with a large proportion of its vilest."

She started with some 40 nurses and probationers, 12 from St. Thomas's. An attempt to train some of the ex-pauper women had to be abandoned. In another letter she writes: "I am almost distracted between sickness and anxiety and drunkenness. One Head Nurse very ill and her sister worn out watching her; and of the ex-pauper women in training who were paid their wages on Friday, five came in tipsy."

There are few details of her work as there are no records either in letters or memoranda: she was too busy to write much. There were about 1,500 patients absolutely undisciplined. Here is a specimen of her day, no idle one. 5.30 a.m., she went in her dressing gown to unlock the door for the kitchen women. At 6, she rang the bell for the nurses. At 6.30 all assembled for prayers in the nurses' sitting room. At 7 Breakfasts began. Often she made a round of the wards at 6 and if there was an anxious case she would be up two or three times in the night. After a race round the wards to see that all the breakfasts were correct she came to her own at the head of the table, where nurses, probationers, assistants and scourers were seated. At 7.30 she gave the orders for the day, then made another round of the wards. Gave out stores till 12, when first dinner began. She always carved for and dined herself with the nurses and probationers and when remonstrated with for not having rest and quiet even at her meals, she replied that the moral influence of her presence in such a mixed community was not the least important part of her day's work. Interviews and stores again till 4 p.m., then presiding at tea, then wards to see the dressings done.

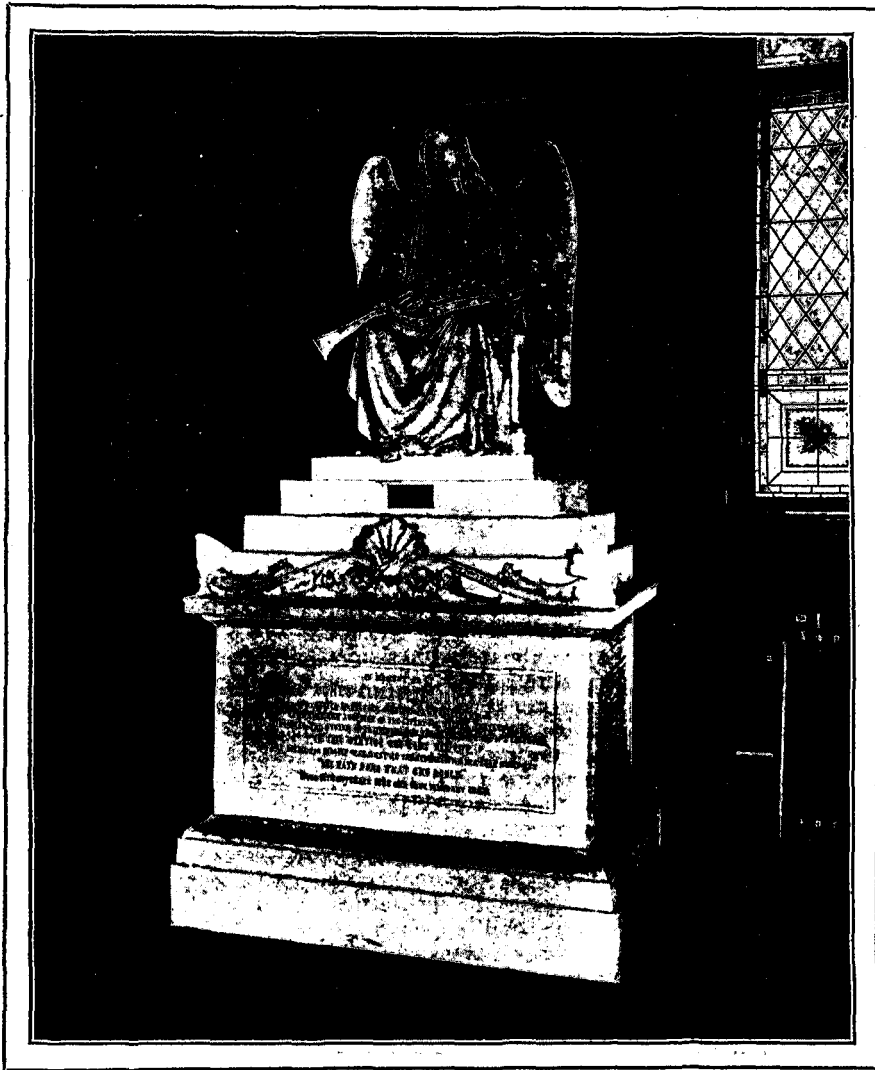
Here her practical knowledge of nursing was invaluable, both for teaching and to her authority. At 9 the night-nurses were visited. Prayers were at 9.30, then another round of the wards, and it was generally 11 p.m. before she finished.

It was by such strenuous work and by quiet courage and determination that she reduced order out of chaos. Florence Nightingale said, "all literally rose up and called her blessed."

Alas, Agnes Jones paid the price that so many Pioneers have paid—her life.

In 1868, Typhus Fever was being nursed in the hospital. She contracted the disease, which at first seemed to run a normal course, but double pneumonia set in and she died on February 19th, mourned by the entire Hospital and the whole of the city but leaving as her lasting monument one of the finest pieces of work ever done by woman.

The picture of the beautiful monument to Miss Agnes Jones appeared in the *Nightingale Fellowship Journal*, January, 1933, and is here reproduced by the kind permission of the President, Miss Lloyd Still, and of the authorities of the Walton Hospital, Liverpool.



Monument erected to Miss Agnes Elizabeth Jones at the Brownlow Hill Infirmary, Liverpool. (Transferred 1928 to Walton Hospital, Rice Lane, Liverpool.)

living body, the temple of God's Spirit. It is one of the fine arts: I had almost said the finest of the fine arts. There is no such thing as amateur art; there is no such thing as amateur nursing."

"Agnes Jones had scarcely three years of active service but they are remembered and the effects of them felt to-day because of all the preparation that preceded them."

In the Spring of 1865 she entered on her duties as Superintendent of Nurses of Brownlow Hill Workhouse Infirmary, notorious for its depravity and vice, and where no

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)