

Joannis, President, National Association of Trained Nurses of France, and was very cordially welcomed.

Mme. Costres made an eloquent reply and amidst applause the Roumanian flag was planted in the appropriate receptacle and its National Anthem applauded.

#### THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ORATION.

Then came the Florence Nightingale Oration delivered by Sir George Newman, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.D., D.C.L., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., and the Chairman in introducing him to the Meeting said:—

"Those of us who were alive in the middle of the last century recall the charm of oratory as valued by the ancients. It was by the spoken word that honour was done to the revered dead.

My proposal that an Oration be spoken in honour of Florence Nightingale from time to time has met with approval, and to-night we have the exceeding good fortune to be present when the first Florence Nightingale Oration will be delivered by Sir George Newman, the most sincere student of her qualities in the world—to Sir George Newman not only the mortal life, but the light of her spirit, and the depth of her soul have been revealed. We shall realise as he speaks to us that death cannot wither her, and that her greatness is the heritage of the ages.

Let her light shine upon us."

#### THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ORATION BY SIR GEORGE NEWMAN.

(Abridged.)

On rising Sir George Newman, who was received with applause, said he was very sensible of the honour done to him by the distinguished lady who was their Chairman.

As an old servant of the Crown he belonged to that company, one of whose qualifications was that they were expected to hold their tongues, and he had no claim to be an orator, but now that he had retired the dog was unmuzzled.

He then delivered the first Florence Nightingale Oration, which will always be remembered by those who were privileged to hear it as an Oration of high distinction, and as the Chairman had foretold, showing that Sir George Newman had, in his deep study of Miss Nightingale's character, obtained an insight into her soul.

The lecturer emphasised the appropriateness of the great Congress of the nurses of many nations coming together to honour and pay homage to Miss Nightingale, for they, above all people in the world, were her soldiers, and they did wisely and well to honour her name on this occasion and in this place.

Miss Nightingale lived to a great age, and practically went out of office in 1856, but throughout her life she remained the courageous defender of the sick. The little oil lamp that she used to carry in the hospital wards at Scutari, and which was immortalised by the poet Longfellow, caught hold of the popular imagination and she became widely known as "the Lady with the Lamp," and in her reorganisation of our hospitals, in her work for army reform, as the creator of modern nursing, she was in very deed "a Lady with a Lamp."

When we came to consider Miss Nightingale and her work, critically, historically, scientifically, without any distortion of the truth, we found in it a most extraordinary work. It was the history of an astounding volume of industry extending over three generations.

Sometimes we see her as a Hebrew prophet, warning, declaiming, sometimes as a practical mystic, again as an intellectualist and an artist, an educationist, a soldier in understanding and command, and for all time a hospital nurse. Sometimes to be persuaded, sometimes immovable as a rock, like "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

We all know, in a general way, what Miss Nightingale did for the wounded during the Crimean War. What Kinglake said of her, or George Trevelyan: "The real hero of the Crimean War was Florence Nightingale," and its most striking effect was modern nursing. She brought order and efficiency out of chaos and disorder, and put an end to the confusion and red tape which imperilled the health, the very lives of our soldiers during the Crimean War, but not for many years did the reforms which she instituted arrive at fruition. Miss Nightingale worked throughout her life first for the British soldier and all soldiers, secondly for sanitation in India.

She established in 1860 the Nightingale Training School for Nurses in connection with St. Thomas's Hospital from the money subscribed as a gift to her after the Crimean War.

She deeply interested herself in the sanitation of the army in India and rejoiced at the appointment of Lord Lawrence as Secretary of State for India after the Indian Mutiny. "I sing with joy," she said, "every day at Lord Lawrence's government in India."

Miss Nightingale also interested herself in Poor Law Reform and sent Miss Agnes Jones and other Nightingale nurses to organise the nursing in the Royal Infirmary, Liverpool.

Lastly, she worked with Henri Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross Society, in obtaining the recognition of the principle of the care of all wounded soldiers of whatever nationality, and drafted with her own hand the proposal for the neutrality of all Red Cross hospitals.

There we had the great lady's programme of public service and we could discard at once all legendary fables concerning her.

In estimating Miss Nightingale's character after 60 years of public service, we must realise that her character was complex, she made use of her high spirited will power, she had the genius to capture what seemed desirable to her from circumstances. She might indeed have said "I control circumstances—not circumstances me."

It had been said that Miss Nightingale was autocratic, self willed and in discipline a martinet. These observations disturbed him, said Sir George Newman, not at all. We must not assume that in Miss Nightingale we had an angel of irreproachable impeccability. She had her faults and made many mistakes. But her workmanship was all in one piece and it was of national and social importance. Every class of the community was included in it. The chain was complete. But let us not remain where Miss Nightingale left us. It was not a dead hand which was laid too heavily upon us. We were pledged to advance. Miss Nightingale was, without doubt, an international pioneer of the whole science and art of preventive medicine. In addressing this great international assembly of nurses Sir George Newman concluded: Let us endeavour each in her own land and her own way, to act always upon that same high plane of Miss Nightingale's motives, and gratefully accept in our dealings, each with the other, the glorious inspiration of her life and work.

My friends, said the lecturer, I belong to the profession of medicine, allied to the great Sisterhood of Nursing, for to know each other and to understand each other is always and every time to make a juster judgment of each other.

Enthusiastic applause greeted Sir George Newman as he resumed his seat.

#### His Excellency the Swiss Minister, M. Charles Paravicini, moved a vote of thanks.

The Chairman then called upon His Excellency the Swiss Minister, M. Charles Paravicini, to move a vote of thanks to Sir George Newman.

M. Paravicini said he thought he must have been chosen to move this vote of thanks because his country

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