

She knew no fear in pressing her cause when negotiating with Secretaries of State, Permanent Heads of Departments and Prime Ministers, whom she could bully or cajole.

Cecil Woodham-Smith relates with admirable clarity the history of Miss Nightingale's determined opposition to the proposal to give State recognition to trained nurses—recommended by the founders of the British Nurses Association—whose object was to establish also a register.*

Nevertheless we feel every one who would realise the significance of Florence Nightingale's monumental work—not only for the health of the British soldier, but for the whole world for all time—should read Cecil Woodham-Smith's beautiful biography of this mistic, this unerring stacionian, powerful administrator and great reformer—Florence Nightingale.

* Those who have lived to see the result of Miss Nightingale's bitter opposition to State Registration of Nurses, cannot but regret that so great a reformer failed to support this just measure.

This was the beginning of a divided camp in the Nursing Profession, from which it has not yet recovered.

It took the brilliant Pioneer and her followers for this movement thirty years of struggle to gain State Registration for Nurses, during which time Permanent Officials, Members of Parliament and other powerful elements were definitely against this reform—at a cost to nurses themselves of some £20,000.

A.S.B.

*Constable, London. Price 15/- net.

Nursing History in Brief.†

By *Minnie Goodnow, R.N.*
(Third Edition).

I like this new edition of Nursing by Miss Goodnow, R.N. It is presented in a conversational, broadminded and un-biased manner, which is most refreshing. Students of Nursing History will not find much that is new in connection with Nursing in ancient times, but on entering the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a real and successful effort has been made to classify a welter of events and important developments.

The author has carefully outlined the progress of nursing in many lands and has drawn interesting parallels with the progress being maintained in the various countries at one time.

The brief chapter on Florence Nightingale is a little gem of concise accuracy and is beautifully written. I found it moving to re-read the quotation from Longfellow's "Santa Filomena," which I again reproduce for you:

"Lo, in that hour of misery, a Lady
with a Lamp I see,
Pass through the glimmering gloom
and flit from room to room,
And saw, as in a dream of bliss, the
speechless sufferer turn to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls upon the
darkened walls."

It was nice of an American Nurse to pick out that beautiful verse for us once again, and embody it in her History of Nursing.

Then of course American Nursing History is presented in detail—followed by important professional developments in Canada and Great Britain. The whole text is lavishly illustrated, and it is quite thrilling to turn the pages and meet the likenesses of outstanding Nursing personalities of all countries, many of whom we had the pleasure of meeting at the International Congress of 1947 in Atlantic City.

Altogether, it is an excellent and most accurate History—one of the best which has so far been presented to the Profession. We wish the author much success and many more editions.

G. M. H.

*W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia and London (7, George Street, W.C.2). Price 15s. net.

"Come my best friends, my books, and lead me on!"—

COWLEY.

Hallowe'en.

THE USE OF ALL SAINTS DAY is celebrated on October 31st, when it is customary, particularly in Scotland, to observe with ceremonies of a superstitious character, presumed to have the power of eliciting certain interesting secrets of fate from wizard spirits of the earth and air allowed in that brief space of time to move about and be accessible to the influence of charms employed.

It is hoped that many, especially children, have added to the fun and merriment by partaking in the various activities such as bobbing for apples or seeking for future wives and husbands in the mirror at midnight.

Long before Guy Fawkes set foot in Parliament, bonfires, burning of effigies and the fireworks were part of the Hallowe'en celebrations, and many people believed that the bonfires on November 5th had really no connection with Guy Fawkes but were an extension of the Hallowe'en Festivities. At all times Hallowe'en was ever a time of merriment and dancing, also much feasting, and as a festival it long antedates the Christian era. The early church changed the night of all the witches into the eve of All Saints, and it is thought possible that the ancient Celts marked the beginning of their year with All Hallows Day.

The festival is said to derive its name from the early English "Halig" meaning "Holy Man," and we are supposed to dismiss from our minds the trials and tribulations which we are facing at this time, and allow our thoughts to run in lighter vein. We may listen to the age-old stories of the witches flying through the air on broomsticks or of fairies curdling the cream in the dairies. In Wales, it is believed that if you go to the Crossroads on Hallowe'en and listen to the wind you will learn all the most important things that will befall you during the future twelve months.

One of the many Scottish superstitions demands that a maiden shall take three pails of water and stand them in her bedroom, then pin to her nightdress opposite her heart three leaves of green holly and go to sleep. She will be aroused from her sleep by three yells as though from the throats of three bears. As these sounds die away they will be succeeded by three hoarse laughs after which the image of her future husband will appear. If he is deeply attached to her he will change the position of the pails, or if otherwise, he will pass from the room without touching them. There are many minor superstitions during the course of the Hallowe'en Fires which take the form of games and customs.

Ireland has various superstitions of Hallowe'en, but according to Irish history the beliefs were only successfully proved when a very strong appeal in the words unmentionable was made to the Evil One. So many of their superstitions differed from those elsewhere for Ireland held that Hallowe'en was indeed an evil night.

And so Hallowe'en provides a time for much merriment. "Frame your mind to mirth and merriment which bar a thousand harms and lengthen life," was Shakespeare's motto, and it is also said that cheerfulness puts the heart in tune to praise God and so honours religion by proclaiming to the world that we serve a good master.

All Hallows is a day of remembrance, and though we find life difficult and the road rough and twisted, we can still strive to be just in our judgment; we may not be saintly but we can try to make others happy by our example. All Hallows comes to us as a reminder—we must not let it pass unheeded. Shakespeare hath written:—

"The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes,
Tis the mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown."

M, B, M,

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