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John Croft Esq.

F.N.  
1873

## ADDRESS

FROM

MISS NIGHTINGALE

TO THE

PROBATIONER-NURSES IN THE "NIGHTINGALE FUND" SCHOOL,

AT

ST. THOMAS' HOSPITAL,

AND THE

NURSES WHO WERE FORMERLY TRAINED THERE.

Printed for Private Circulation.

I.—For us who Nurse, our Nursing is a thing, which, unless in it we are making *progress* every year, every month, every week,—take my word for it we are going *back*.

The more experience we gain, the more progress we can make. The progress you make in your year's training with us is as nothing to what you must make every year *after* your year's training is over.

A woman who thinks in herself: "Now I am a 'full' Nurse, a 'skilled' Nurse—I have learnt all that there is to be learnt;" take my word for it she does not know *what a Nurse is*, and she never *will* know: she is *gone* back already.

Conceit and Nursing cannot exist in the same person any more than new patches on an old garment.

Every year of her service a good Nurse will say: "I learn something every day."

I have had more experience in all countries and in different ways of Hospitals than almost any one ever had before, (there were no opportunities for learning in *my* youth such as you have had;) but if I could recover strength so much as to walk about, I would begin all over again. I would come for a year's training to St. Thomas' Hospital under your admirable Matron, (and I venture to add that she would find me the closest in obedience to all our rules), sure that I should learn every day, learn all the more for my past experience, and then I would try to be learning every day to the last hour of my life:—

"And when his legs were cutt off,

"He fought upon his stumps,"

says the ballad; so when I could no longer learn by nursing others, I would learn by being nursed, by seeing Nurses practise upon *me*. It is all experience.

NOTE.—This Address was read by Sir HARRY VERNEY, the Chairman of the Council of the Nightingale Fund, to the Probationer-Nurses in the School at St. Thomas' Hospital, on the 8th May, 1872.

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FROM

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TO THE

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AT

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28TH APRIL, 1876.

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And thus do we return to the question we asked before—how near can we come to Him whose name we bear, when we call ourselves Christians\*?—to His gentleness and goodness—to His “authority” over others—in following Him whom we would fain make our pattern?

And the highest “authority” which a woman especially can attain among her fellow women must come from her doing God’s work here in the same spirit, and with the same thoroughness, that Christ did, though we follow him but ‘afar off.’

IV.—Lastly, it is charity to nurse sick bodies well; it is greater charity to nurse well and patiently sick minds, tiresome sufferers. But there is a greater charity even than these:—to do good to those who are not good to us, to behave well to those who behave ill to us, to serve with love those who do not even receive our service with good temper, to forgive on the instant any slight, which we may have received, or may have fancied we have received, or any worse injury.

If we cannot “do good” to those who “persecute” us—for *we* are not “persecuted”; if we cannot pray “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”—for none are nailing us to a cross—how much more must we try to serve with patience and love any who use us spitefully, to nurse with all our hearts any thankless peevish patients!

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AGNES JONES, who died as Matron of the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, (whom you may have heard of as "Una,") wrote from the Workhouse in the last year of her life: "I mean to stay at this post forty years, God willing; but I must come back to St. Thomas' as soon as I have a holiday; I shall learn so much more" (she had been a year at St. Thomas') "now that I have more experience."

When I was a child, I remember reading that Sir Isaac Newton, who was, as you know, perhaps the greatest discoverer among the Stars and the Earth's wonders who ever lived, said in his last hours: "I seem to myself like a child who has been playing with a few pebbles on the sea-shore, leaving unsearched all the wonders of the great Ocean beyond."

By the side of this put a Nurse leaving her Training School and reckoning up what she has learnt, ending with—"The only wonder is that one head can contain it all." [What a small head it must be then!]

I seem to have remembered all through life Sir Isaac Newton's words.

And to nurse—that is, under Doctors' orders, to cure or to prevent sickness and maiming, Surgical and Medical,—is a field, a road of which one may safely say: There is no end—no end in what we may be learning every day.\*

I have sometimes heard:—"But have we not reason to be conceited, when we compare ourselves to —— and ——?" (naming drinking, immoral, careless, dishonest Nurses.) I will not think it possible that such things can ever be said among *us*. Taking it even upon the worldly ground, what woman among us, instead of looking to that which is higher, will of her own accord compare herself with that which is lower—with immoral women?

Does not the Apostle say: "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind; *and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;*" and what higher "calling" can we have than Nursing? but then we must "press forward," we have indeed *not* "apprehended" if we have not "apprehended" even so much as this.

There is a little story about "the Pharisee," known over all Christendom. Should Christ come again upon the earth, would he have to apply that parable to us?

And now, let me say a thing which I am sure must have been in all your minds before this: if, unless we improve every day in our Nursing, we are going back: how much more must it be, that, unless we improve every day in our conduct as Christian women, followers of Him by whose name we call ourselves, we shall be going back.

This applies of course to every woman in the world; but it applies more especially to us, because we know no one calling in the world, except it be that of teaching, in which *what we can do* depends so much upon *what we are*. To be a good Nurse one must be a good woman; or one is truly nothing but a tinkling bell. To be a good woman at all, one must be an improving woman; for stagnant waters sooner or later, and stagnant air, as we know ourselves, always grows corrupt and unfit for use.

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\* There is a well known Society abroad, (for charitable works) of which the Members go through a two years' probation on their first entering, but after ten years they return and go through a second probation of one year. This is one of the most striking recognitions I know of the fact, that progress is always to be made: that grown-up people, even of middle age, ought always to have their education going on. But only those *can* learn *after* middle age who have gone on learning up to middle age.



Is any one of us a *stagnant woman*? Let it not have to be said by any one of us: I left this Home a worse woman than I came into it. I came in with earnest purpose, and now I think of little but my own satisfaction and a good place.

When the head and the hands are very full, as in Nursing, it is so easy, so very easy, if the heart has not an earnest purpose for God and our neighbour, to end in doing one's work only for oneself—and not at all, even when we *seem* to be serving our neighbours—not at all for them or for God.

"In the midst of this multiplicity of works and of women," said an excellent Matron, "much may go wrong; if," she added, "self is the only object." Then it is "all *go* and all *do*," and "no food" for the best part of us.

I should hardly like to talk of a subject which, after all, must be very much between each one of us and her God,—which is hardly a matter for *talk* at all, and certainly not for me, who cannot be among you (though there is nothing in the world I should so dearly wish), but that I thought perhaps you might like to hear of things which persons in the same situation, that is, in different Training Schools on the Continent, have said to me.

I will mention two or three.

(1). One said, "The greatest help I ever had in life was, that we were taught in our Training School always to raise our hearts to God the first thing on waking in the morning."

Now it need hardly be said that we cannot make a rule for this; a rule will not teach this, any more than making a rule that the chimney shall not smoke will make the smoke go up the chimney.

If we occupy ourselves the last thing at night with rushing about, gossiping in one another's rooms; if our last thoughts at night are of some slight against ourselves, or spite against another, or about each other's tempers, it is needless to say that our first thoughts in the morning will not be of God.

Perhaps there may even have been some quarrel; and if those who pretend to be educated women indulge in these irreligious uneducated disputes, what a scandal before those less educated to whom an example, not a stone of offence, should be set!

"A thousand irreligious cursed hours," (as some poet says,) have not seldom, in the lives of all but a few whom we may truly call Saints upon earth, been spent on some feeling of ill will. And can we expect to be really able to lift up our hearts the first thing in the morning to the God of "good will towards men" if we do this?

I speak for myself, even more perhaps than for others.

(2). Another woman once said to me—

I was taught in my Training School, never to have those long inward discussions with myself, those interminable conversations inside myself, which make up so much more of our own thoughts than we are aware. If it was something about my duties, I went straight to my Superiors, and asked for leave or advice; if it was any of those useless or ill-tempered thoughts about one another, or those that were put over us, we were taught to lay them before God and get the better of them, before they got the better of us.

A spark can be put out while it is a spark, if it falls on our dress, but not when it has set the whole dress in flames. So it is with an ill-tempered thought against another. And who will tell how much of our thoughts these occupy?



I suppose, of course, that those who think themselves better than others are bent upon setting them a better example.

II.—And this brings me to something else that I may have said before: [I can always correct others though I cannot always correct myself]—it is about jealousies and punctilios as to ranks, classes and offices, when employed in one good work. What an injury this jealous woman is doing, not to others or not to others so much as to herself—she is doing it to herself! She is not getting out of her work the advantage, the improvement to her own character, the nobleness (for to be useful is the only true nobleness) which God has appointed her that work to attain. She is not getting out of her work what God has given it her for; but just the contrary.

[Nurses are not children, but women; and if they can't do this for themselves, no one can for them.]

I think it is one of Shakespeare's heroes who says, "I laboured to be wretched." How true that is! How true it is of some people all their lives; and perhaps there is not one of us who could not say it with truth of herself at one time or other: I laboured to be mean and contemptible and small and ill-tempered, by being revengeful of petty slights.

A woman once said: "What signifies it to me that this one does me an injury or the other speaks ill of me, if I do not deserve it? The injury strikes God before it strikes me, and if He forgives it, why should not I? I hope I love Him better than I do myself." This may sound fanciful; but is there not truth in it?

What a privilege it is; the work that God has given us Nurses to do, if we will only let Him have His own way with us—a greater privilege to my mind than He has given to any women, (except to those who are teachers), because *we* can always be useful, always "ministering" to others, real followers of Him who said that he came "not to be ministered unto" but to minister. Cannot we fancy Him saying to *us*, If any one thinks herself greater among you, let her minister unto others.

This is not to say that we are to be doing other people's work. Quite the reverse. The very essence of all good organisation is, that every body should do her (or his) own work in such a way as to help and not to hinder every one else's work.

But, this being arranged, that any one should say, I am "put upon" by having to associate with so-and-so; or, by *not* having so-and-so to associate with; or, by not having such a post; or, by having such a post; or, by my Superiors "walking upon me," or, "dancing" upon me, (you may laugh, but such things have actually been said); or &c., &c.—this is simply making the peace of God impossible—the call of God (for in all work He calls us) of none effect; it is grieving the Spirit of God; it is doing our best to make all free-will associations intolerable.

In "Religious Orders" this is provided against by enforcing blind, unconditional obedience through the fears and promises of a Church.

Does it not seem to you that the greater freedom of secular Nursing Institutions, as it requires (or ought to require) greater individual responsibility, greater self-command in each one, greater nobleness in each, greater *self-possession* in *patience*—so, that very need of self-possession, of greater nobleness in each, requires (or ought to require) greater thought in each, more discretion, and higher, not less, obedience? For the obedience of intelligence, not the obedience of slavery, is what *we* want.

And you who have to be Head Nurses, or Sisters of Wards, well know what I mean, for you have to be Ward *Mistresses* as well as Nurses; and how can she (the Ward Mistress) command if she



has not learnt how to obey? If she cannot enforce upon herself to obey rules with discretion, how can she enforce upon her Ward to obey rules with discretion?

The slave obeys with stupid obedience, with deceitful evasion of service, or with careless eye service. Now, we cannot suppose God to be satisfied or pleased with stupidity and carelessness. The free woman in Christ obeys, or rather *seconds* all the rules, all the orders given her, with intelligence, with all her heart, and with all her strength, and with all her *mind*.

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

III.—And of those who have to be Ward Mistresses, as well as those who are Ward Mistresses already, or in any charge of trust or authority, I will ask, if Sisters and Head Nurses will allow me to ask of them, as I have so often asked of myself—

What is it that made our Lord speak "as one having authority"? What was the key to *His* "authority"? Is it anything which we, trying to be "like Him," could have—like Him?

What are the qualities which give us authority—which enable us to exercise some charge or control over others with "authority"? It is not the charge or position itself, for we often see persons in a position of authority, who have no authority at all; and, on the other hand, we sometimes see persons in the very humblest position who exercise a great influence or authority on all around them.

The very first element for having control over others, is, of course, to have control over oneself. If I cannot take charge of myself, I cannot take charge of others. The next, perhaps, is—not to try to "seem" anything, but to *be* what we would *seem*.

A person in charge must be felt more than she is heard—not heard more than she is felt. She must fulfil her charge without noisy disputes, by the silent power of a consistent life, in which there is no *seeming*, and no hiding, but plenty of discretion. She must exercise authority without appearing to exercise it.

A person, but more especially a woman, in charge must have a quieter and more impartial mind than those under her, in order to influence them by the best part of them and not by the worst.

We (Sisters) think that we must often make allowances for them, and sometimes put ourselves in their place. And I will appeal to Sisters to say whether we must not observe more than we speak, instead of speaking more than we observe. We must not give an order, much less a reproof, without being fully acquainted with both sides of the case. Else, having scolded wrongfully, we look rather foolish.

The person in charge, every one must see to be just and candid, looking at both sides, not moved by entreaties, or by likes and dislikes, but only by justice, and always reasonable, remembering and not forgetting the wants of those of whom she is in charge.

She must have a keen though generous insight into the characters of those she has to control. They must know that she *cares for* them even while she is checking them; or rather that she checks them *because* she cares for them. A woman *thus* reproofed is often made your friend for life; a word dropped in this way by a Sister in charge (I am speaking now solely to Sisters and Head Nurses) may sometimes show a probationer the unspeakable importance of this year of her life, when she must sow the seed of her future nursing in this world, (for although future years are of importance to train the plant and make it come up, yet if there is no seed nothing will come up) and of her future life through eternity.



Nay, I appeal again to Sisters' own experience, whether they have not known patients feel the same of words dropped before *them*.

We had in one of the Hospitals which we nurse, a little girl patient of seven years old, the child of a bad mother, who used to pray on her knees (when she did not know she was heard) her own little prayer that she might not forget, when she went away to what she already knew to be a bad life, the good words she had been taught. [In this great London, the time that children spend in Hospital is sometimes the only time in all their lives that they hear good words.] And sometimes we have had patients, widows of journeymen for instance, who had striven to the last to do for their children and place them all out in service or at work, die in our Hospitals, thanking God that they had had this time to collect their thoughts before death and to die 'so comfortably,' as they expressed it.

But, if a Ward is not kept in such a spirit, that patients can collect their thoughts, whether it is for life or for death, and that children can hear good words, of course these things will not happen.

Ward management is only made possible by kindness and sympathy. And the mere way in which a thing is said or done to patient, or probationer, makes all the difference. In a Ward too, where there is no *order* there can be no "*authority*," there must be noise and dispute.

Hospital Sisters are the only women who may be in charge really of men. Is this not enough to show how essential to them are those qualities which alone constitute real authority?

Never to have a quarrel with another; never to say things which rankle in another's mind; never when we are uncomfortable ourselves to make others uncomfortable—for quarrels come out of such very small matters—a hasty word, a sharp joke, a harsh order—without regard to these things, how can we take charge?

We may say, so and so is too weak, if she minds that. But, pray, are we not weak in the same way ourselves?

I have been in positions of authority myself and have always tried to remember, that to use such an advantage—for they cannot "oust" me, I can "oust" them—inconsiderately, is—cowardly. To be sharp upon them is worse in me than in them to be sharp upon me. No one can trample upon others, and govern them. To win them is half, I might say the whole secret of "having charge." If you find your way to their hearts, you may do what you like with them; and that authority is the most complete which is least perceived or asserted.

The world, whether of a Ward or of an Empire, is governed not by many words but by few; though some, especially women, seem to expect to govern by many words—by talk, and nothing else.

There is scarcely anything which interferes so much with charge over others as rash and inconsiderate talking, or as wearing one's thoughts on one's cap. There is scarcely anything which interferes so much with their respect for us as any want of simplicity in us. A person who is always thinking of herself—how she looks, what effect she produces upon others, what others will think or say of her—can scarcely ever hope to have charge of them to any purpose.

We ought to be what we want to seem, or those under us will find out very soon that we only *seem* what we ought to be.

If we think only of the duty we have in hand, we may hope to make the others think of it too. But if we are fidgety or uneasy about trifles, can we hope to impress them with the importance of essential things?

There is so much talk about persons now-a-days. Everybody criticises everybody. Everybody seems liable to be drawn into a current. Has there been such a current in our Probationers' Home?—



a current against somebody?—or in favor of everyone doing what she likes, pleasing herself, or getting promotion?

If any one gives way to all these distractions, and has no root of calmness in herself, she will not find it in any Hospital or Home.

"All this is as old as the hills," you will say. Yes, it is as old as Christianity; and is not that the more reason for us to begin to practise it to-day? "*To-day*, if ye will hear my voice," says the Father; "*To-day* ye shall be with me in Paradise," says the Son; and He does not say this only to the dying; for Heaven may begin here, and "The kingdom of heaven is within," He tells us.

I have returned now to the probationers, as you see.

Most of you here present will be in a few years in charge of others, filling posts of responsibility. *All* are on the threshold of active life. Then our characters will be put to the test, whether in some position of charge or of subordination, or both. Shall we be found wanting? unable to control ourselves, therefore unable to control others? with many good qualities, perhaps, but owing to selfishness, conceit, to some want of purpose, some laxness, carelessness, lightness, vanity, some temper, habits of self-indulgence, or want of disinterestedness, unequal to the struggle of life, the business of life and ill adapted to the employment of Nursing which we have chosen for ourselves, and which, almost above all others, requires earnest purpose, and the reverse of all these faults. Thirty years hence, if we could suppose us all standing here again passing judgment on ourselves, and telling sincerely why one has succeeded, and another has failed; why the life of one has been a blessing to those she has had charge of, and another has gone from one thing to another, pleasing herself, and bringing nothing to good—what would we give to be able *now* to see all this before us?

Yet some of these reasons for failure or success we may anticipate now. Because so and so was or was not weak or vain; because she could or could not make herself respected; because she had no steadfastness in her, or on the contrary, because she had a fixed and steady purpose; because she was selfish or unselfish, disliked or beloved; because she could or could not keep her women together or manage her patients, or was or was not to be trusted in Ward business. And there are many other reasons which I might give you if it were right, or which you might give yourselves for the success or failure of those who have passed through this training school for the last eleven years.

Can we not see ourselves as others see us?

For the "world is a hard school-master," and punishes us without giving reasons, and much more severely than any Training School can, and when we can no longer perhaps correct the defect.

Good posts may be found for us; but can we keep them so as to fill them worthily?—or are we but unprofitable servants in fulfilling any charge?

Yet many of us are blinded to the truth by our own self-love even to the end. And we attribute to accident or ill-luck what is really the consequence of some weakness or error in ourselves.

But can we not see ourselves as God sees us? is a still more important question. For while we value the judgments of our superiors, and of our fellows, which may correct our own judgments, we must have also a higher standard which may correct theirs. We cannot altogether trust them, and still less can we trust ourselves. And we know, of course, that the worth of a life is not altogether measured by failure or success. We want to see our purposes, and the ways we take to fulfil such charge as may be given us, as they are in the sight of God.—"Thou God seest me."



And thus do we return to the question we asked before—how near can we come to Him whose name we bear, when we call ourselves Christians\*?—to His gentleness and goodness—to His “authority” over others—in following Him whom we would fain make our pattern?

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London, May 1872.

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28TH APRIL, 1876.

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1876.



April 28, 1876.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Again another year has brought us together to rejoice at our successes, and, if to grieve over some disappointments, to try together to find out—what is it? that may have brought them about, and to correct it.

God seems to have given His favour to the manner in which you have been working.

Thanks to you, each and all of you, for the pains you have taken to carry out the work. I hope you feel how great have been the pains bestowed upon you. I hope you feel (what is the truth) that your interests and comfort are as near the hearts of your Trainers as are those of the Patients, whom to nurse well you are being trained; and as those of the Patients are, I well know, near *your* hearts.

If you can say 'yes' to this, say it to-night to God. Say to Him a word of gratitude for Matron, for 'Home Sister's' care, for our Ward Sisters,—not omitting our kind Instructor.

You are not 'grumblers' at all: you do try to justify the great care given you—the confidence placed in you, and, after you have left this 'Home,' the freedom of action you enjoy—by that *intelligent* obedience to rules and orders, to render which is alone worthy of the name of 'Trained Nurse,' of God's soldier; and we shall be poor soldiers indeed, if we don't *train* ourselves for the battle.

But if discipline is ever looked upon as interference, then freedom has become lawlessness, and we are no 'Trained Nurses' at all.

The trained Englishwoman is the first Nurse in the world: *if*—IF she knows how to unite this intelligent obedience to commands with thoughtful and godly command of herself; and the one cannot exist without the other.

'The greatest evils in life,' said one of the world's highest statesmen, 'have had their rise from something which was thought of too little importance to attend to.' How we Nurses can echo that!

'Immense, incalculable misery' is due to 'the immoral'—he calls 'thoughtlessness' 'immoral'—'thoughtlessness' of women about little things: this is what our training is to counteract in us. Think nothing too small to be attended to in this way. Think everything too small of personal trouble or sensitiveness to be cared for in another way.

It is not knowledge only: it is practice we want. We only *know* a thing if we can *do* it. [There is a famous Italian proverb which says: 'So much'—and no more—'each knows as she *does*.']

You have been most attentive to your Classes: how much benefit is to be derived from them, you know: we need not tell you: they are invaluable.

Our Matron, our 'Home Sister,' our Medical Instructor, have all done their parts by us nobly. We will do our parts by them.

What we did last year we may look upon not as a matter of conceit, but of encouragement. We must not fail this year, and we'll not fail. We'll keep up to the mark: nay more, we will press on to a higher mark. For our 'calling' is a high one (the 'little things,' remember: a high excellence in little things).

And we must answer to the call ever more and more strenuously and ever more and more humbly too.



By and bye I have a few words to say about the 'little things.'

Now I say, we live together: let us live for each other's comfort; we are all working together; grasp the idea of this as a larger work than our own little pet hobbies, which are very narrow; our own little personal wishes, feelings, piques, or tempers. This is not individual work: a real Nurse sinks self. Remember we are not so many small selves, but members of a community.

'Little children, love one another.' To love, that is, to help one another, to strive together, to act together, to work for the same end, to bring to perfection the sisterly feeling of fellow-workers, without which nothing great is done, nothing good lasts. Might not St. John have been thinking of us Nurses in our Training Schools when he said that?

May God be with us all and we be *one* in Him and in His work.

God speed us all.  
Amen in our hearts.

## I.

1. These are some of the little things we need to attend to:

To be a Nurse *is* to be a Nurse: not to be a Nurse only when we are put to the work we like. If we can't work when we are put to the work we don't like—and Patients can't always be fitted to Nurses—that is behaving like a spoilt child, like a naughty girl: not like a Nurse.

If we can do the work we don't like from the higher motive till we do like it: that is one test of being a real Nurse.

A Nurse is not one who can only do what she does like, and can't do what she does not like.

For the Patients want according to their wants, and not according to the Nurse's likes or dislikes.

If you wish to be trained or exercised in those parts of the work you don't so much like and know you don't do so well, that is wishing to be a real Nurse.

If you wish to be trained or exercised only in that which you like and know you do well, it is needless to say that what you want is not to be a Trained Nurse but to do what you like.

If you want to do what you like and what you do well, it is for your own sake, for your own self-satisfaction, for conceit, in short, that you do it: that you come here—not for the sake of Nursing or of Training.

If you want to do what you like and what you do well for the sake of being praised by others, then you nurse for your own vanity, not for the sake of Nursing.

But if you wish to be trained to do *all* Nursing well, even what you do not like—trained to perfection in little things—that is Nursing for the sake of Nursing: for the sake of God and of your neighbour.

And remember, in little things as in great, No Cross, no Crown.

Nursing is said, most truly said, to be a high calling, an honourable calling.

But what does the honour lie in? In working hard during your training to learn and to do all things perfectly.

The honour does not lie in putting on Nursing like your uniform, your dress: though dishonour often lies in being neat in your uniform within doors and dressy in your finery out of doors.

Dishonour always lies in inconsistency.

Honour lies in loving perfection, consistency, and in working hard for it: in being ready to work patiently: to say not 'How clever I am!' but 'I am not yet worthy': but Nursing is worthy; and I will live to deserve and work to deserve to be called a Trained Nurse.

2. What you are in the 'Home' will surely influence you elsewhere and everywhere. Here are two of



the plain practical little things necessary to produce good Nurses, the want of attention to which produces some of the 'greatest evils in life!' quietness, cleanliness. (a) Quietness in moving about the 'Home;' in arranging your rooms, in not *slamming* every door after you; no noisy talking on the stairs and in the lobbies—forgetting at times some unfortunate Night Nurse in bed. But, if you are Nurses, Nurses ought to be going about quietly, whether Night Nurses are asleep or not. For a Sick Ward ought to be as quiet as a Sick Room; and a Sick Room, I need not say, ought to be the quietest place in God's Kingdom. Quietness in dress, especially being *consistent* in this matter when off duty and going out. And oh! let the Lady Probationers realise how important their example is in these things, so little and so great! If you are Nurses, Nurses ought not to be dressy, whether in or out of their uniform.

Do you remember that Christ holds up the wild flowers as our example in dress? Why? He says: God 'clothes' the field flowers. How does He clothe them?

First: their 'clothes' are exactly suitable for the kind of place they are in and the kind of work they have to do. So should ours be.

Second: field flowers are never double: double flowers change their useful stamens for showy petals, and so have no seeds. These double flowers are like the useless appendages now worn on the dress, and very much in your way. Wild flowers have purpose in all their beauty. So ought dress to have;—nothing purposeless about it.

Third: the colours of the wild flower are perfect in harmony, and not many of them.

Fourth: there is not a speck on the freshness with which flowers come out of the dirty earth.

Even when our clothes are getting rather old we may imitate the flower: for we may make them look as fresh as a daisy.

Whatsoever we do, whether we eat or drink *or dress*, let us do all to the glory of God.

But above all remember, 'be not anxious what ye shall put on: ' which is the real meaning of 'Take no thought.'

This is not my own idea: it was in a Bible lesson, never to be forgotten. And I knew a Nurse who dressed so nicely and quietly after she had heard this Bible lesson that you would think of her as a model. And alas! I have known, oh how many! whose dress was their snare.

Oh, my dear Nurses, whether gentlewomen or not, don't let people say of you that you are like 'Girls of the Period: ' let them say that you are like 'field flowers,' and welcome.

(b) Cleanliness in person and in our rooms, thinking nothing too small to be attended to in this respect.

And if these things are important in the 'Home,' think how important they are in the Wards, where cleanliness and fresh air not so much give life as *are* the very life of the Patients—and there can be no pure air without cleanliness; where the smallest carelessness may turn the scale from life to death: where Disinfectants, as one of your own Surgeons has said, are but a 'mystic rite.' Cleanliness is the only real Disinfectant. Remember that Typhoid Fever is distinctly a filth disease; that Consumption is distinctly the product of breathing foul air, especially at night; that in surgical cases, Erysipelas and Pyæmia are simply a poisoning of the blood—generally thro' some want of cleanliness or other. And do not speak of these, as little things, which determine the most momentous issues of life and death. I knew a Probationer who when washing a poor man's ulcerated leg, actually wiped it on his sheet, and excused herself by saying she had always seen it done so in another place. The least carelessness in not washing your hands between one bad case and another, and many another carelessness which it is plain I cannot mention here—it would not be nice, tho' it is much less nice to do it; [but I think of writing a short article on this very thing: Carelessnesses in cleanliness about Patients: their persons, utensils, bandages, towels, discharges, secretions,—all that which more especially falls to the duty of the Nurse and not of the Hospital;] the least carelessness, I say, in these things, which every Nurse can be careful or careless in, may cost a life: aye, may cost your own, or at least a finger. We have all seen poisoned fingers.



3. I read with more interest than if they were novels your case papers. Some are meagre, especially in the 'history.' Some are good. Please remember that, besides your own instruction, you can give me some too, by making these most interesting cases as interesting as possible, by making them full and accurate and entering the full history. If the history of every case were recorded, especially of Typhoid Fever, which is, as we said, a filthy disease, it is impossible to over-estimate the body of valuable information which would thus be got together, and which might go far, in the hands of Officers of Health and by recent laws, to prevent disease altogether. The District Nurses are most useful in this respect.

When we obey all God's laws as to cleanliness, fresh air, pure water, good habits, good dwellings, good drains, food and drink, work and exercise, health is the result: when we disobey, sickness. 110,000 lives are needlessly sacrificed every year in this kingdom by our disobedience, and 220,000 people are needlessly sick all the year round. And why? Because we will not know, will not obey God's simple Health-laws.

No epidemic can resist thorough cleanliness and fresh air.

4. You must not think of admiration, of conceit; you must think only of excellence: that is, if you wish to be a real Nurse. If we don't, we had better not be here. Don't let us put on any disguises: one must be a Nurse or nothing, if one chooses to be here at all.

The first thing is to be sure to serve God by helping every fellow-servant of God, and also many who are not servants of God at all—helping them, not by your words but by your acts, to become fellow-servants; then to build up, by learning to do every little thing to perfection, the real Nurse in ourselves.

You say, perhaps, or rather think: 'I don't do as I am bid, because I know better how to do it than the person who bids me.' Let me tell you this: the best nursing powers that ever constituted a genius of a Nurse afterwards are at first little or nothing more than the power of receiving training—a great capacity for obeying discipline.

If you can't be trained, if you can't obey the impulse and guidance of the training hand in the minutest particular in 'little things,' it's no use: you are no Nurse: you never will be: you are only a potterer in your own way.

Sir Harry Verney, your Chairman, who cares very much about you all, my brother-in-law, has had a frightful accident from his horse falling and rolling over him. Tho' by no means recovered, he is, we are thankful to say, out of danger. His two little grand-daughters, Ellen, aged 3, and Lettice, a baby, prayed for grandpapa. And then Ellen knelt, and Lettice stood at their mama's knee with her chubby hands clasped, and her serious blue eyes. Ellen looked fixedly at her, and began her prayers with 'Pray God, bless baby's handies.' It was so touching—the four baby hands—one does so long to dedicate all our Nurses' hands to all pure and lovely and earnest work. The dirtiest work may be pure and lovely: done for God and our neighbour; or rather there is *no* dirty work done in that way. And the little voice full of real love for her sister, tho' not understanding her own words! Oh, let us, who do understand our own words, all be sisters! and pray for and help one another's hands!

5. Is there any Nurse here who is a Pharisee? This seems a very cruel and unjust question.

We think of the Pharisees, when we read the terrible denunciation of them by our Master, as a small, peculiar, antiquated sect of 2,000 years ago. Are they not rather the least peculiar, the most widely-spread people of every time? A conceited Nurse who says, 'How much cleverer, how much better I am than other people': is she not a Pharisee? A Nurse who nurses well, to be seen of men, or for the love of power or praise, however hard she works—the Pharisees worked very hard—but without love or humility in her heart, or with more ambition and love of success than love of God or her neighbour, is she not a Pharisee? I am sure I often ask myself, sadly enough, Am I a Pharisee? in this sense: Am I, or am I not, doing this with a single eye to God's work, to serving Him and my neighbour, even tho' my 'neighbour' is as hostile to me as the Jew was to the Samaritan,—or am I doing it because I identify my selfish self with the work, and in so doing serve myself and not God? If so, then I am a Pharisee.



It is good to love our Training School and our body, and to wish to keep up its credit. We are bound to do so. That is helping God's work in the world. We are bound to try to be the 'salt of the world' in nursing; but if we are conceited, seeking *ourselves* in this, then we are not 'salt' but Pharisees.

I may be a Pharisee even in writing this to you, if I do it only for the love of our own credit, and not for the love of you and to serve God.

We should have zeal for God's sake and His work's sake; but some seem to have zeal for zeal's sake only.

Zeal does not make a Christian Nurse—tho' Christ was the most zealous medicine-r that ever was—(He says: 'The zeal of God's house hath eaten me up')—if it is zeal for our own credit and glory, and not for God's; zeal for our own work, and not for God's work; zeal for our own good and our own success, and not for our Patients' good; or for our Patients' good only to procure our own. Zeal by itself does not make a good Nurse: it makes a Pharisee. Christ is so strong upon this point of not being conceited, of not nursing to show what 'fine fellows' we are as Nurses, that He actually says 'it is conceited of us to let one of our hands know what the other does.' What will He say if He sees one of us doing all her work to let not only her other hand but other people know she does it? Yet all our best work which looks so well *may* be done from this motive.

And let me tell you a little secret. One of our Superintendents at a distance says that she finds she must not boast so much about St. Thomas'. Nor must you. People have heard too much about it. I dare say you remember the fine old Greek statesman who was banished because people were tired of hearing him called 'The Just.' Don't let people get tired of hearing you call St. Thomas 'The Just' when you are away from us. We shall not at all complain of your proving it 'The Just' by your training and conduct.

I read lately in a well-known medical journal, speaking of the 'Nightingale Nurses,' that the day is quite gone by when a novel would give a caricature of a Nurse as a 'Mrs. Gamp'—a drinking, brutal, ignorant, coarse old woman. The 'Nightingale Nurse,' it said, would be in a novel—What do you think?—an active, useful, clever Nurse. These are the parts I approve of; but what else do you think?—these are the parts I would like to be left out—a lively, rather pert, and very conceited young woman. Ah, there's the rub. You see what our name is 'up' for in the world. That's what I should like to be left out. This is what a friendly critic says of us, and we may be very sure that unfriendly critics say much worse. Do we deserve what they say of us? that is the question. Let us not have each one of us to say 'Yes' in our own hearts. Christ made no light matter of conceit.

Keep the usefulness, and let the conceit go.

6. And may I here say a few words of counsel to those who may be called upon to be Night Nurses? One of these asked me with tears to pray for her: I do pray for all of you, our dear Night Nurses. In my restless nights my thoughts turn to you incessantly by the bed-sides of restless and suffering Patients, and I pray God that He will make, thro' you, thro' your patience, your skill, your hope, faith and charity, every Ward into a Church, and teach us how to *be* the Gospel is the only way to 'preach the Gospel,' which Christ tells us is the duty of every one of us 'unto the end of the world'—every woman and Nurse of us all—and how a collection of any people trying to live like Christ is a Church. Did you ever think how Christ was a Nurse, and stood by the bed, and with his own hands nursed and 'did for' the sufferers? But, to return to those who may be called upon to be Night Nurses:

Do not abuse the liberty given you on emerging from the 'Home,' where you are cared for as if you were our children. Keep to regular hours by day for your meals, your sleep, your exercise. If you do not, you will never be able to do and stand the night work perfectly; if you do there is no reason why night nursing may not be as healthy as day. [I used to be very fond of the night when I was a Night Nurse. I know what it is: but then I had my day work to do besides. You have not.] Do not turn dressy in



your goings out by day. It is vulgar: it is mean to burst out into freedom in this way. There are circumstances of peculiar temptation when, after the restraints and motherly care of the 'Home,' you, the young ones, are put suddenly into circumstances of peculiar liberty. Is it not the time to act, like Daniel?

You ask me to pray for you. I give you the watchword:

Dare to be a Daniel,  
Dare to stand alone,  
Dare to have a purpose firm,  
Dare to make it known.

Let us repeat this together every night.

Daniel went thro' the hungry lions' den, because he would not deny God: he would not do what God told him not. You have not to go thro' lions, but you may have to be laughed at: you may find many temptations not to stand to your rule of life. You will say, perhaps, that your little sins are very different from denying God. Yes, and so is what you have to fear and to endure very different from what Daniel had to fear and to endure. He had to fear being eaten by savage wild beasts: you the not comrade-ing together. But as God delivered Daniel out of the lions' den, so He will deliver you. If you stand by Him, He will stand by you:

Standing by a purpose true,  
Heeding God's command:  
Honour them, the faithful few,  
All hail to Daniel's band!

All hail to Daniel's band, the Night Nurses of St. Thomas', the Night Nurses from the 'Home.' Oh, may God have this to say to you at the Last Day! Let 'the Judge, the Righteous Judge,' have to call us not 'the Pharisees,' but Daniel's band!

This is what I pray for you, for me, for all of us.

But what is it to be a Daniel's band? What is 'God's command' to Night Nurses?

It is—is it not?—not to slur over any duty—not the very least of all our duties—as Night Nurse: to be able to give a full, accurate, and minute account of each Patient the next morning: to be strictly reserved in your manner with gentlemen ['Thou, God, seest me': No one else]—to be honest and true. You don't know how well the Patients know you: how accurately they judge you. You can do them no good unless they see that you *live* what you say.

It is: not to go out showily dressed, and not to keep irregular hours with others in the day time.

Dare to have a purpose firm,  
Dare to make it known.

Watch—watch. Christ seems to have had a special word for Night Nurses: 'I say unto you, watch.' And He says: 'Lo, I am with you always,' when no one else is by.

And He divides us all, at this moment, into the 'wise virgins' and the 'foolish virgins.' Oh, let Him not find any 'foolish virgins' among our Night Nurses! Each Night Nurse has to stand alone in her Ward.

Dare to stand alone.

Let our Master be able to say some day that every one of the Patients has been the better, not only in body but in spirit—whether going to life or to death—for having been nursed by each one of you.



But one is gone: perhaps the dearest of all—Nurse Martha Rice.

I was the last to see her in England. She was so pleased to be going to Miss Machin at Montreal. She said it was no sacrifice, except the leaving her parents. She almost wished it had been, that she might have had something to give to God.

Now she *has* had something to give to God: her life.

'So young, so happy: all so happy together, when in their room they were always sitting round the table, so cheerful, reading their Bible together. She walked round the garden so happy that last night.'

So pure and fresh: there was something of the sweet savour of holiness about her. I could tell you of souls upon whom she made a great impression: all unknowing: simply by being herself.

A noble sort of girl: sound and holy in mind and heart: living with God. It is scarcely respectful to say how I liked her, now she is an angel in heaven; like a child to Miss Machin, who was like a mother to her: loved and nursed her day and night.

'So dear and bright a creature,' 'liked and respected by every one in the Hospital,' 'and, as a Nurse, hardly too much can be said in her favour.' 'To the Doctors, Patients, and Superintendent, she was simply invaluable.' 'The contrast between these Nurses and the best of others is to be keenly felt daily': 'doing bravely': 'perfectly obedient and pleasant to their Superintendent.'

Was Martha conceited with all this? She was one of the simplest, humblest Christian women I have ever known. All noble souls are simple, natural, and humble.

Let us be like her, and, like her, not conceited with it all. She was too brave to be conceited: too brave not to be humble. *She* had trained herself for the battle.

'With a nice, genial, respectful manner, which never left her, great firmness in duty, and steadiness that rendered her above suspicion': 'happy and interested in her charge.'

More above all petty calculations about self, all paltry wranglings, than almost any. How different for us, for her, had it not been so: could we not have mourned her, as we do. The others of the small Montreal staff who miss her so terribly will like to hear how we feel this. They were all with her when she died: Miss Machin sat up with her every night, and either she or Miss Blower never left her, day or night, during the last nine days of her illness. She died of typhoid fever: peritonitis the last three weeks; but, as she had survived so long, they hoped against hope up to Easter Day.

About seven days before her death, during her delirium, she said: 'The Lord has two wills: His will be done.' It is when we do not know what God's will is to be, that it is the hardest to will what He wills.

Strange to say, on Good Friday, tho' she was so delirious that there was difficulty in keeping her in bed, and she did not know what day it was, Christ on the Cross was her theme all the day long. 'Christ died on the Cross for me: and I want to go and die for Him.' She had indeed lived for Him. Then on Easter Day, she said to Miss Blower: 'I am happy, so happy: we are both happy, so very happy.' She said she was going to hear the 8th Psalm. Shall we remember Martha's favourite psalm? She spoke often about St. Thomas'.

She died the day after Easter Day. The change came at seven in the evening, and she lived till five o'clock the next morning, conscious to the last, repeating sentences, and answering by looks when she could speak no more. Her Saviour, whom she had so loved and followed in her life, was with her thro' the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and she felt Him there. She was happy. 'My best love,' she said, 'tell them it is all for the best, and I am not sorry I came out.'

Her parents have given her up nobly, though with bleeding hearts, with true submission to our Father's will: they *are* satisfied it is 'all for the best.'



All the Montreal Hospital shared our sorrow. The Doctors were full of kindness in their medical attendance. Mr. Redpath, who is a principal Director, and Mrs. Redpath were like a real father and mother to our people. Martha's death-bed and coffin were strewn with flowers.

Public and private prayers were offered up for her at Montreal during her illness. Who can say that they were not answered?

She spoke of dying: but without fear. We prayed that God would spare the child to us: but He had need of her.

Our Father arranged her going out: for she went, if ever woman did, with a single eye, to please Him and do her duty to the work and her Superintendent. 'Is it well with the child?' 'It is well.' Let us who feel her loss so deeply in the work not grudge her to God.

As one of you yourselves said: 'She died like a good soldier of Jesus Christ, well to the front.' Would any one of us wish it otherwise for her? Would any one of us wish a better lot for herself?

There is but one feeling among us all about her: that she lived as a noble Christian girl, and that she has been permitted to die nobly: in the post of honour, as a soldier thinks it glorious to die: in the midst of our work, so surely do we Nurses think it glorious to die.

But to be like her we must have a mind like hers: 'enduring, patient, firm, and meek.' I know that she sought of God the mind of Jesus Christ. 'Active, like His; like His, resigned;' copying His pattern: ready to 'endure hardness.'

We give her joy: it is our loss, not hers. She is gone to our Lord and her Lord. Made ripe so soon for her and our Father's house,—our tears are her joy. She is in another room of our Father's house. She bids us now give thanks for her. Think of that Easter morn when she rose again. She had indeed 'Another morn than ours'—that 17th of April!

### III.

LASTLY:—'Quit ye like men,' says St. Paul.

What does this mean? To fight on bravely, and humbly, because ye are men, and not Gods. To make progress all your lives: to go on and not to stop: Never. No turning back. No halting. No surrender.

Quit ye like women, he would have said to us Nurses. And what does this mean? Does it not mean much the same thing?—always to press on: no turning back, no giving in: always trying to make Nursing something better and better than it is every year; always like women, not like school-boys, in our quietness everywhere: 'in quietness and in confidence' possessing our strength: always like women, not like boys in borrowed plumes, in our dress: always, like women, quitting ourselves with the Patients, so that every one of them shall be the better, mind as well as body, for having been nursed by us. Trusting happily in God: 'There is a Providence over us,' one would say; 'If I am to have this' (something, or some post one wants), 'I shall have it; if I am not to have it, I shall not have it. What is there to be anxious about?' This is a plain saying, but who of us acts up to it?

No shrinking from work we don't like, like spoilt children: no selfish tempers about who is thought the most of, but 'in honour preferring one another:' no petty wranglings, so shameful before God, among women: remember the family at Bethany—(the book chosen by one of you in going to Montreal)—so may we be all one with each other: in Sisterly love: whether we are on this side the Atlantic or the other: on this or the other side the Tweed: and one with our Matron and Sisters: and one with our Great Master. And may this Home be like the Home of Bethany: one in the fellowship of our Father—



He calls us *fellow-workers*—and of His Son, our brother : He calls us Sisters : let us be His true Sisters : His Martha and Mary : whom He loved to stay with.

Hold the fort, for I am coming :

Jesus signals still :

Wave the answer back to heaven,

By Thy grace I will.

In a Nurse's career there is no time to fold the hands : it is only the cowardly and the conceited who do that. On, on : there is a hill to climb : there is also a 'Valley of Humiliation' to pass through before we cross the river—before we are welcomed home.

If Bunyan wrote a 'Pilgrim's Progress,' let us write—not in a book, but in our lives—a Nurse's Progress : for a Nurse is, beyond all others, a pilgrim.

On, on : till we can say the course is run : the goal is won : we have got home !

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.



The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Fourth Amendment

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