

A Garden of Rare Delight.

Then the head gardener arrived and it was a liberal education to listen to all his wonderful knowledge of trees and flowers.

We were shown by Mrs. Crosfield the lovely grounds and gardens on either side of the long walk which extends for a quarter of a mile from the house. We passed through wonders of sylvan beauty, first by the rose garden—in which a quaint fountain with Italian characteristics which is supposed to have been brought by Miss Nightingale from Italy was greatly admired; then we came to the rock garden and on to the erica garden. Thickets of flowering shrubs, rhododendrons and azaleas, which make this demesne a gorgeous paradise in Spring. Now in high summer it is equally supreme. Read what an entranced visitor writes:—

"Nothing could have been more delightful than the stroll through the grounds of Embley Park, typical of the stately homes of England, of which, alas! so many are passing from our ken.

"We started on the path leading by the great cedar tree, where Miss Nightingale taught the youth of the village on summer days; we leave the rose garden behind on our right to find a heavenly herbaceous border, in summer splendour.

"Wishing we could stay and gaze, we passed under spreading trees of great variety, and shrubbery-skirted lawns on either hand, where Japanese maples of palest tender green, bright red and bronze, were ablaze in the sunlight; shady nooks misty with the soft blue of the Himalayan blue poppy, and magnificent royal ferns of great dimensions, seven and eight feet in height. Then we wandered up hill into wilder growth by a meandering stream at intervals broadening into pools brilliant with colonies of rare iris and primula, when reaching the crest of the hill, we came to the Wishing Seat, sometimes known as Cromwell's Seat, on which we are told he was supposed to have rested. Here we had opportunity to dwell on the beauty of rocky terraces, carpeted with heather just ascended, outlined by spreading beech, and where luxurious conifers flourished and white-foliaged eucalyptus trees peeped. A garden of rare delight, in which to spend days not hours, and get the fragrant memory of its beauty, never to be forgotten by those of us privileged to pass through its shades."

We, of course, all sat on the Wishing Seat and no doubt longed for delights which never will be ours!

Tea in the "Noble Drawing-room."

When we came again to the garden front of the house we entered the mansion by the garden entrance and through a small room to the Library, still panelled with the white fixture bookcases of the Nightingale occupation. It took but a glance to realise we were passing through a treasure house indeed. From the Library we came into a magnificent Hall, running the width of the house where the antique furniture and fittings were very fine Jacobean chairs with rose puce velvet seats, a fine refectory table, magnificent old masters on the walls and exquisite rugs, far too precious for shoes to step on. Leading from this beautiful Hall we passed into the "noble Drawing-room" which Florence Nightingale "longed to turn into a hospital ward." Instead a most delicious feast of welcome was spread and here in groups the nurses from far and near enjoyed the generous hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Crosfield, some no doubt realising just here Florence Nightingale had dispensed tea for her lady mother and many distinguished guests.

Florence Nightingale's Bedroom.

After tea, following our kind hostess, we were taken up the panelled oak staircase, which gleamed like silver in contrast to the glowing rose-coloured carpets, along a

corridor, up a little stairway, and then we entered the bedroom used in the days long passed by Florence Nightingale and from the windows gazed out over the sunlit park, a scene exquisitely English upon which her eyes must so often have rested.

It was indeed a solemn moment fraught for nurses with deep and loving gratitude to be associated for all time with this woman of supreme genius.

We came quietly from the room in strange and joyful serenity.

On the hour of departure, much to everyone's pleasure, Mr. Crosfield arrived in his becoming Court dress straight from attendance as High Sheriff on the Judge at Winchester. This was great good fortune, as his guests were enabled to express thanks to their gracious host for the great privilege of visiting Embley Park, and for the delightful hospitality extended to them.

Gathered in front of the stately mansion, its very kind owner and Mrs. Crosfield waved their guests good-bye. "What lovely people," someone whispered. Yes, indeed.

Life may have many blessed hours in store for those present, but this one golden day will remain for ever an imperishable memory for those who realised its significance. To have stood by the Grave of Honour in silent homage, to have passed where her feet have passed! Surely a never-to-be-forgotten experience. From now onward the "Nightingale Foundation" should acquire a forceful influence in lands where these things can be told by pilgrims who have returned from their pious journey.

Our chariot passed slowly under magnificent trees towards the beautiful wrought-iron gates, flanked on either side by picturesque "pepper-pot" lodges, and we went on our homeward way through counties of far stretching sylvan beauty and little rose-red towns of the Georgian era; somewhat subdued in spirit as those having touched a sacred shrine.

We watched the dusk of a July night stealing softly over the beauties of English wood and meadow, and meditated on what seemed like a day of beautiful melody, melody falling into a lovely solemn movement there in East Wellow churchyard. As we had stood there time had suddenly become space. Spread out before us was the long vista of years. The simplicity of the last resting place of one of England's greatest daughters was swallowed up in the victory of a vast achievement. Soon the moon would come forth and shed beams over that hallowed spot, and behold a shroud of many colours woven by the love of many nations' nurses.

Another Golden Day.

And yet another golden day illumines memory, July 16th, 1937, when with their unfailing kindness Mr. and Mrs. Crosfield entertained right royally the members of the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses, then in Congress in London, from all the civilised countries in the world, the aim of all amity and service. The lovely garden was in glorious summer beauty, and the scent of the lavender bed with its misty sweetness lingers to this day. Never in all the far lands to which each visitor returned can this soul to soul communion fade away.

And now the kind friend who gave special facilities to our Nurses on so many occasions to share his splendid domain, has passed to his rest. Our hearts ever grateful for past joy in so much beauty, and for the touch of his kindly hand, will hold this great and good man in affectionate remembrance all our days.

E. G. F.

*He who blesses most is blest,
And God shall own his worth
Who toils to leave as his bequest
An added beauty to the earth.*

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

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