



FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ON WOMEN,  
MEDICINE, MIDWIFERY AND  
PROSTITUTION

LYNN McDONALD  
EDITOR

COLLECTED WORKS OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

**FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ON  
WOMEN, MEDICINE, MIDWIFERY  
AND PROSTITUTION**

**VOLUME 8  
OF THE COLLECTED WORKS OF  
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE**

# THE COLLECTED WORKS OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

## LIST OF VOLUMES

Note: Short title denoted by bold

Volume 1	Florence Nightingale: An Introduction to Her <b>Life and Family</b> , 2001
Volume 2	Florence Nightingale's <b>Spiritual Journey</b> : Biblical Annotations, Sermons and Journal Notes, 2001
Volume 3	Florence Nightingale's <b>Theology</b> : Essays, Letters and Journal Notes, 2002
Volume 4	Florence Nightingale on <b>Mysticism and Eastern Religions</b> , ed. Gérard Vallée, 2003
Volume 5	Florence Nightingale on <b>Society and Politics</b> , Philosophy, Science, Education and Literature, 2003
Volume 6	Florence Nightingale on <b>Public Health Care</b> , 2004
Volume 7	Florence Nightingale's <b>European Travels</b> , 2004
Volume 8	Florence Nightingale on <b>Women</b> , Medicine, Midwifery and Prostitution, 2005

*Tentative order:*

Volumes 9-10	Florence Nightingale and Public Health Care in India
Volume 11	Florence Nightingale's <i><b>Suggestions for Thought</b></i>
Volumes 12-13	Florence Nightingale and the Foundation of Professional Nursing
Volume 14	Florence Nightingale: The <b>Crimean War</b> and War Office Reform
Volume 15	Florence Nightingale on <b>War and Militarism</b>
Volume 16	Florence Nightingale and <b>Hospital Reform</b>

**FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ON  
WOMEN, MEDICINE, MIDWIFERY  
AND PROSTITUTION**

**LYNN McDONALD, EDITOR**

**VOLUME 8  
OF THE COLLECTED WORKS OF  
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE**

**Wilfrid Laurier University Press**  
[www.wlupress.wlu.ca](http://www.wlupress.wlu.ca)



We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program for our publishing activities.

## **Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

Nightingale, Florence, 1820-1910.

Florence Nightingale on women, medicine, midwifery and prostitution / Lynn McDonald, editor.

(Collected works of Florence Nightingale ; v. 8)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-88920-466-7

1. Nightingale, Florence, 1820-1910 — Political and social views. 2. Nightingale, Florence, 1820-1910 — Correspondence. 3. Women — Great Britain — Social conditions — 19th century. 4. Women — Medical care — Great Britain. 5. Women's hospitals — Great Britain. I. McDonald, Lynn, 1940- II. Title. III. Series: Nightingale, Florence, 1820-1910. Collected works of Florence Nightingale ; v. 8.

HQ1593.N54 2005

305.4'0941'09034

C2005-904505-1

© 2005 Wilfrid Laurier University Press

Cover design by Leslie Macredie. Front cover: Stained glass window of Florence Nightingale, Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY. Photograph courtesy of Michael D. Calabria. Front flap: Florence Nightingale's "chatelaine," a piece of jewellery for carrying keys, with a seal ring and Egyptian coin attached, left in her will to a cousin, Bertha Coltman. Private collection of Dr George Ebers. Back flap: Photograph of Lynn McDonald by Grant W. Martin, University of Guelph. Back cover: Clock given by Nightingale to a distant cousin, namesake and nurse Florence Nightingale Shore. Photograph courtesy of Pat Paskiewicz.



Printed in Canada

Every reasonable effort has been made to acquire permission for copyright material used in this text, and to acknowledge all such indebtedness accurately. Any errors and omissions called to the publisher's attention will be corrected in future printings.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior consent of the publisher or a licence from The Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency (Access Copyright). For an Access Copyright licence, visit [www.accesscopyright.ca](http://www.accesscopyright.ca) or call toll free to 1-800-893-5777.

**Wilfrid Laurier University Press**

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3C5

E-mail: [press@wlu.ca](mailto:press@wlu.ca)

Web: <http://www.wlupress.wlu.ca>

*Collected Works of Florence Nightingale* Web site:

<http://www.sociology.uoguelph.ca/fnightingale>

# CONTENTS

---

Acknowledgments .....	ix
Dramatis Personae .....	xi
List of Illustrations .....	xii
Florence Nightingale: A Précis of Her Life .....	xiii
Introduction to Volume 8 .....	1
Nightingale's Views on Women .....	6
Key to Editing .....	11
Nightingale on Women .....	15
Employment and Income Security for Women .....	66
Marriage, Celibacy and Vocation .....	87
Gender and Class—Ladies or Women .....	91
Religious Communities for Women .....	100
Nightingale's Draft Novel .....	110
<b>Midwifery</b>	
Midwifery Training at King's College Hospital .....	141
Establishment of the Training School for Midwifery Nurses	
at King's College Hospital .....	153
Ecclesiastical Interference at King's College Hospital .....	179
Closing the Training School and Midwifery Ward	
at King's College Hospital .....	190
Research for and Writing <i>Introductory Notes on Lying-in</i>	
Institutions .....	206
<i>Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions</i> .....	249
Preface .....	250
Notes on Lying-in Institutions .....	253
Midwifery Statistics .....	253
Normal Death Rate of Lying-in Women in England .....	255
Normal Mortality among Lying-in Women in Different	
Countries .....	257
Objections to the Data .....	259
Estimated Approximate Home Death Rate .....	260

Death Rates in Lying-in Institutions .....	260
Classification of Causes of Mortality in Lying-in Institutions .....	269
Causes of High Death Rates in Lying-in Institutions .....	270
Influence of Construction and Management of Lying-in Wards on the Death Rate .....	276
Results of Improved Lying-in Ward Construction .....	283
Should Medical Students be Admitted to Lying-in Hospital Practice? .....	288
Influence of Time Spent in a Lying-in Ward on the Death Rate .....	289
Effect of Good Management on the Success of Lying-in Establishments .....	291
Management of Military Lying-in Wards .....	298
Recapitulation .....	299
Can the Arrangement and Management of Lying-in Institutions be Improved? .....	302
Chapter II Construction and Management of a Lying-in Institution and Training School for Midwives and Midwifery Nurses .....	304
I Construction of a Lying-in Institution .....	305
Site .....	312
II Management .....	314
III Training School for Midwives .....	316
Description of Sketch-Plans of Proposed Institution .....	320
Appendix: Midwifery as a Career for Educated Women .....	325
After Publication of <i>Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions</i> .....	329
 <b>Prostitution, the Contagious Diseases Acts and the Treatment of Syphilitic Prostitutes</b>	
The Regulation of Prostitution by the Contagious Diseases Acts ..	411
“Note on the Supposed Protection” .....	428
Further Legislation in the 1860s and the Beginning of the Repeal Movement .....	458
The Royal Commission 1871 .....	472
The Repeal Campaign and Treatment Measures in the 1870s .....	482
International Work on Repeal .....	492
Suspension and Repeal in the 1880s .....	496
Contagious Diseases Legislation in India .....	506
The Treatment of “Penitents” in the Convent of the Good Shepherd .....	509
 <b>Women Friends, Relatives, Colleagues and Acquaintances</b>	
Women Friends, Relatives, Colleagues and Acquaintances .....	519
Older Women Friends .....	525

Selina Bracebridge .....	525
Mary Clarke Mohl .....	544
Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland .....	601
Julia Smith .....	608
Joanna Bonham Carter .....	610
Harriet Martineau .....	611
Lady Elizabeth McNeill .....	634
Mary Jones .....	640
Lady Alicia Blackwood .....	644
Other Older Friends .....	648
Contemporary Women Friends .....	651
(Mary) Elizabeth Herbert .....	651
Louisa Stewart-Mackenzie, Lady Ashburton .....	710
Georgina Tollet .....	737
Other Contemporary Women Friends .....	748
Notable and Royal Women Acquaintances .....	791
Julia Ward Howe .....	791
Harriet Beecher Stowe .....	800
Angela Burdett-Coutts .....	808
Other Notable Women .....	812
Royal Women .....	821
Younger Women Friends .....	847
Adeline Paulina Irby .....	847
Louisa Shore Smith .....	859
Blanche (Smith) Clough and Daughters .....	860
Bertha (Smith) Coltman .....	867
Sibella Bonham Carter .....	871
Maude Verney .....	877
Other Verney Relatives .....	933
Rosalind (Smith) Nash .....	944
Charlotte Symonds Green .....	955
Caroline Werckner .....	959
Women Servants and Villagers .....	973
Jane, Fanny and Mary Dowding .....	980
Alice Mochler .....	983
Mrs Holmes and Lizzie Holmes .....	990
Ellen “Nelly” Owen .....	995
Frances Groundsell .....	1000
Nuns .....	1013
(Roman Catholic) Sisters of Mercy .....	1013
Anglican Nuns .....	1020



**Appendixes**

Appendix A: Biographical Sketches .....	1033
Harriet Martineau .....	1033
(Dr) Elizabeth Blackwell .....	1035
Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland .....	1037
Appendix B: Secondary Sources on Nightingale and Women .....	1039
Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Secondary Literature .....	1049
Bibliography for Appendix B .....	1052
Bibliography .....	1055
Index .....	1065

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

Acknowledgments are due to a large number of individuals and organizations for assistance on this volume, and even more for assistance at various stages in the *Collected Works* project. First of all acknowledgments are due to the Henry Bonham Carter Will Trust for permission to publish Nightingale original manuscripts, and indeed for treating Nightingale material generally as being in the public domain. To the owners of Nightingale manuscripts thanks are due for their important role in conservation, for permitting scholarly access and for permitting copies to be made for this *Collected Works*.

The correspondence at Boston University is held in the Florence Nightingale Collection in the History of Nursing Archives; that identified as “Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA)” is owned by the Florence Nightingale Museum Trust, housed at the London Metropolitan Archives; the Woodward Biomedical Library is at the University of British Columbia.

Many people worked on the preparation of the texts, many as volunteers. Thanks are due to transcribers: Gwyneth Watkins, Kelly Thomas, Leo Uotila, Victoria Rea and Daniel Phelan; volunteer verifiers of texts: Cherry Ambrose, Linda Elliot, Joyce Donaldson, Jean Harding, Mary Parfitt and Marcia Macrae; to volunteers who assisted me with proofreading: Cherry Ambrose, Aideen Nicholson, Arun Dhanota; for assistance with visuals and literary sources: Lesley Mann; and for advice on nineteenth-century science: Dr Anne Innis Dagg. Thanks to Dr Douglas Coombs and Dr James Albisetti for providing information about manuscript sources not otherwise known to scholars.

Archivists and librarians around the world provided skilled assistance, often beyond the call of duty. To the University of Guelph thanks are due for the provision of an extra faculty office to house the project, a computer, technical and administrative support.

Thanks are due to colleagues who read the manuscript: Dr Gérard Vallée and Dr Charles Roland, and to anonymous peer reviewers for helpful comments. For advice on French, German and Latin translations thanks go (again) to Dr Vallée; for Italian translations and identifications to Dr Quirino Di Giulio; and to Dr C.T. McIntire for reading the “draft novel” material.

At the Press thanks are due to Dr Brian Henderson, director; Carroll Klein, managing editor; Doreen Armbruster, typesetter; Leslie Macredie and Penelope Grows, marketing; Steve Izma, production; and Jacqueline Larson, peer review. The copy editing was done by Frances Rooney.

Acknowledgments for photographs and other illustrations are given where they appear.

In spite of the assistance of so many people undoubtedly errors remain, which are the responsibility of the editor. I would be grateful for notification of any errors, and for information on missing identifications. Corrections will be made in the electronic text and any other later print publication.

Lynn McDonald  
*Guelph, Ontario*  
*May 2005*

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

---

Frances (Smith) Nightingale (1788-1880), mother  
William Edward Nightingale (1794-1874), father  
Parthenope Nightingale, Lady Verney (1819-90), “Pop,” sister  
Sir Harry Verney (1801-94), brother-in-law  
Mary Shore Smith (1798-1889), “Aunt Mai”  
Samuel Smith (1794-1880), “Uncle Sam”  
Blanche Smith Clough (1828-1904), cousin  
Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-61) “AHC,” husband of Blanche Smith  
William Shore Smith (1831-94), “Shore,” cousin, Nightingale heir  
Louisa Shore Smith (d. 1922), wife of “Shore”  
Julia Smith (1799-1883), “Aunt Ju”  
Marianne Nicholson (later Galton), (1821-1909), cousin  
Douglas Galton (1822-99), Royal Engineer, husband of Marianne  
Hilary Bonham Carter (1821-65), cousin  
Henry Bonham Carter (1827-1921), cousin, secretary, Nightingale  
Fund Council  
Maude Verney (c1846-1937), wife of Frederick Verney  
Frederick W. Verney (1846-1913), son of Harry Verney  
Margaret Verney (1844-1930), wife of Edmund Verney  
  
Selina Bracebridge (1800-74), “spiritual mother,” family friend  
Charles Holte Bracebridge (1799-1872), family friend  
Mary Clarke Mohl (1793-1883), friend, “Mme Mohl”  
Julius Mohl (1800-76), Persianist, friend  
Elizabeth Herbert (1822-1911), friend  
Sidney Herbert (1810-61), friend  
Harriet Martineau (1802-76), journalist, author, friend  
(Dr) Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910), doctor, friend  
Josephine E. Butler (1826-1906), women’s advocate  
Adeline Paulina Irby (1831-1911), friend  
Mary Jones (1812-87), nurse, Anglican nun  
Agnes Jones (1832-68), superintendent, Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary  
(Dr) John Sutherland (1808-91), public health expert, collaborator  
Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland (c1808-95), wife of Dr Sutherland, friend

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

---

Portrait of Elizabeth Blackwell, first woman physician, p 14.

Nightingale letter to Caroline Clive, pp 523-24.

Title page and first page of Jacob Abbott, *The Corner-stone*, and dedication by Nightingale on a Book of Common Prayer for Ruth Verney, p 972.

Illustrations facing page 592.

1. Stained glass window of Florence Nightingale, Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY.
2. Portraits of women correspondents of Nightingale: Selina Bracebridge, Harriet Martineau and Maude Verney.
3. Portraits of women correspondents of Nightingale: Louisa Ashburton, "Aunt Mai" Shore Smith, Hilary Bonham Carter and Margaret Verney.
4. A letter by Florence Nightingale to a friend, Mrs Truelove.
5. Combe Hurst, home of Nightingale's "Aunt Mai" Shore Smith.
- 6-7. Draft questionnaire on Poor Law schools for girls, prepared by Nightingale.
8. Fundraising letter by Florence Nightingale for Kaiserswerth.

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE: A PRÉCIS OF HER LIFE

---

**F**lorence Nightingale was born in Florence, Italy, 1820, the second daughter of wealthy English parents taking an extended European wedding trip. She was raised in England at country homes, Lea Hurst, in Derbyshire, and Embley, in Hampshire. She was educated largely by her father, who had studied classics at Trinity College, Cambridge. At age sixteen Nightingale experienced a “call to service,” but her family would not permit her to act on it by becoming a nurse, then a lower-class occupation and thoroughly unthinkable for a “lady.” Lengthy trips to Rome and Egypt were allowed (1847-48 and 1849-50 respectively). She had earlier (1837-39) been taken on a long trip with her family, mainly to Italy and France. These European trips not only improved her language skills (she was fluent in modern French, German and Italian as well as competent in ancient Latin and Greek) but exposed her to republican politics and Italian independence (she was in Rome and France during the revolts of 1848).

Nightingale was finally permitted to spend three months at the (Protestant) Deaconess Institution in Kaiserswerth, near Düsseldorf, Germany, in 1851 and several weeks with Roman Catholic nursing orders in Paris in 1853. Her father gave her an annuity in 1853 to permit her to become the superintendent of the Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness, Upper Harley Street, London. She left there in 1854 to lead the first team of British women nurses sent to war. The British Army was poorly prepared for that war and the death rate from preventable disease was seven times that from wounds. The Barrack Hospital at Scutari where she was stationed was structurally unfit to be a hospital, had defective drains and had to be re-engineered by a team of visiting experts before the death rate could be brought down.

Nightingale’s work as a social and public health reformer effectively began on her return from the Crimean War in 1856. Recogn-

nized as a national heroine, she chose to work behind the scenes for structural changes to prevent that war's high death rates from ever recurring. She began by lobbying to get a royal commission established to investigate the causes of the medical disaster and recommend changes. She herself briefed witnesses, analyzed data and strongly influenced the thrust of the report. Even before the report was finished Nightingale fell ill, it is thought from the chronic form of brucellosis, the disease from which (again this is conjecture) she nearly died in the war. She spent most of the rest of her life as an invalid, seeing people on a one-to-one basis and making her influence by research and writing. The illness was certainly painful and incapacitating, but Nightingale learned how to work around it, to focus her hours of working time on the most important projects, that is, those with the best prospect of saving lives.

Nightingale was baptized in the Church of England and remained in it for the rest of her life, although often despairing of its paltry role for women, the minimal demands it made of its adherents generally and its social conservatism. Her experience of religious conversion in 1836 and call to service in 1837 (the latter specifically dated 7 February, and frequently referred to) were both shaped by reading the work of an American Congregational minister, Jacob Abbott, notably *The Corner-stone*. Her faith was nourished by broad reading, from the medieval mystics, liberal theologians and the German historical school to contemporary sermons, popular devotional books, tracts and religious novels. The family had been largely Unitarian in earlier generations, but her paternal grandmother was evangelical Church of England. There is a strong Wesleyan element in Nightingale's faith, for the family supported dissenting chapels in Derbyshire. Lutheran influences date from the time at Kaiserswerth.

God for Nightingale was a perfect Creator who made and runs the world by *laws*, which human beings can ascertain by rigorous, preferably statistical, study. With the knowledge thus gained we can then intervene for good, thus becoming God's "co-workers." Ongoing research is required, for human interventions, however well intentioned, may have negative, unintended consequences. This approach appears in all the work Nightingale did, whether in health care or social reform more broadly. Thus we find a substantial faith component not only in the four volumes on religion: *Spiritual Journey*, *Theology*, *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* and *Suggestions for Thought*, but the introductory *Life and Family*, *European Travels*, this volume, *Women*, and

later volumes in the series: two each on nursing, war and India, and the final volume, *Hospital Reform*.

To guide her in doing the research necessary to discover “God’s laws” Nightingale developed an effective methodological approach. Her sources were L.A.J. Quetelet, a Belgian statistics expert, on the conduct of research, and J.S. Mill on the philosophical grounding. *Society and Politics* shows what Nightingale learned from these two people and how she further developed their ideas. The successful use of this methodology is evident in *Public Health Care*, as it is here and in later volumes.

Nightingale’s ardent and consistent liberal politics are another theme informing her social reform work. Her family (and the Verney family, into which her sister married) were strong Liberal supporters. Her brother-in-law was a Liberal MP, as were cousins and family friends. She herself gave money to the Liberal Party and even wrote campaign letters for (a small number) of Liberal candidates. At a time of considerable political flux Nightingale’s politics were consistent: she was a thorough “small l” liberal in her ideas, a supporter of freedom of inquiry and expression and an advocate of religious toleration. The Liberal Party seemed to be the best political manifestation of these goals. Again, as with the Church of England, the Liberal Party often failed to live up to its principles—she desperately wanted Liberal governments to be liberal on India as well as Ireland.

For most of her long working life Nightingale was confined to her room, describing herself variously as “a prisoner to my room” or even “a prisoner to my bed.” Some days she could not see anybody but usually she had interviews, sometimes several and sometimes lengthy ones, with nursing leaders, medical experts, politicians and Indian officials. Many people who requested interviews with her over their various concerns were turned down. Time with family and friends took second place, fitted around this “business,” God’s business, “my Father’s business,” in her understanding. People who did not get interviews, however, normally got letters in reply, often long and careful explanations, and offers of assistance.

Nightingale’s own network of colleagues and advisors was impressive and she continued to add to it as newer, younger experts, MPs and officials came into office. She always worked collectively, seeking advice and getting her own questionnaires, draft articles and reports vetted by knowledgeable people. When she could not aid the cause for someone, she suggested someone who could.



Nightingale continued to produce papers and reports of various kinds well into her seventies. She did not do any serious writing in her eighties, when blindness and failing mental faculties gradually stopped her. There are brief messages only from 1902 on. She was given honours in her last years (the Order of Merit in 1907) and enjoyed the company of younger relatives and several close nursing friends. She died at ninety and was buried in the churchyard of St Margaret's, Wellow, the family's parish church. Consistent with her wishes, the family declined an offer of burial at Westminster Abbey.

## INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 8

---

Nightingale is one of the most famous women of all time. She was greatly revered in her own lifetime and indeed for some decades after her death she was a symbol of virtue and feminine heroism. In recent decades all this has changed, and she has been attacked from within the nursing profession, by medical doctors, historians and other academics. Her contribution to the cause of women has been challenged as well as her own character, relations with women and even identification as a woman. This volume permits a serious and thorough examination of all these issues: Nightingale's views of and relationships with women and her work on central issues of concern to women.

*Women* begins with material on several major thematic areas: medicine (versus nursing), various aspects of income security for women, marriage and gender issues, women in religious communities and an early draft of an abandoned novel that led to *Suggestions for Thought*. There are next much more substantial sections of writing on midwifery, including Nightingale's pioneering *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, and the regulation of prostitution. Finally there is correspondence with women friends, colleagues, servants and some relatives. This last part of the volume focuses on personal relationships, but of course also includes material on issues as well, as indeed the earlier material includes personal material along with the prime focus on the issue to hand.

This volume begins with the vexed issue of medicine or nursing as a career for women. What is the proper role for women? Should women become doctors or only nurses? The issue is immediately complicated with that of women in midwifery, for Nightingale wanted to see a skilled profession of midwife, to include the treatment of women's and children's diseases, that would be a profession for women and an alternative to medicine as typically practised by men.

Right from the start and throughout the volume we will see that issues of gender roles, social class and education intersect. In Nightingale's time there was almost no state provision for education and the education of girls was a luxury confined effectively to the fortunate daughters of wealthy and progressive parents. The term "ladies," we will soon see, applies to women with education, hence usually (but not always) to the very privileged. Nightingale used the term interchangeably for educated women, and it even became an occupational title, as in "lady superintendent," referring to an achieved status regardless of social background. There are issues of "ladies" versus "women" in nursing generally and in the nursing of prostitutes more specifically. Social-class issues arise also when different mortality rates for the different institutions, which were class-based, are examined. Social-class issues also arise in relation to women's religious communities. Further, we shall see social-class issues arise throughout the correspondence with friends, for Nightingale's own friendships broke the usual class barriers.

In Nightingale's time disparities in income and wealth were enormous and largely unquestioned. The various forms of socialism were new and confined to very small movements. Nightingale was by no means impressed with any of them, even Christian socialism; Marx is simply not mentioned. Nightingale was a thorough liberal who believed in the fundamental rights and the equal dignity of all people (her faith fed that view), but these rights could co-exist with wide disparities of income and wealth. The private sector was essential for the good functioning of the economy and some degree of inequality hence was not to be questioned.

Workers were entitled to decent wages and working conditions, but should save for times of illness, unemployment and old age. To encourage this Nightingale supported a wide range of measures for pensions, home ownership and savings banks, related in *Society and Politics* (5:166-94). She condemned poor working conditions in detail in *Notes on Nursing*:

No attention is paid to cubic space or ventilation. The poor workers are crowded on the floor to a greater extent than occurs with any other kind of overcrowding. In many cases 100 cubic feet would be considered by employers an extravagant extent of space for a worker. The constant breathing of foul air, saturated with moisture, and the action of such air upon the skin, makes the inmates peculiarly liable to cold, which is a sign indeed of the danger of chest disease to which they are exposed. In such places and under such

circumstances of constrained posture, want of exercise, hurried and insufficient meals, long exhausting labour and foul air—is it wonderful that a great majority of them die early of chest diseases? (6:40)

Poor working conditions also led to excessive alcohol use, which “undermine their health and destroy their morals.”

Nightingale argued that employers would be better off, too, to provide better conditions, especially of good air and water. Yet:

Employers rarely consider these things. Healthy workrooms are no part of the bond into which they enter with their work people. They pay their money, which they reckon their part of the bargain. And for this wage the workman or workwoman has to give work, health and life. Do men and women who employ fashionable tailors and milliners ever think of these things? (6:40-41)

The period was one of great poverty for the vast mass of the population, with wages and conditions of living improving gradually over the second half of the century. The gap between rich and poor was enormous. The full “welfare state” in Britain was achieved only after World War II. In Nightingale’s time there was only minimal relief for the destitute, usually under humiliating conditions in a workhouse. The male working class was finally accorded the vote in 1867; no women had the vote in Nightingale’s lifetime. Medicine was scarcely a science and hospitals were positively dangerous places when Nightingale started to work on these issues. Drunkenness and crime were rampant.<sup>1</sup>

Englishwomen only gradually acquired some rights in the nineteenth century. The Married Women’s Property Act ended the absolute control of husbands over their wives’ earnings. Educational opportunities were created, schools and even the first colleges. Women made their first assaults on the male professions during Nightingale’s lifetime, gaining only the most modest entry into medicine and the law. Many women worked outside the home for wages as well as bearing and raising large numbers of children. There was no effective birth control and married women were sexually subject to their husbands (conjugal rights) and could be beaten with impunity. Women’s wages were substantially lower than men’s.

---

1 For further background material on social and economic conditions in the nineteenth century see *Life and Family* (1:61-62 and 64-68) and *Society and Politics* (5:129-30, 166).

Employment and income security issues as they concern women receive some coverage in this volume at the end of the section on women in medicine and nursing.

Finally in this first section comes Nightingale's abandoned novel, written roughly 1850-53, revised for printing and comment, but never published, as *Suggestions for Thought*. The revised version with related material is published in full in the *Collected Works* under the title *Suggestions for Thought*. Here we provide some glimpses of deleted texts for their revelations of Nightingale's views on women.

Nightingale's extensive, but often unsuccessful, work on midwifery is the second major theme area. This relates the work of the midwifery ward and school for the training of midwifery nurses, which Nightingale instituted at a newly created lying-in ward at King's College Hospital. Childbirth was dangerous to women; there was a serious risk of death in the birth process itself (notably from breech births) and even more so after childbirth from puerperal fever. We report Nightingale's pioneering statistical study on maternal mortality from puerperal fever, *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, 1871, with correspondence and notes on the process of establishing the maternity ward and training school and the decision to close them. Then come her years of later work on the training of midwives and the perils of hospital care in childbirth. Correspondence with the superintendent of the institution, Mary Jones, an Anglican nun, also deals with male interference in the running of her religious community. Material emerges at various stages on the development of midwifery as a profession, notably with European comparisons, and a proposal late in Nightingale's life for the registration of midwives, which she opposed.

The third substantive area in *Women* reports Nightingale's work on the regulation of prostitution, prompted initially by the threat of legislation and then the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1864. This legislation sought to reduce the incidence of syphilis in the army and navy (resulting in manpower losses) by targeting prostitutes for inspection and compulsory treatment, letting their male customers completely off the hook. Like most people of her time, Nightingale regarded prostitution as a moral evil, but, unlike her contemporaries, she regarded it as a lesser evil than others such as administrative malfeasance and laxity, which cost large numbers of lives. A lifelong liberal, Nightingale opposed this intrusive and discriminatory legislation. A quantitative social scientist, she argued that the available data

showed that the measures—where tried—did not achieve the goal of reducing the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases. Neither she nor her contemporaries would have seen prostitution as a morally neutral “sex trade” or prostitutes as willing “sex trade workers.”

Each of these theme areas has its own introduction, which outlines the problems as they existed when Nightingale started to work on them, the major figures with whom (or against whom) she worked, especially her main women colleagues, and the nature of the work that they accomplished or failed to accomplish.

After the material on these major issues of concern to women comes correspondence with women friends, colleagues and the large number of other women who consulted Nightingale, asked for her support on their causes and the like. Some correspondence with women relatives is included here, adding to the larger amount already reported in *Life and Family*. As there are two full volumes on nursing we confine the material in this volume to colleagues in fields other than nursing.

This great diversity of women correspondents is organized by age group, beginning with older women (usually family friends, roughly of her mother’s age group); next come contemporaries (both friends from childhood and youth and others she met later with whom she interacted as peers) and finally younger women (especially the new generation of social reformers for whom Nightingale was an advisor or mentor). Relatives and their spouses and in-laws (the Verneys) are fitted into their age group. Brief comments are given about women Nightingale knew or worked with, but for whom either there is no surviving correspondence or it has already appeared in another volume (again, not including nurses, material on whom appears in the two nursing volumes). There is a small amount of material on women servants.

For the most important women biographical sketches are provided in Appendix A (for some biographical sketches have already appeared in earlier volumes). Biographical information is incorporated into the editorial introductions for other, relatively significant, women for the volume. For the rest, identifying information is provided in the text or by footnote as appropriate. In all cases identifying information is indicated in the index by italicized entries.

## Nightingale's Views on Women

To have to do the work of an office in a home, subject to the interruptions of a home, and the work of a home in an office, subject to the business of an office, is the hardest life. No man has to do it. (ADD Mss 45845 ff23)

Nightingale's views on women have already appeared in earlier volumes of this *Collected Works* in the introduction, "Gender Roles and Status of Women" in *Life and Family* (1:69-73) and in her essay, "On the Family" in *Theology* (3:140-56). It is a major focus in the essay "Cassandra," in *Suggestions for Thought*. Nightingale always believed in the equal right of women to pursue whatever career or object they wanted to, but she seldom used the language of "rights," more often emphasizing duty or calling and desire to serve. In her unpublished essays she affirmed what we might call a psychological right of women, the right to a life, to choose marriage or a single life, to work for a cause in which she believed or a challenge to which she was drawn. In this volume the only place where we see language concerning rights for women is on the regulation of prostitution, the right of women not to be examined and subjected to compulsory treatment. The writing in fact is a draft written by her colleague Dr Sutherland for her. Nightingale presumably agreed, for she repeated it word for word (see p 479 below).

In her own case, with her experience of "calling," marriage was not an option, but Nightingale did concede at least the possibility that a woman could respond to a high calling as a partner with a man, "two in one, one with God, one with mankind" as she put it in the essay "On the Family" (3:154). The religious life as an option for women is explored in several places. Clearly Nightingale found the rigours of convent life fascinating and she understood why some women were attracted to it, but there was always the great drawback that a religious community did not foster the kind of serious professional work she sought and later did.

Much has been made in the secondary literature of Nightingale's statement that women lacked "sympathy." This occurs in an 1861 letter to her friend Mary Clarke Mohl (see p 564 below) where Nightingale was countering the conclusion, in Mme Mohl's book on Mme Récamier, that women had more sympathy than men. Nightingale

riposted: “*Women have no sympathy*. . . . I have never found one woman who has altered her life by one iota for me or my opinions.” She of course was wrong on the first part, for she received much sympathy from women in the years when her family would not allow her to work. But she was entirely correct on the second, that no woman had altered her life for her, and right on a further point: “I leave no school behind me. My doctrines have taken no hold among women. Not one of my Crimean following learnt anything from me or gave herself for one moment after she came home to carry out the lesson of that war or of those hospitals” (see p 564 below).

None of Nightingale’s women colleagues from the Crimean War did in fact join her for any kind of significant work, while several of her men colleagues became lifelong collaborators or frequently consulted advisors. Dr John Sutherland, Sir John McNeill and Robert Rawlinson are examples of men who went to considerable trouble to give Nightingale the expertise and assistance she needed, Sutherland indeed for years of his life. Her cousin Henry Bonham Carter, too young to have been a Crimea colleague, also gave decades of dedicated work. Few of the nurses with whom Nightingale worked in the Crimean War continued nursing after it at all, and some of those required her assistance with job hunting. The nuns mainly went back to their convents and other work. Several became close friends, notably Mary Clare Moore, an excellent nurse in Nightingale’s opinion, but who did not nurse thereafter. Generally it was Nightingale who supported their good works, sending encouragement and small donations.

The woman who could have been Nightingale’s leading disciple was the Anglican nun Mary Jones, the nurse from whom Nightingale herself learned the most about their craft and who was the superintendent of the lying-in ward and training school at King’s College Hospital in 1861. But Jones, although she called Nightingale “mistress” in correspondence, and clearly respected her expertise, did not take advice from her. As will be clear in the material on midwifery below, Jones precipitously resigned her position, the training program came to an end and neither it nor the ward was ever re-established—in spite of Nightingale’s efforts and advice that a reasonable compromise settlement could be reached.

Nightingale’s men co-workers in the immediate post-Crimea period, whom she named in the “no sympathy” letter, gave not only their time and expertise to her projects but clearly worked under her



guidance. They shared her vision, but it was she who articulated it and had clear ideas as to how to achieve it. Men drafted material for her, looked up statistics and searched out sources for her, in short acted variously as executive assistant, research assistant or expert consultant, all willingly and without pay (apart from the odd brace of pheasants and profuse thanks).

Women at this time for very obvious reasons lacked the scientific, medical, statistical knowledge and professional experience needed for policy formulation and public administration. This gradually changed and Nightingale in time acquired significant women co-workers, although never at the professional level of her men co-workers. The Nightingale training school, which opened in 1860, (slowly) produced nurses who became trusted colleagues. Agnes Jones, who had received training at St Thomas' (also Kaiserswerth) was the first woman to join Nightingale as a serious co-worker, in 1864, indeed one who gave her life, not only her time. With Emily Verney, daughter of her brother-in-law by a previous marriage, Nightingale even had a member of her family who worked hard on her causes (relief in the Franco-Prussian War). Late in life we shall see many examples of courageous and generous women, not only nursing colleagues, not afraid to take on the male establishment in government and medicine in their reforming zeal. Still, at the time of the "no-sympathy" letter Nightingale could not claim women disciples, none from the Crimean period, not even the nuns, who certainly gave up their lives to service, but not to Nightingale's objects.

Another complication, Nightingale's idea of what constituted "sympathy" was high and its absence terrible. In her draft novel (and in *Suggestions*) she has a character say: "To be alone is nothing—to be without a sympathy in a crowd, *this* is to be confined in solitude." The character who admits to not having "sympathy" is then given a more agreeable definition of it. But sympathy cannot be willed, she insists, nor attraction felt at will: "The want of sympathy is painful enough without the aggravation of blame to oneself or others." Further, the character argues: "Want of sympathy, of attraction given and returned—must it not be a feeling of starvation? Sympathy, being one of the essentials of the human spirit, must the human spirit be famishing, without it, as the human body is, without food?" (see p 123 below). Sympathy indeed meant someone who could "give you thought for thought, receive yours, digest it and give it back with the impression of their character upon it, then give you one for you to do likewise" (see p 122 below).

It will seem incongruous that, after hundreds of pages reporting Nightingale's work with women on women's issues and an appendix on her key collaborators, a further appendix appears on the secondary literature relating Nightingale's associations with women. The peer reviewers of the first volume of the *Collected Works* took exception to the inclusion of so much negative secondary material on her in the introduction; they advised putting it into an appendix. Thus "The Rise and Fall of Florence Nightingale's Reputation," Appendix B of *Life and Family*, reports the negative literature on Nightingale, including accusations that she hated women and would not work with them.

For this volume also it seemed best to relegate similar accusations and the extraordinary number of conflicting opinions generally to an appendix, Appendix B, "Secondary Sources on Nightingale and Women." There we examine this secondary literature, noting the basis for its opinions in the use of primary or only secondary sources. The great perils of using secondary sources on Nightingale will be clear as we consider sometimes totally opposing views, expressed with equal confidence. For example, there are articles discussing Nightingale's support of the suffrage movement and others asserting that she opposed the vote for women. Her statement "I have had more political power than if I had been a borough returning two MPs" is often quoted, but the accompanying words not: "If women had votes, they would vote so well that men would have to be disfranchised."<sup>2</sup> There are whole books as well as articles on Nightingale's friendships with women, while other authors declare without qualification that she "hated" women.

All the material gathered for this *Collected Works of Florence Nightingale* will be made available to scholars, not only in the sixteen print volumes, but in full electronic publication. Along with full publication of her letters, drawn from over 200 archives worldwide, there are data bases of names of correspondents and other contacts, and a chronology noting her publications, letters sent and received, interviews conducted, visitors received, authors and reports read.

---

2 Note to Dr Sutherland ca. 20 February 1867, ADD Mss 45752 f163.



## KEY TO EDITING

---

All the manuscript material in the *Collected Works* has been carefully transcribed and verified (see Appendix E: Research Methods and Sources, in *Life and Family*, for a description of the process of obtaining and processing this information). Illegible words and passages are so indicated, with [illeg], or [?] inserted to indicate our best reading of the word or words in question. Dates for material cited or reproduced are given wherever possible, in square brackets if they are estimates only (by an archivist, previous scholar or the editor). Any controversy about date is indicated. The type of material, whether a note, actual letter, draft or copy is given as precisely as possible. Designations of letter/draft/copy signify that the source was Nightingale's own files, given to the British Library or to St Thomas' Hospital and then the Florence Nightingale Museum, and are probably drafts or copies kept by her. The designation of "letter" is used only when there is good reason to believe that it was actually sent and received (a postmarked envelope, for example, or the archive being other than Nightingale's own files). In some cases both the original letter and Nightingale's draft or copy are extant, and these show that the copies she kept are reliable. We do not use the convention of ALS (autograph letter signed), but our "letter" is close to it, bearing in mind that Nightingale often used initials rather than her signature. The electronic I-text (that is, the transcriptions as "input," before editing) gives full information on supporting material (envelopes, postmarks), and whether the piece was in pen, pencil, dictated or typed.

The practice was naturally to use the best source possible, the original letter where available. Where a draft or copy was also available this is noted. Sometimes the original was no longer available and a typed copy in an archive or a published copy had to be used.

All sources indicated as "Add Mss" (Additional Manuscripts) are British Library, the largest source of Nightingale material. The Well-

come Trust History of Medicine Library is abbreviated “Wellcome.” Most of those materials are copies of correspondence at Claydon House, indicated as (Claydon copy). If not so indicated they are originals. Where only short excerpts from a letter are used (because the rest is on another subject) these are indicated as “from a letter” and the address and ellipses at the beginning and end are omitted. Postscripts that merely repeat points or move on to a completely different subject are omitted without ellipses.

To avoid use of “*ibid.*” and “*op. cit.*,” and to reduce the number of footnotes generally, citations are given at the end of a sequence if the same source is cited more than once. Subsequent citations are noted in the text with the new page or folio number given in parentheses. The term “folio” (abbreviated as f or ff in the plural) is used for reference to manuscript pages, p and pp for printed pages, where needed, or page numbers are given after the date or volume number without p or pp. References to material that appears in earlier volumes of the *Collected Works* are normally identified by our title, volume number and page number rather than the archival source.

To make the text as accessible as possible spelling, punctuation and capitalization have been modernized and standardized, and most abbreviations replaced with full words. British spellings have been maintained and standardized (labour, honour). We have kept her old-fashioned “farther,” “bye-word” and “co-temporaries,” but change “shew” to “show,” “civilise” to “civilize,” “staid” to “stayed” and her occasional abbreviation “ye” to “the.” “Fipun” remains for a five-pound note. We change “story” to “storey” when it refers to a floor. We use modern spellings of words with “ae,” such as gynecology, pyemia, septicemia and hemorrhage. Nightingale’s terms for a student nurse, “probationer,” and a maternity hospital, “lying-in” remain as they are, as does “confinement” for giving birth.

We have followed the trend to lesser use of capitals, even to kings, queens and bishops. Nightingale was fond of dialect and we trust that the meaning will be clear enough, as other old-fashioned words she used and which we did not edit—for example, “a fipun” for a five-pound note. The electronic text gives a full glossary of edited words.

Roman numerals are replaced with Arabic (except for royalty, popes and the citation of classical texts). We have left Nightingale’s use of masculine generics as they are, hence “man,” “men,” “he,” etc., referring to human beings generally. Some, but not all, of the excessive uses of “and,” “but” and “the” have been excised. Nighting-

gale's "Esq." titles for men have been omitted. Any words the editor has added to make sense (usually in the case of rough notes or faint writing) appear in square brackets.

Nightingale was not consistent in the use of capitals or lower case for synonyms or pronoun references to God and Jesus. Here we standardize her most frequent usage (He and Him, Thy and Thine for God), and leave references to Jesus as she wrote them (Son of God, but varying between upper and lower case in pronouns). Editorial comments have been standardized to upper case for God the Father, lower case for Jesus (her most frequent usage). We follow Nightingale in considering that God would be too polite to write Me or Mine for Himself.

Italics are used to indicate underlining and small capitals for double (or more) underlining. All indications of emphasis in texts are Nightingale's (or that of her correspondent or source), *never* the editor's. Any use of (sic) also is Nightingale's, never the editor's. When taking excerpts from written material Nightingale indicated ellipses with x x and we have kept these. Ellipses for editorial purposes are indicated with . . . for skipped material within a sentence . . . if to the end of the sentence or more than a sentence has been dropped. Passages that break off abruptly (or in which folios are missing) are so indicated.

We refer to Nightingale and indeed all adult women by their surnames, the normal practice for references to men. We note with some dismay the frequent practice in the secondary literature of using first names, even nicknames, for women, reserving surnames, initials and honorifics for the (apparently) superior sex. We would urge all writers to adopt a policy of equality between the sexes in this respect. The use of first names and nicknames for this period and people seems especially inappropriate, even unauthentic as well as sexist, for such names were strictly limited to immediate family and close, old friends. Nightingale herself was always proper in the use of names, so much so that it is impossible to ascertain the first names of some nursing colleagues. Women often signed their letters with their surnames and initials without using first names, let alone nicknames, at all.

We use correspondents' names in the source headings but normally refer to them by the name Nightingale used: hence Dr Sutherland, Mme Mohl.

Editorial notes appear in footnotes or, if very brief, in square brackets in the text. Articles (the, a, an) and the appropriate form of the

verb to be have been supplied to make sense. Persons who changed their names (usually through marriage or the acquisition of a title, sometimes for purposes of inheritance) are referred to by the more commonly used name, cross-referenced in the index to the other if another name is also used. Dates to identify people are given at the first appropriate moment, not where there is only passing mention of the person or the name appears on a list or in a footnote; italicized entries in the index indicate entries with identifying information. Of course for many people, notably servants and acquaintances, identifying information is not available.

The bibliography provides full information on most books cited. Newspaper sources, government reports and periodical references are given in footnotes only. References to classical and other works available in many editions (now often on the Internet) are by book, chapter, canto, scene, line, etc., as appropriate, and are not repeated in the bibliography.



Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, first woman physician. Photograph courtesy of Health Sciences Library, SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse NY.

## NIGHTINGALE ON WOMEN

---

When Nightingale began her work as a nurse in 1853 there were no women doctors practising in Britain or America, or indeed anywhere requiring a Western, science-based medical education. Elizabeth Blackwell was the first British woman to practise medicine, on obtaining an American medical degree. The first woman to qualify in Britain was Elizabeth Garrett (1836-1917), who successfully sat the examinations of the Society of Apothecaries in 1865; the rules were subsequently changed to prevent such a mistake from happening again. To practise she founded a dispensary, to which beds were later added. Garrett was later dean and president of the London School of Medicine for Women.

For Nightingale the question of women's entry into medicine was complicated by her poor view of medical training in general, "about as bad as it can possibly be," as she called it, preventing "any wise, any philosophical, any practical view of health and disease" (see p 35 below). Her own experience of medical treatment (she was often ill as a child and young woman) was confined to the application of leeches, blistering and water cures. Obviously she could not enter the public controversy over medical training for women "without attacking medical education for men" (see p 56 below). This she would not do for fear of losing medical support for her broader public health reforms and workhouse infirmary nursing. Social reformers cannot take on every cause and Nightingale here made her choice for what she considered the greatest public good, consistent with her calling of saving lives.

In 1851 Nightingale quoted with approval Dr Fowler's prediction that the "whole present system of medicine" would be "exploded" and joked that the name of the doctor or doctors whose patient died should be listed in the "Deaths" column, as were the names of officiating clergy in "Marriages" (see p 556 below).



Nightingale's negative views on the practice of medicine were shared with John Stuart Mill, whom she told: "I wish to see as few doctors, either male or female as possible for, mark you, the women have made no improvement—they have only tried to be 'men,' and they have only succeeded in being third-rate men. They will not fail in getting their own livelihood but they fail in doing good and improving therapeutics" (5:376). Mill also saw much wrong with the medical profession but reasonably did not insist that entrance into it should require the ability to reform it (5:378). She agreed that all women were entitled to try their way in any field.

In 1870 she told Mme Mohl that she could not recommend her a doctor although she knew a dozen "well known for stomach complaints." She thought her friend needed someone who would see to her "everyday regimen" and not just give her medicine (see p 580 below).

Nightingale was friends with the first woman doctor, Elizabeth Blackwell, assisted her with her career and gave advice to her sister, Emily Blackwell, as she was beginning her medical career (see p 24 below). Rather than opposing women's entry into the medical profession, Nightingale stressed the difficulties that the pioneers would have. She was utterly realistic about the extent and vehemence of anti-woman prejudice in medicine and did not expect quick change. Sophia Jex-Blake (1840-1912), for example, after studying with Blackwell in New York and obtaining a medical degree in Berne, successfully completed her medical studies at Edinburgh University in 1872 but was refused the right to graduate. She founded the London School of Medicine for Women in 1874. She was admitted to the Medical Register only in 1877. The University of Edinburgh, where she and six other women had been admitted in 1869, only permitted women to graduate in medicine in 1894.

Elizabeth Blackwell led the names of women on the Medical Register (1858), followed by Garrett Anderson in 1865 and not until 1877 Jex-Blake and five others; there were nine women on the register in 1878 and fifty-eight in 1887.<sup>1</sup>

Nightingale in time became a public supporter of women's entry into medicine, the right to practise in hospitals, etc. In 1888 she contributed to the New Hospital for Women on Marylebone Road and sent a letter of support to the Mansion House meeting raising funds for it (see p 31 below).

---

1 Louisa Garrett Anderson, *Elizabeth Garrett Anderson* 286-87.

To Dr Henry Acland, Nightingale in 1869 stated that women should get “as thorough an education” as medical men (see p 51 below), but it was important to keep medicine and nursing distinct. She told him that she would have accepted, immediately after the Crimean War, his “noble offer” of a “female special certificate” for women, but later experience made her change her mind (see p 51 below). The two professions should be kept distinct; women who wanted to practise medicine should not see nursing training as a shortcut toward that goal.

While Nightingale conceived of the nursing profession as one entirely for women, to be run by women, she also favoured training for male medical orderlies. Men could be good nurses, she acknowledged, but there was no apparent need for provision for them to be made in the nursing profession (they had the exclusive run of every profession then, and the occupation of orderly was not far off that of nurse). Several men are commended in family correspondence for being good nurses. General Gordon referred to nursing men himself (5:493).

There are also issues of propriety, both for the doctor and patient. It seems that Nightingale would have preferred women doctors to treat only women and children, or at least she referred approvingly to women who did not intend “to take practice among men” (see p 34 below). American female practitioners told her that they would “consider it an insult” to be called in “to attend a man-patient.” Nightingale agreed: “That is as it should be. What I want to see is women attending as physicians their own sex—especially in lyings-in and in diseases peculiar to women or children” (see p 35 below). “Women should be attended by women, especially in all that pertains to child-bearing” she told Dr Acland (see p 53 below).

If women doctors kept to midwifery (expanded to include the diseases of women and children) there need be no such concerns of modesty. They would find an enormous field opening to them, professionally challenging and providing them with good incomes. They would do a great deal of good in an area currently badly served by untrained midwives, and with terribly high mortality rates for birthing mothers and even their children. Yet the few women who did qualify as medical doctors avoided midwifery (perhaps fearing that they would be restricted to a “women’s” practice?). Nightingale could not understand why they did not see the importance and challenge of midwifery work. But then she chose her causes by their death rates.

Commentators from the late twentieth century take women in medicine for granted; not only are large numbers of women practising, women indeed form the majority of the intake in some medical schools. This, however, is the situation more than a century after the period at issue, when even the few women who qualified were effectively barred from practising in hospitals, and indeed had to found women's hospitals to get access. Moreover, Nightingale realized that very few women would be advantaged by the opening of the medical profession to them, on which she would be proved to be correct. It would be at least another century before women in large numbers were able to enter the profession. In the meantime there were lives to save.

Nightingale's prediction, in 1859, that under the new Medical Act women would not be permitted in the regular medical schools in Blackwell's lifetime was overly pessimistic (see p 29 below). But it was not until 1877 that the first woman to graduate from a British medical school began practising in England, and the obstacles continued to be enormous.

Recent commentators have tended to naïveté about professional relations between doctors and nurses, even criticizing Nightingale for making women nurses "subservient" to male doctors, as if equal professional relations had previously existed. When the British nursing union, Unison, voted in 1999 to stop recognizing Nightingale as a founder and model, this was one of the (astonishing) reasons given.<sup>2</sup> Nightingale was painfully aware of the lack of educational qualifications of women, who were then not permitted in any British university or any secondary school equivalent to a high school or lycée. The entrance requirement to the Nightingale School at St Thomas' Hospital stipulated no level of schooling whatsoever. Literacy was required, but often the standard attained in practice was marginal. Many nurses could scarcely read or write. Nursing schools even in the 1880s in Britain had to provide remedial classes in reading and writing (as had Kaiserswerth when Nightingale visited it in 1851).

Drunkenness and sexual immorality continued to be problems for those trying to establish a respectable profession for women in nursing. Nightingale described to the grand duchess of Baden how in Edinburgh it had been (in the bad old days) the duty of the senior house surgeon to see to it that drunken night nurses were carried into the wards on a stretcher (see p 837 below). The notion that doctors,

---

2 "Nurses Snuff Nightingale Image," *Guardian* 27 April 1999:8.

who would often have attended elite public schools before studying at university, and who might have had postgraduate experience at foreign universities as well, would accept barely literate and frequently drunk women as peers is ludicrous. Nightingale herself always encouraged measures to improve education for women, recognizing that their poor education was a great barrier.

Nightingale could see the need for a nursing profession. Its value was apparent even when the inadequacies of medicine were most obvious. She conceptualized nursing as a women's profession, controlled by women from top to bottom. It would provide women with a good income and opportunities to rise to senior administrative appointments. The inclusion of women as equals to men in medicine must have seemed an idle luxury, of benefit to very few people, and ignoring any real problems of the medical profession as it was then practised.

Nurses in Nightingale's scheme would take their medical orders from doctors, but the nursing hierarchy would be entirely woman led. Women nurses only would hire, discipline and dismiss women nurses. Doctors would take any concerns about the work of a nurse to the nursing superintendent. All this will be very clear in the nursing volumes.

During the Crimean War a woman successfully disguised herself as a man, Dr James Miranda Barry (1795-1865), in order to practise as a doctor. A book published about him after his death showed how he had served in the army for forty years and attained the rank of inspector-general of hospitals. On this revelation Nightingale was asked by her family about her experience of him. It was negative:

I who have had more than any woman from this Barry sitting on (her) horse, while I was crossing the hospital square, with only my cap on, in the sun. (He) kept me standing in the midst of quite a crowd of soldiers, commissariat servants, camp followers, etc., every one of whom behaved like a gentleman during the scolding I received, while (she) behaved like a brute. After (she) was dead, I was told (he) was a woman. . . . I should say (she) was the most hardened creature I ever met.<sup>3</sup>

Nightingale's work on India convinced her of the urgency of getting women into the regular profession of medicine, for religion and custom forbade Indian women being seen by men. Thus she increasingly began to promote medical training for women. She continued to

---

3 Letter to Frances Nightingale [late 1865], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/145.

prefer, however, a different type of medical training and practice for women, centred on midwifery and the diseases of women and children.

Nightingale's own last doctor was a woman, Dr May Thorne.<sup>4</sup> Ironically, the physician who signed her death certificate was Dr Louisa Garrett Anderson, daughter of her antagonist on the nursing-medicine conflict and on the Contagious Diseases Acts.

### **Elizabeth Blackwell**

See Appendix A for a biographical sketch of Elizabeth Blackwell, a contemporary of Nightingale's with an almost identical life span (1821-1910), a friend and for a time a close confidante. Both were serious, intelligent women with aspirations of making a contribution to their worlds. They were already on different paths when they met, which Nightingale fully realized. Each tried to recruit the other to join her but failed. Blackwell's proposals to Nightingale seemed wrong-headed, merely to bring women into a very unsatisfactory medical profession. Nightingale, we know, wanted the reform of the medical profession rather than the introduction of women to it.

The friendship did not survive these differences although there is correspondence until old age. The last letters were clearly prompted by specific questions and requests for advice or help from Blackwell. Yet earlier Blackwell had been a close-enough friend to raise the delicate issue of pay for women's services (see p 23 below). Thanks to the annuity Nightingale had from her father, she did not need an earned income and declined a salary both at Harley St. and in the Crimean War. She fully recognized that men were paid for their professional work, including those who enjoyed independent means.

We do not know precisely what Blackwell proposed in 1859 that Nightingale warned her against pursuing. It evidently involved both a hospital in the country (which Nightingale thoroughly approved in principle) but in this case would have entailed competition with the major hospital involved in nurse training. Certainly Nightingale did not want to jeopardize her own training school, then in the planning stages (it opened in 1860). According to Monica Baly, Nightingale

---

4 Thorne obtained her MD at Brussels in 1895, practised at 148 Harley St., was on the staff of the London School of Medicine for Women and a clinical associate at the Royal Free Hospital; she became a member of the LSA and became a FRCST in 1902, served on the Examination Centre Midwives Board, was a fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, president of the Association of Registered Medical Women and the author of medical articles.

wanted Blackwell to be the superintendent of the Nightingale school, but the hospital treasurer insisted that the existing matron, Sarah Wardroper, be appointed.<sup>5</sup> There is further correspondence with Blackwell in this volume on midwifery and the regulation of prostitution.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, RP 1877I BL/803/30

[postmarked] 1 March 1852

Umberslade (this hydropathic place), and I asked innocently, “do they introduce any part of the hydropathic treatment when they return, among their own patients?” “Oh no,” said Dr Johnson, as innocently, “you know they have all large families.” Do you know Johnson’s books? . . .

I hope you will tell me any discoveries which you have made regarding the subject which most interests us. You know how eagerly I hail your discoveries regarding women, the position they are meant by the laws of their nature to hold, and which I feel to be still undiscovered. I don’t know the difference between men and women though I have them before my eyes every day of my life. Is there one? If there is, it is very odd we should not know it. You said once (in which I fully agree): “There ought to be a male and a female influence brought to bear upon everything.” This looks as if they were different; you do not know that it would be the same, if *two* FEMALE influences were brought to bear upon the thing. Yet what is the difference? And if there is one, ought it not to point at different vocations for given women?

I think men are gradually beginning to awake to the great truth you urge about women. Some of our greatest writers, *Comte* in France, *Stuart Mill*<sup>6</sup> in England, have been writing about equalizing the education of men and women. But on the other hand, such a caricature as Dickens’s in his *Bleak House*. (Mrs Jelliby will do more harm than all the philosophers will do good. The caricature is meant for Mrs Chisholm, a great friend of mine.<sup>7</sup>)

5 Monica Baly, *Florence Nightingale and the Nursing Legacy*. Sarah Elizabeth Wardroper (c1813-92).

6 Auguste Comte (1798-1857), French social philosopher, who initially supported rights for women but later reneged; John Stuart Mill, English political philosopher, ardent supporter of women’s rights and correspondent with Nightingale; see *Society and Politics* (5:369-410).

7 Charles Dickens (1812-70), a favourite English novelist, much quoted throughout Nightingale’s correspondence; for her views on him see *Society and Politics* (5:767-70). On her relationship with Caroline Chisholm, “the emigrants’ friend” (see p 812 below).

As it is, I think the position of the Muhammadan woman but in one respect more deplorable than that of the Englishwoman. In one class she is supposed to have no employment of sufficient importance not to be interrupted (except indeed that of suckling her fools). She herself considers it a virtue to be able to leave off *anything* to receive a visit or write a note. And, if she does anything more than this, people say that she is breaking up the family life. Dinner is, in England, the great sacrament, the one sacred obligation which no one can evade.

Write to me at “Embley, Romsey, Hampshire,” dear friend, I beseech you and tell me what you think of the things about which we used to talk.

I cannot help thinking that a female priesthood will be the great future sphere of woman: the care of the soul and of the body, female priests and female physicians. But I must say farewell. We are now in London but not for long.

yours, till doomsday i' th' afternoon

Florence Nightingale

Source: Letter from Elizabeth Blackwell, Claydon House, Bundle 370

44 University Ave.

New York

27 March [1854]

My dear friend

It gives me real pleasure to introduce you to my sister and fellow worker who, I hope, will be able to present this letter to you in person. Emily has at length concluded her studies in America—five difficult years they have been to her. And now, as Dr Emily Blackwell, she visits Europe, hoping to perfect herself in certain special branches of our profession, of which full knowledge is very necessary to us. Of her plans and prospects, I shall leave her to speak for herself, for I want to ask you innumerable questions as to your own success and hopes.

I read over the various announcements which you sent me through Miss Parker with care, and a doubt arose in my own mind as to the freedom of your new position and the possibility of your carrying out your various improvements in an institution under such distinguished patronage and so completely organized on the old plan. Indeed your idea is not so much an *improvement* in nursing as it at present exists as a radically different system which requires its own conditions of growth, and can hardly, I should think, be grafted into the old stock! It appeared to me also that your class of patients was a difficult one to manage. Poor gentlewomen, paying a sum not enough for the sup-

port of the institution, objects of charity and yet not charity patients, sensitive to their own uncertain position, yet tenacious of their rights and probably exaggerating them, I think there must be a constant struggle between their sense of dependence and independence which must render intercourse with them a very delicate and unsatisfactory thing.

I hope I am wrong in all this or at any rate that your determination has surmounted the difficulties, but I have often thought of you with anxious interest, and am very desirous of knowing the result of your experience. Thus far I sympathize most heartily in your resolve to act rather than to theorize and I am very sure you will gain practical wisdom by the attempt, whatever the immediate result may be. I only hope that the step did not cost you any painful family sacrifices. I look upon your position as a very noble one, weakening the barriers of prejudice which hedge in all *work* for women—you thus carry out a reform much wider than the ostensible nursing plan.

I wish that you received payment for those services.. I should think the principle an important one, but that would be taking too wide a step at once and doubtless you will reach society more readily by your present plan. I should like to know what you would consider the best method for training a superintendent of nurses. What hospital or institution would afford that enlargement of idea and practical experience necessary to one who occupied such a post?

I suppose Kaiserswerth is the superior school; that, however, necessitates a knowledge of German, which is not always possible. I hope some day to be able to find the woman who will devote herself to this work, and thus aid me in the establishment of a hospital. I am just beginning my little dispensary, which is all I can carry out this year. It will be I hope a good stepping-stone to something else. I shall hope to enlarge it next year, or the year after, and then my nurse coadjutor will be essential.

My private practice grows steadily, though slowly, as is always the case with young doctors. Indeed as far as practice goes I have found myself very much in the position of a young man. Much less special practice has come to me than I had anticipated. My calls have been very generous in character and I have had few midwifery cases. There are half a dozen families who consider me as their attendant physician. But of all such details, if you feel an interest in them, my sister will inform you. I will merely assure you of my deep interest in your life, and the pleasure it gives me to think of you as my fellow worker. If



your family remembers me, will you give my cordial regard to them,  
and believe me,

your true friend

E. Blackwell

Source: Letter to Emily Blackwell, Radcliffe College Schlesinger Library, Blackwell Family Collection Box 5:70

General Hospital

Balaclava

12 May 1856

I would have written sooner, had I had any opinion to give worth your having. But I have been 1½ years away from England and I cannot therefore give any just judgment upon the state of opinion there now relative to women undertaking medicine and surgery.

So far one can safely say that the first woman who undertakes it will have a hard struggle, and will probably fall, the sacrifice, either in spirits or in pocket. But pioneers must always be prepared to throw their bodies in the breach.

Rather would I ask that pioneer whether she has sufficient confidence in herself that she is the right one to initiate that cause which, sooner or later, must find its way. She must have both natural talent and experience and undoubted superiority in her knowledge of medicine and surgery (and I would rather be inclined to wish that she might gain her experience elsewhere than in England). She must be entirely above all flirting or even desiring to marry, recollecting that, to her, the apostle of the cause, her cause must be all in all. She must be above all personal feelings, hopes and fears.

A mistake such as ignorance of her profession, using her profession for the sake of social advancement or feminine affection, would wreck that cause for fifty years.

Pray remember me most affectionately to your sister, whom I shall never forget, and believe me,

yours most truly

though I have never had the pleasure of seeing you

F. Nightingale

My time and thoughts are here so more than taken up by almost overwhelming labour that I have not given a particle of either to the consideration of any future scheme for myself, nor have I been able to do so. I thank you for your interest and offer of help most sincerely in any future work of mine.

Source: Undated note for Dr Sutherland to send to some authority on behalf of Elizabeth Blackwell, ADD Mss 45797 f53

[c1858]

Miss B. has a foreign degree, with which she practised in London before October 1848, of which fact she has proof. She is also ready to give the information or explanation required by clause 46 of the act. Indeed she is able to fulfill every requirement of the act, only she is a woman. Can she under the circumstances be rejected? Could you ascertain this authenticating for me, as Miss B. will very probably apply for registration soon.<sup>8</sup>

Source: From a dictated, signed letter to Arthur Hugh Clough, Balliol College lot 305/5

Malvern

2 January [1859]

So Mrs Dr Blackwell comes on the 3rd. I am rather stumped. I don't feel as if I should be able to see her here this month, and after session business has begun there will not be a chance for me. Do you think you could see her and explain my idea? You must put forward the sanitary lectures I propose and the matronship rather in the background for it to meet with her attention at all, but I feel very doubtful about it even if she were to accept, for to have the details of instalment brought to me to settle would quite unfit me for other business, and they would not be well done themselves.

Source: From a partly dictated letter, partly in Nightingale's hand, to Elizabeth Blackwell, Library of Congress

Great Malvern

10 February 1859

You ask me for my counsels, and in a matter of such importance, I could not hesitate to give it at once. I would lay down two points as essential in establishing a sanitary professorship.

1. that it should be attached to an old established hospital;
2. that the sanitary professor should *not* be the director of the hospital (but the superintendent of the nurses). This is the result of my long experience—and a conclusion not lightly made.

That all hospitals will ultimately be in the *country* I have emphatically said, both in and out of print. In this therefore I am not likely to

---

<sup>8</sup> Blackwell in fact was the first woman on the Medical Register, in 1858.

differ from Mme de Noailles but I should say that the way to hinder, not to help, this desirable consummation would be to begin with a small pottering women's hospital "on a farm in the country." Think what £5000 is! (about £150 per annum) for a hospital!!

Mr Ackinson Morley, my late landlord in Burlington Street, bequeathed last year when he died upwards of £100,000 to St George's to found a convalescent establishment in the country. This is a step in the right direction and I have no doubt that St George's will in time become transformed bodily (*not only* its convalescents) to such an institution. Should I live, I have thought a sanitary professorship might be most advantageously attached there.

To answer your two questions, however, as you have put them, I think Lord Brougham too old for a trustee. I think either Lord Ashburton or Lord Cranworth<sup>9</sup> would do very well for a trustee, very well for a counsellor. The former is still in the East.

2. I could not act as one of your advisers, because I entirely deprecate the principle of the thing proposed to you. Were I in health, I would give my best advice—even where I anticipated possible failure, but what I told you is perfectly true, people bring me anxieties for my sick holiday, any one of which would overwhelm a person in perfect health. In justice to the army, to India, therefore, I can undertake nothing *not* strictly my business. If you wish to know why I feel so certain of failure (for schemes, i.e., which do not give that element of stability, to which a number of jarring interests, paradoxical as it may sound, contributes more than anything) I will refer you to the enclosed proof, although it relates exclusively to nurses. (It is not for publication, and I will ask you to return it to me.)

It is the result of much anxious consideration and burnt-in experience. Nothing would ever induce *me* to undertake anything where I could not have jealous and warring elements (and men too) to keep my staff up to their work. At the same time take this only for what it is worth.

I trust very much to what people themselves *feel* they can do: that is, not what girls of sixteen, nor what elderly ladies of fortune and rank, *who are just* as inexperienced as girls of sixteen, feel can be done, but

---

9 Henry Peter Brougham (1778-1868), progressive politician and writer; the 2nd Baron Ashburton (1799-1864), MP and minister and husband of her old friend, Louisa Ashburton, with whom there is warm correspondence below; the 1st Baron Cranworth, lord chancellor; his wife had been on the ladies' committee at Harley St.

what people like you and me, that is, middle-aged women who have struggled with every kind of opposition in the world, feel they themselves can do. This is a very good guide. I should feel certain of failure in doing what you propose to do (supposing even that I had your physiological and medical knowledge) while the opposition of the authorities [missing lines] so [illeg] might make you feel certain of failure, therefore, I say: “take this only for what it is worth”; each man (and woman) must measure his own calling.

If you think that it would clear up anything to your mind to see me again, please come down here on Saturday—you shall be met at Worcester Station, if you will say yes. I feel so uncertain as to whether I shall be able to see you at all in London.

I remember my impression of your character—that you and I were on different roads (although to the same object), you to educate a few highly cultivated ones, I to diffuse as much knowledge as possible. Still I cannot help reiterating my warning.

Sir James Clark<sup>10</sup> does not return home for a week—I have written to him. “The lady studying” at the Maternité is Mrs Shaw Stewart, my best nurse and superintendent in the Crimea,<sup>11</sup> and who has since been living three months in four London hospitals each, ditto in Vienna, Berlin and Paris (for me) in order to educate herself to do the same in the army hospitals here under me as she did in the Crimea. She was three months at the [blanked out] only one at [lines missing] our object. She is now at the Salpêtrière. The new sage-femme-en-chef at the Maternité would have been worth your knowing, Mme Allier. Your informant was misinformed himself about the windows at the Lariboisière. At p 118 to p 120 of my *little* book *Subsidiary Notes*<sup>12</sup> which you have, I have given personal experience of the ventilation—I am not surprised to hear what you say of it, when the windows were not opened.

---

10 Sir James Clark (1788-1870), physician to the queen, member of the original Nightingale Fund Council.

11 Jane Elizabeth Shaw Stewart (d. 1905).

12 Florence Nightingale, *Subsidiary Notes as to the Introduction of Female Nursing into Military Hospitals in Peace and in War*, 1858.

Source: From a dictated, signed letter to Sir Benjamin Brodie,<sup>13</sup> Clendening History of Medicine Library, Kansas University Medical Center

Great Malvern

13 February 1859

Do you consider me as having the advantage to be sufficiently known to you to ask you to do me a very great kindness?

The bearer of this is an English lady, Mrs Blackwell MD, who graduated in America, has worked her way up to a physician's practice among women and children (not exclusively in midwifery) at New York, and is now returned to England where she is very anxious to have the benefit of your counsel as to her future career, if you can spare her time for an interview.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to William Farr,<sup>14</sup> ADD Mss 43398 f118

26 February 1859

May I beg to enclose two tickets (for Mrs Dr Blackwell's lectures) for Mrs Farr and your daughter, if they would like to go. Remember I am not responsible for Mrs Dr's proprieties for such a very young lady as your daughter—I don't know how you feel about those things—for I am old and hardened.

yours sincerely

[signed] F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, Library of Congress

7 March 1859

I do not want to prevent you from "making any use" of my "ideas" you please. After they have become yours, they are no longer any more mine than yours. There is no copyright in "ideas." But I think the course you propose to take (in your next lecture) a *very* dangerous one for the success of *your* own "ideas." I mean, i.e., that I think it may quite prevent your carrying out your own plan.

1. *And chiefly* it will so set the medical staffs of the great hospitals against you that it may prevent your carrying out that part of the plan which we will (for brevity) call mine within any period that I can at all look forward to. With the N. Fund and the name of that "Fund" you

---

13 Sir Benjamin Brodie (1783-1862), professor of comparative anatomy and physiology at the Royal College of Surgeons.

14 William Farr (1807-83), superintendent of statistics, General Register Office.

might (this I have ascertained) enter a London hospital now under the terms I have laid down. But, if you *gave out* your ulterior object, you could not. This is the chief and main objection. This is fact. My other four objections are only opinions.

2. You might get up an “enthusiasm” among the audience you have (of which I have taken pains to ascertain the component parts). You could not, I believe, get up “funds.” That is, you would in time finally find yourself *landed in debt*.

3. You could not make out a case for establishing a special hospital of the kind you mention, as against the great general hospitals. The patients themselves would prefer going to the latter. The tendency of this time is toward consolidation in these things.

4. The idea you represent in America does not *yet* exist (to any great extent) in England. I mean, with regard to letting women enter the professions. I can better anticipate your making £2000 or £3000 a year as a female Locsch than your obtaining female students of the kind and number you wish excepting through having to deal (your ulterior purpose being *unknown*) with a large body of working women, like the nursing staff of a great hospital.

5. And much the least important—have you read Schedule A of the new Medical Act? It appears to most physicians conclusive against your getting yourself registered. To me this seems of very little importance. But I cannot think [?] that within your lifetime, there will be any “existing board” or “board appointed by government” for the graduation of women. I do not think you know how little your audience represents the public opinion of England, or rather that which moves the public opinion of England. I do not draw discouragement from this but neither should I draw encouragement from them as you do.

P.S. I return your note, in order that you may look at point 5 again. It is this which makes me so anxious about you. If you wed this indissolubly to the nursing scheme, you will find that it will close the doors of the great London hospitals to you—that you will not be able to collect £40,000 or anything like it for your nursing scheme—and that the results will be a kind of falling between two stools. The only really important point of my note appears to me to be this: you run the risk of closing to yourself that very “big hospital” (of which you so strongly see the necessity) by announcing prematurely the plan (No. 5) attached to the “little hospital.” It will strengthen the male feeling against your female M.D. ship.

F.N.

Source: Letter from Elizabeth Blackwell, Add Mss 45802 f237

6 Burwood Place, W.

25 July [1871?]

Dear Miss Nightingale

I have begun, what will be to me, a serious life work and I want to know whether you will approve, and be on our General Council.

I hope to draw in the Ladies' Sanitary [Association], and enlarge their operations by bringing in men, and a better organization. This, of course is only a proof with suggested names, that I send you, but many have promised, and the "crosses" are pledged to a weekly meeting and conscientious work. The type will stand for some time, to admit of alterations; any suggestion will be thankfully received.

Dear friend, the never-ceasing effort to make God's laws the rule of life seems to me the only thing worth living for, and I do long to render good service to my dear native land. I remain,

very truly yours

E. Blackwell

### **Elizabeth Garrett and "Hospital Nursing"**

**Editor:** The correspondence below was prompted by Dr Elizabeth Garrett giving a paper at the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, duly published<sup>15</sup> and much taken up in the press. In it Garrett set out her ideas for the organization of nursing, concluding "that hospital nursing can be very well done by women of the lower middle class" and recommending further "a lady superintendent" over the nurses, "as combining the principal advantage of the volunteer method with the advantages of the present system" (477), although Garrett also pointed out the unfairness of women who did not need a salary cheapening its price.

The letters below, none to Garrett herself, are an excellent source of Nightingale's views on the faults of the existing male medical profession, her vision of a profession for women and the distinction between that and the nursing profession. There is much here on the importance of training rather than social status in determining eligibility for a position.

Years later Henry Bonham Carter assisted with fundraising for the Women's Hospital on Euston Road, opposite St Pancras Church, named for Garrett Anderson. A letter to Nightingale informs her that

---

15 Elizabeth Garrett, "Hospital Nursing," *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science* 10 (1866):472-88.

he was taking the chair at a public meeting for the Women's Hospital Building Fund, "Mrs Garrett Anderson's appeal."<sup>16</sup> Nightingale contributed £50 and a letter of support to the Mansion House Appeal for the hospital.<sup>17</sup>

Source: From a letter to Dr Farr, Private Collection of Susan Teagle, copy Wellcome

13 October 1866

I have, alas! so few "great friends" left. But I always reckon you as one of my great friends. I saw, in the *Illustrated News* of this morning (I did not observe it in the *Times*) a report of a discussion upon hospital nursing arising out of a paper of Miss Garrett's, under the section, of which you were president, at Manchester. In this a Dr Stewart is stated to have said that I (!!!) had been *compelled* to give up employing "lady nurses" or the introduction of educated women into the profession of nursing!!! (the fact being that to doing this I devote my life—editor's note). And that I (!!!) had declared that educated women were unable to undergo the training necessary for the purpose (the fact being that it is not a week ago since I had openly congratulated ourselves upon the steady, though slow and quiet, progress we had been making in inducing educated women to "undergo" the training requisite for nurses, without which they cannot be fit to be superintendents, i.e., to train nurses in their turn).

Now, the first thing to ascertain is: *did* Dr Stewart say this? If so, he must be made to unsay it. Or at least to declare on what authority he made this unwarranted, unwarrantable assertion. In that case would *you* unsay it for me? I don't want to weary you with a long manifesto—especially as we do not yet know whether Dr Stewart has not been wrongly reported. (Who is he?)

I will only say now that my opinion is the same, only strengthened—by the experience of the last ten years—viz.,

1. That no nurses should do the work of scrubbers, that therefore the nurse, be she "upper" (vide Dr Stewart), middle or lower class," is equally able to go through the training of a *nurse*.

2. That no "lady superintendent" (vide Miss Garrett)—be she "upper, middle or lower class," is qualified to govern or to train nurses, if she has not herself gone through the training of a nurse.

16 Letter to Nightingale 9 April 1889, ADD Mss 47721 f176.

17 Louisa Garrett Anderson, *Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson 1836-1917* 246.



3. I don't exactly know what Miss Garrett or Dr Stewart mean by the "upper class." (Neither do I think they know themselves.) Therefore I will wait to know before I mention many (among others the present lady superintendent of the Workhouse Infirmary at Liverpool) who (1) have gone through the training of a nurse, (2) who yet serve without pay, (3) who are equally qualified to be nurses, head nurses, to attend an operation or to be superintendents yet who are of what is usually called the "upper class." (Be it known to Dr Stewart, who draws a painfully invidious distinction between "upper" and "middle class," that the *fact* is exactly the contrary from what he represents it. It is far more difficult to induce a "middle-class" woman than an "upper-class" one to go through as head nurse the incidental drudgery which must fall to the province of the head nurse—or be neglected.)

4. I thought the fallacy about "*paid* nurses" was exploded. It is very easy to pay. It is very difficult to find good nurses, paid or unpaid. It is "*trained* nurses" not "*paid* nurses" who are what we want. It is not the payment which makes the *medical officer*, but the education.

To make the power of serving *without* pay a *qualification* is, I think absurd. In a country like England, where so many women have to support their families, I would far rather than establish a religious order open a career highly paid. But, I think, all the sickening talk (of the Workhouse Infirmary Association, of Miss Garrett and Dr Stewart) about "paid nurses" is disgraceful to our common sense as a nation.

I will not weary you with more till I know what, if anything, you advise me to do in order to prevent a Dr Stewart from injuring our work. You may think I attach undue importance to it. But then you do not know how I am worried with letters, asking my authority (*with reproaches*):

1. for Church of England ladies and religious orders only;
2. for paid nurses only;
3. for pauper nurses only;
4. for marchionesses only and princesses;
5. for -- but I can't tell you all the nonsense.

Certainly I never expected to be quoted as having "been obliged to give up the employing ladies as nurses because" I "found them unable to obtain a thorough knowledge of the training necessary," etc. Also, that all that was necessary was to "pay good wages" to secure good nurses.

(Oddly enough I had a correspondence with Dr [Philip] Holland, of the Burials Act, in view of this very meeting, in which he invoked

my authority, which I gladly gave, to establish the reverse of what Dr Stewart represents me as saying and doing.)

I am neither for nor against “lady nurses” (what a ridiculous name! what would they say if *we* were to talk about gentlemen doctors?). I am neither for nor against “paid nurses.” My principle has always been that we should give the best training we could to any woman of any class, of any sect, “paid” or unpaid, who had the requisite qualifications, moral, intellectual and physical, for the vocation of a nurse. Unquestionably, the educated will be more likely to rise to the post of superintendents, but *not* because they are “ladies” but because they are educated (which epithet I really must refuse to either Miss Garrett or Dr Stewart, if they have been rightly reported). I fear they will do much harm to our cause. *I wish every* trained good nurse Godspeed and to provide as many such as I can, and also *trained* superintendents over them, has been the object of my life. I have unquestionably said (and I still hold) that “lady nurses” or “lady superintendents,” UNtrained, do more harm than good and that it is a destructive fallacy to put a “lady” over nurses, who does not know their work as well as they do themselves, merely because she is a “lady.” Believe me,

ever yours sincerely

Florence Nightingale

Dr Sutherland returns home this day from Gibraltar. I understand it is said he must either report to Miss Nightingale or to himself—for there is no one else to report to at the War Office. Don’t repeat this bad joke.

Source: From three letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/138, 139 and 145

13 April 1867

About Miss Garrett: there is, I am told, no general hospital *without* a school of students except the one I mentioned to you, the “Royal Free” in Gray’s Inn Road.

I should have thought a women and children’s hospital would have been the proper place for a female medical school. Would not this afford sufficient experience? In my time the Soho Square Female Hospital was a very good one and had no students (male). Is that the case now?

It has been suggested to me that, if one of the lying-in hospitals could be reformed and placed under the supervision of Miss Garrett, with children added, Miss G. being the resident medical officer, a real school for female physicians would thus best be established. You see,

these ladies (very properly) don't intend to take practice among men—in England, at least. Such female midwifery physicians might well take rank with licentiates.

13 April 1867

I send you a sensible letter of Mr Whitfield's on the subject of female medical training. You know that I have been beset with applications to admit ladies (wishing to practise) at our training school "for six or nine months" to "pick up" what they could—the last application urged by the "*Delhi Mission*" with a pertinacity it was difficult to resist.

I have always set my face against<sup>18</sup> any admixture of the nursing and medical elements in training schools as equally disadvantageous to both. The nurse ought not to fancy herself as a doctor; the female doctor ought not to fancy that she can "*pick up*" the knowledge which the student is compelled by law to take four years in acquiring before he can practise. I have been all the more, instead of the less, confirmed in this, because I should like to see midwifery practice altogether, or at least chiefly, in the hands of female physicians. But those who fancy they can "*pick up*" medical knowledge are backwarding, not forwarding, the movement.

16 April [1867]

With regard to Miss Garrett's letter, there is time enough to talk about it. If she is "too much occupied" with her "own private practice" to organize the school herself, she had much better let it alone. And I am far too much overwhelmed with business not to be obliged to decline giving any attention to the business, if such is the case.

She will *not* get a *general* hospital to admit them (female students) and I should not think well to organize a nurses' school in any other.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/140

16 April 1867

*Private.* You see I differ upon every word of Miss Garrett's note, but it is not a subject on which I am (or fancy myself) an authority. Therefore I write this for you only. I could not if I would, and I would not if I could, enter upon any controversy with her. But then neither must *they* ask me for advice or co-operation (as they have often done).

1. *She* starts on the ground that the *summum bonum* [greatest good] for women is to be able to obtain *the same* licence or diploma as men

---

18 An allusion to Jer 21:10.

for medical practice. Now I start from exactly the opposite ground. Medical education is about as bad as it possibly can be. It makes men prigs. It prevents any wise, any philosophical, any practical view of health and disease. Only a few geniuses rise above it. If it makes a man a prig, it will make a woman prigger. But, all that women have hitherto said is: I will take the same *kind* of education a man gets, but less in *degree*. Where he studies years, I will study months. Against that I set my face.

What I want to see is not, as Miss G. seems to wish, women obtaining exactly *the same* education as men, and exactly the same diploma and practising indiscriminately between the sexes as men do—very far otherwise. Not that I conceive it is much more indelicate for a woman to doctor men than for a woman to nurse men. But the last is necessary, the first is totally unnecessary. Indeed female (American) practitioners have told me with their own lips that they should “consider it an insult” “if called in to attend a man-patient.” That is as it should be. What I want to see is women attending as physicians their own sex—especially in lyings-in and in diseases peculiar to women or children. The good of a licence or diploma is this: that you *can’t get it*, except after *years* of a certain course and that this ensures you against the superficiality (said to be) common to all women. But, if this good result could be brought about by women’s own good sense, where would be the necessity of the “licence”?

Do you suppose Miss Garrett gets one more patient by being a “licentiate”? Do you suppose that a thoroughly educated experienced female doctor would lose one patient by *not* being a “licentiate”? I don’t. I think English women have too much sense. It is quite true that a *special* education (i.e., for female cases only) is always disadvantageous. It is quite true that every oculist, dentist, accoucheur, practises much better for having had a *general* medical education, but Miss Garrett does *not* say this. She does not say: how can we give women the best general medical education? She says: how can we satisfy the “examining boards”? Now, every old fogey, like me, knows that, if a man is a genius, he can’t pass (these “examining boards”), that what makes a man pass is memory, chiqué [pretence], words, that “examining boards” are just so many charlatans.

(Poor Alexander,<sup>19</sup> the director-general, told me of a man who passed the “examining board” triumphantly and who did not know,

---

19 Dr Thomas Alexander (d. 1860), director-general, Army Medical Department.

one from the other, the heart from the liver, when these valuable articles were placed before him in the flesh. Every examiner is full of similar stories.)

It was for this that, in 1861, we took so much pains to organize, and Sidney Herbert to start, a practical Army Medical School (now at Netley) where men who *have* passed *all the regular* medical course are instructed by the bedside, for even the *four years* necessary in civil hospitals are no sufficient test. Only the dressers and clinical clerks get much thereby, while the hundreds who follow in the train of such a man as Fergusson (the “great carpenter,” as Sidney Herbert used to call him) get next to nothing by their “four years.”

2. Who is to organize it, then, if Miss Garrett does not? It appears as if she wished to be another Fergusson, i.e., totally useless except to patients.

3. Whether we can do this or not will depend upon our calls and our supply. At present we are engaged years Liess to Leeds, Sydney, India, etc. I see no prospect of our doing it for years to come, what Miss G. wishes. I have myself had the regret of refusing *two general* hospitals within the last month—besides many smaller applications. We should certainly not think it right to sacrifice some great centre like Sydney, etc., which wishes to form a training school, for a scheme so unluckied as the present one under discussion. For we had rather, of course, have a training school in a large general hospital whenever we have nurses to spare. As to *midwifery* nurses: at our humble little institution at King’s College, the education is far better than anything that could be given us (e.g., at Queen Charlotte’s and other lying-in hospitals, a certificate as *accoucheuse* is actually given after a month’s *or less than a month’s* attendance. The lady who is going out to practise at Delhi actually got hers in this way).

4. Certainly it does. It “increases the expenses” *just by the expenses of those nurses* in training. If a nurse is learning, she can’t be *in the place of* another nurse. Mr Rathbone<sup>20</sup> proposes to give us £400 a year to train just ten probationers at Liverpool Workhouse. We spend £1000 a year at St Thomas’, £500 a year at King’s College. Ask the Maternité at Paris what *it* spends. Not one midwife is saved by having pupil midwives. The utmost that is saved is the expense of “*extra*” nurses in any

---

20 William Rathbone (1819-1902); see *Public Health Care* for extensive correspondence on the establishment of nursing in the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, which he funded.

of these institutions. Fevers and operations requiring “*extra*” nurses, you put on our probationers (*not* however *raw* probationers) for whom it is excellent practice, or when a regular nurse is sick or on leave.

ever yours

F.N.

*Confidential.* In 1860, it took me *months* of very hard work, *assisted as I was* by all the first civil and army medical authorities, to make the program and scheme of the Army Medical School. (Of course I took nothing from my own authority. All I did was to collect and sift the best opinions.) Now I am quite sure that it would take *anyone* months of very hard work to make the program of a female medical school. I neither can nor mean to do it. Miss Garrett, I am sure, neither sees the necessity of this close application, nor means to give it. (The paper on nurses which she read at the Social Science was crammed full of errors in fact, which half a day’s inquiry would have enabled her to avoid—and which cost me a whole week’s work to answer *after* the fact, to different inquirers, including Dr Farr.)

The great error of these medical ladies appears to me to be that they not only put the cart before the horse, but that they expect the cart to drag the horse. How is a woman to get a man’s diploma?—*that* is *all they ask*. It is just the same as if I, instead of qualifying myself to assist Sidney Herbert in the War Office, had bent all my energies to how is a woman to become a secretary of state?

How do people in Paris do these things? For fifty years there has been a succession of lady professors at the Maternité, who rank (I was going to say, just as high) but who in fact rank much higher than Simpson or Locock<sup>21</sup> here. Their works are quoted as authorities all over Europe. They command any practice they please when they leave the Maternité. Their names have even been forged and establishments set up in their names by quacks. There is no struggle with the men doctors. How have they done all this? Not certainly by trying for men’s diplomas, not by a paper war, not by struggling to get into men’s colleges. Simply by working a female school on female patients to perfection and letting all controversy alone.

But then, the school is absolutely complete. An “*élève sage-femme*” cannot be certificated *under two years*, instead of *in one month*, as in

---

21 Sir James Young Simpson (1811-70), professor of midwifery at Edinburgh University; Sir Charles Locock (1799-1875), physician at the Westminster Lying-in Hospital, first accoucheur to Queen Victoria.

England. The female professoriat, the “sage-femme” en “chef” and “sages-femmes aides” reside in the hospital. The “élèves sages-femmes de deuxième année” are made to help in training the “élèves sages-femmes de première année.” No medical school of men ever known is anything to be compared to its perfection in point of instruction, *both* practical *and* scientific. All this they have done—how? Not by *aping* a man’s medical school. Just the reverse, by simply doing the very best to form good midwives—and not thinking about men at all. (To ensure the standard of free public opinion there *is* a man-professor besides, generally the best accoucheur in France but who does not reside, of course.) (I believe the female head of this school has usually attended the queens and royal duchesses of France in this century. It was said that the Empress Eugénie<sup>22</sup> desired it very much, and would have gone on quite well, if the emperor had not insisted on her having a man doctor.)

If I were forming a female medical school in England, I should just cut the Gordian knot at once, and avoid all collision with men, by beginning as closely as possible on the Parisian model. Then afterwards, if you extend it to all diseases of women and children, so much the better, or even to a more general education still. It is absurd to tell me that “Madame la sage-femme-en-chef” at Paris requires a diploma to obtain her a practice among queens and empresses, or that it is not trying to make your cart draw your horse. It is not your “bishop’s commission” that makes the “apple-woman” a deaconess, nor your “licence” which makes the lady a doctor. As long as medical ladies go on in England in this way, I have no hope. One sensible woman, like Miss Garrett, may now and then win her way to practise. But even she is as senseless as the others about female medical schools. Let women begin by that branch of the profession (midwifery) which is undoubtedly theirs. Let them do it as well as possible. Let them conquer their place in it, instead of, as now as it seems to me, lady doctors affecting to despise it. All the rest will follow. But *none* of the rest will follow if their only aim is to be to extort from men a man’s place.

N.B., Let me explain what I said about a nurse training school being merely an extra expense. The pupil midwives of the second year (at Paris) instruct the pupil midwives of the first year. I have never made any calculation of the kind. Still I think I must be much beyond

---

22 Eugénie (1826-1920), wife of Emperor Napoléon III, Louis-Napoléon (1808-73).

the mark in saying that, if the Maternité were *not* a training school, one sage-femme-en-chef and half the number of pupils de seconde année as sages-femmes would be more than sufficient as a working staff, so that you at once sweep off as “increase to working expenses” all the pupils de première année, half those de seconde année, and all the head staff but one.

As to St Thomas’: though I have often found fault with them for turning a penny out of us, it has *not* been for employing our probationers as “extra” nurses for severe cases (which is excellent practice), *not* for employing them to take the place (temporarily) of sick or absent nurses—not even for working a whole ward with our probationers, as has *not, never*, been done—but for helping themselves, as they have frequently done, to our *uncertificated* nurses (probationers who had been with us only a few months) to fill *permanently* vacant situations as nurses and sisters at St Thomas’. . . . But we have been obliged to submit, because it has been the choice of having our own woman or a stranger as head nurse over our probationers. I need scarcely say that, as a rule, you must pay probationers wages.

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/114

20 May 1867

[That every woman, paid] or unpaid, should be trained, trained to her art, an art which no genius can conquer without training, without systematic, practical, persevering, continuous training by the bedside. (The most singular test of worthiness to serve God in nursing is to have had a private fortune left you.) I hold that, to serve according to “mercantile” principles from the “religious” motive (I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word) is the highest service, the service most according with the purpose of God of which we are capable.

The *Lancet*, quoted by Miss Garrett, says, “the nursing by *ladies* is the very best nursing England has seen.” Is not that type medical doctrine? Because “ladies” have happened to produce nurses who are better than drunken old sots, therefore *all* “ladies” are good nurses. Because, in some internal affection that the doctor did not understand, he gave something and the patient got well, therefore in all internal affections which the doctor does not understand give the same and the patient will get well. That is the type medical doctrine. And it would apply to politics just as well. Why does Miss [Mary] Jones, of King’s College and Charing Cross Hospitals, succeed so well? Not because her sisters are “ladies,” but because they are *trained*.



When I saw Miss Garrett's grave errors reproduced in April's *Macmillan*, I began an answer. I never finished it, partly because I am so driven by business, but mainly because, in such a subject, I think one ought to write as a "preacher of righteousness,"<sup>23</sup> not as a church controversialist, mainly because I think one ought to write, *not* for personalities, but for the truth, not against Miss G. but for conviction's sake. Mr Lewis's question encourages me to go on to write. And I think I shall try to write a short, terse paper "on my *art*," referring only to past sayings as to fallacies which should be avoided, at the next Social Science meeting, where you have a section.

I send you the few words I jotted down for *Macmillan* (which please consider private and return to me, I do *not* mean to send it), merely to remind you of the view my experience takes (for Mr Lewis) but *not* to show him.

I had meant to ask you, some day, whether you could give me some safe, though general, view as to (1) the greater proportion of women ("ladies") *if* greater, who, in England, have to earn their own and others' bread, than in other countries; (2) the average rate of governesses' salaries (my experience, rather an old one, being that £50, the hospital head nurse's salary, is rather a high governess's salary. But as I have said, I look upon this as quite a subsidiary point. My object is no more to secure hospital head nurse's places for "ladies" who would otherwise be governesses than I think Miss Garrett's object ought to be to secure them for the "lower middle class" or for *any* class. But I repeat that Miss G. is perfectly unaware how many sisters of sisterhoods, aye, superiors, too, *are* paid (being absolutely penniless) and quite right too!! . . .

I have recently been asked a question about the "Female Medical College" and especially about Dr Edmonds's lectures, of which college I think you are a patron. Could you, without much trouble, give me your view of its usefulness, especially as regards the point whether any *practical* course of clinical training is there attached? It would very much oblige me.

---

23 2 Pet 2:5.

Source: From a letter/draft/copy to Caroline Stephen,<sup>24</sup> ADD Mss 45802 ff12-30

[May 1869]

Private

Dear Madam

I thank you for your kind note. You put a question to me when you were leaving me which I felt I did not adequately answer, viz., whether it were possible, so I understood, successfully to follow out the profession of nursing except from “higher motives.”

I wished to have added some answer to this to the pencil scrawl I sent you, but I really had not time. (If you knew more of me, you would find that I was one of those tiresome persons with a scrupulous conscience. And so I am going to try to answer your question now. But, if it should prove a long answer, you need not read it; most people are far from wishing for lengthy answers to their inquiries.)

What *are* the “higher motives”? That is just what I want to know. Nearly all the Christian orders will tell you: the first is to save your soul, or perhaps they will put it: to please God in saving your soul. Even those who put it in *this way*: to serve God in serving your fellow creatures do not at all infer from this that you are to strain mind and soul and strength and body in finding out *what are* the laws of health, the laws of political economy, the best methods of education, without which all your serving of your fellow creatures is a farce, without which you really kill, ruin or pauperize them, while you are serving them. No: if you are to strain your body, it is by observing certain practices of fasting, poverty, etc. According to them, if you ask the Roman Catholic religious orders: What are the “higher motives”? (and the ritualist Anglican orders will tell you the same thing now) they will answer: to serve God’s church by entering into a society to promote His glory (or even *Her* glory, they may say), which can only be done, or best be done, by certain vows. And should you ask them (which I never did, because I lived with them) whether, if you performed exactly the same works without the vows, it would not do as well, they would answer: Certainly not.

And they would explain that the “vows” made these works more “meritorious”—that is, the word, that the “vows” were, in fact, the

---

24 Caroline Stephen (1834-1909), collaborator with Octavia Hill and aunt of Virginia Woolf; Stephen published *The Service of the Poor: An Enquiry into the Reasons for and against the Establishment of Religious Sisterhoods for Charitable Purposes*, 1871.

“higher motives.” (To this Roman Catholics would add a good deal about the “merit” of “gaining indulgences,” but into this it is probably not necessary to go.) Into the “merit” however of the “higher motives,” these “higher motives” being the fulfilling of poverty, obedience and celibacy, the Anglican and now the German Protestant orders appear to enter quite as strenuously as the Roman Catholic. In other words, poverty, obedience and celibacy are not considered as means to an end, but as the end themselves [itself]. In this there has been a sensible progress *backwards* in the last ten or twenty years. The great Roman Catholic orders are undoubtedly becoming more ultra-montane. But, it is not only this: the Protestant orders used to consider that “obedience” was only the necessary machinery to carry out a great work together, that “poverty” was only the self-denial essential to any doing good, that “celibacy” was only because you can’t have the nurses’ (or the schoolmistresses’ or the matrons’) husbands and children in your hospitals, penitentiaries, asylums, schools, etc.

Now, on the other hand, “obedience,” “celibacy,” “poverty” *are* the “higher motives” presented, not skill in the care of the sick (which must include devotion and self-denial), not skill in educating children, etc., in raising not pauperizing those under your care. In short, the “order,” not the patient, the “church,” not the child are becoming the “higher motives,” even in Protestant, even in evangelical English life (or, in this last it may be the *setting down*, not the glorifying the “order,” which is only the same thing in another guise, since they invent no organization for training the real “higher motive,” which is the care of the sick, the de-pauperizing of the pauper, the education of the child and the reclaiming of the prostitutes).

And certainly, some knowledge of political economy as regards the causes of pauperism is necessary for this. But, for the matter of that, governments and Poor Laws make just as great mistakes as the worst and most fanatical “religious” orders as regards how to de-pauperize.

However, to return: I can’t, for the life of me, especially when I hear all about the nursing by these “Knights of St John” and that of the campaign of Sadowa,<sup>25</sup> and the “Société de Secours” and the “Bailiwick of Brandenburg,” and the grand mastership, etc., help thinking of our immortal classic, *the Anti-Jacobin*, which I have not read these thirty years:

---

25 The Battle of Sadowa, fought over Schleswig-Holstein in the Austro-Prussian War; it in turn triggered the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

"Marked you the *waiter*?"

(Beefington) "The waiter?"

(Cas: in a confidential tone) "No waiter, but a *knight templar*. Poor "Beefington" and "Puddingfield" do make themselves so very ridiculous when they "dissemble their order" and "embrace the profession of a *hospital waiter*" (without knowing anything about it), "habited as knight templars, with the cross on their breast" and the "troubadour" and the "attendant female minstrel" (*alias*, the deaconess or nun, who are made female members of the order of the knights).

"Here doom'd to starve on water-gruel. That's the patient and very bad the water gruel *is* which the knight templar, *alias* hospital waiter, makes."<sup>26</sup>

However, quite seriously, and in good faith: the knightship, or the vovship, or the "lettres d'obédience," or the insignia, or the ecclesiastical petticoats, are an accessory (often rather ridiculous and *never* the "higher motive") but quite unobjectionable, *provided* these knights, these deaconesses, these nuns, these "soeurs," these "frères," these "waiters" know what they are about, can "pass an examination" in sanitary things, in sanitary construction, nursing—things which regard the health of hospitals and the public health. But this is just what they can't do. They look upon these things, which constitute the "higher motives," as the accessories. They look upon the "order," the historic pedantry, the ultramontane or evangelical sectarianism, the "no waiter but a knight templar," as the essential, the "higher motive."

Joseph II of Austria<sup>27</sup> said that he would keep the monks, provided the monks would go through the *government examination* (and open normal schools). Joseph II resumed the whole question of the "higher motive" in these words. (This is just what the present emperor of France<sup>28</sup> is too weak to do, even with the Soeurs de Charité. And this is just what religious orders, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, with some noble exceptions, *have too little of the "higher motive"* to do.)

The "higher motive" is to "pass the examination," not to do without it: to take care of the sick, to educate the child, to de-pauperize

---

26 Paraphrase from "Rovers; or, the Double Arrangement," in *The Anti-Jacobin*, anonymous satirical works published in the late eighteenth century by political/literary notables. The scene is Weimar, Germany; Puddingfield and Beefington were fictional English nobles exiled by King John prior to Magna Carta; Casimire (Cas) was a Polish emigrant; the gruel of course is for the prisoner.

27 Emperor Joseph II (1741-90), known as a progressive ruler.

28 Napoléon III; see *European Travels* for numerous negative comments on him.

the pauper, *as well as it is possible to do it*, and to strain body, soul, nerve and mind and strength to find out the best possible methods of doing it. And every other is *not* the “higher motive” but the lower. And, whether they dare to say it or not, the patients always feel this.

Joseph II was a sincere Catholic. I think I am a sincere “nun” in what I now say—far more so than any “mother superior” of this or “*mère générale*” of that order, though I dearly love them both (at least, some of them). But it is being a sincere “religious” to show the fatal mistake, fatal indeed in its consequences when so-called religion comes in, in any order whatsoever or under any guise of “higher motives” whatsoever, whether in the ordinary monasteries and nunneries, whether in the newfangled “societies,” and tries or pretends to exempt the members from the universal laws of business and success.

In all time it has been fatal to ecclesiastical government—most especially in education or in nursing. I have seen nuns and deaconesses do, in carelessness, dirt and neglect, what no ordinary secular hospital nurse or schoolteacher would dare to do, because she would lose her place. Still more I have seen *men* in religious orders, or “knights templars,” guilty of this kind of thing. On the other hand, experience has led me to believe that (as human nature is now) religious orders or societies, *if* they do carefully observe secular laws of success, if they do cordially unite with the civil powers, submit to civil conditions, if they pass their “examinations,” in fact, if they do all these things, they find a great help to the “higher motive” among the weaker vessels in the bond of the “society” to maintain a higher standard of administration, of nursing, of education, than purely secular nurses, schoolteachers, etc., have who are scattered abroad without any particular bond of association.

But, if they exempt themselves from all but ecclesiastical jurisdiction or opinion as regards the “higher motive,” all experience tells us that this is capable of becoming incalculably the *lowest* “motive” of all. And this is even more remarkable in the Protestant than in the Roman Catholic orders. But it is difficult, without betraying confidence, to give illustrations which can only be known by those who have *lived* among them (but not of them). Take therefore the historic fight between the church and the civil powers as to the validity of marriage. Every sincere Roman Catholic will tell you that it is the church sacrament, every sincere ritualist the church ceremony, which constitutes the “higher motive,” the essence, the morality of marriage. But the “higher motive” *is* the intention of one man and one woman to

belong to one another for all time. It signifies nothing, as far as the “higher motive” is concerned, whether this intention is declared or not before a gentleman in a white tie, in ecclesiastical petticoats, etc. Everything short of this is the *lower* “motive,” not the higher. So, the “higher motive” in nursing is to nurse under all the conditions which restore the sick to health, to secure as far as possible the administration and construction which the most careful study of the laws of health renders imperative.

This is the “higher motive.” But to belong to something called an ecclesiastical order or society which prescribes other conditions than the essential ones, this is surely the “*lower* motive,” not the “higher.” But, in justice to my friends, the Paris hospitals, to my friends the deaconesses, and even to the dirty knight templar waiters, I must repeat that, if an order does strictly subordinate itself as a means to an end, to fulfill these practical laws, like everybody else, I think an order a great preservative of the “higher motive.” *If not, not.* But orders are always mistaking the accident for the essence, the essence for the accident, the “higher motive” for the lower, the lower for the higher. But patients don’t mistake them. Children don’t mistake. “Comme je me serais ennuyé, *si je n’avais été là!*” [how I would have been bored if I had not been there!] It is astonishing how this principle applies everywhere. If there is a first-rate superintendent, she does not see these things, because *they are not there*. And to this must be attributed so much of the aberration, the degeneracy of orders and societies.

The founder could not possibly foresee or prevent it, because, while he (or she) was *there*, it did not exist. For my part, I think that people should always be founders. And this is the main argument against endowments. Let each founder train as many in his or her spirit as he or she can. Then the pupils will, in their turn, be, so to speak, founders. While the founder *is there*, his or her work will be done, not afterwards. The founder cannot foresee the evils which will arise when he is no longer there. Therefore let him not try to establish an order. This has been most astonishingly true with the Order of the Jesuits as founded by (I must take a *historical* illustration) St Ignatius Loyola,<sup>29</sup> with St Vincent de Paul’s “Soeurs de la Charité.”<sup>30</sup> It is quite immeasurable the

29 Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the Society of Jesus.

30 Vincent de Paul (1581-1660), co-founder of the Filles de la Charité, known as the Soeurs, or Sisters of Charity.

breadth and length which now separates the spirit of these orders from the spirit of their founders. But it is no less true with far less ambitious societies. This fundamental experience Anglican orders are so far from perceiving that their main object is to perpetuate themselves, their main complaint that there is not a constant succession and extension, as, they say, there exists in the R.C. orders.

To return to what is the higher motive? In the perfect religious nurse or teacher there ought to be what may be called (1) the physical (or natural) motive, (2) the intellectual (or professional) motive, (3) the religious motive, *all three*. The natural motive, which is the love of children, the love of nursing the sick, and which may entirely conquer (as I know by personal experience) a physical loathing and fainting at the sight of operations, of post-mortem examinations, etc., this cannot be dispensed with in the good nurse, the good teacher. (I do not believe it possible for the "higher motive," as it is called, so to disguise a natural disinclination to children or sick in the nun as to make her acceptable to the patients or the children. I have seen very serious and painful examples of this among hospital "sisters" and educational orders, while, on the other hand, the good nurse is a creature much the same all over the world, whether in her coif and cloister or taking her £20 or £50 a year.)

Then there is (2) the professional motive, the desire and perpetual effort to do the thing *as well as it can* be done, to nurse or teach up to the ideal, to train oneself to the means of reaching perfection, to discover and perfect new methods, which exists just as much, every bit as much, in the nurse as in the astronomer in search of a new star, or in the artist completing a picture or statue which is to live forever.

These may be thought fine words. I can only say that, in the course of a very eventful life, I have seen this professional ambition in the nurse who could hardly read or write, but who aimed just as much at perfection in her care and dressing of the difficult amputation case as the surgeon did in performing the operation, and that there is no first-rate nursing without it just as there is no first-rate surgery without it. And I have seen it in the nun and the deaconess. But, I have never seen it in any English or Irish "sister," whether Anglican or R. Catholic or evangelical, which I attribute to their obstinate resistance to anything secular, which [un]fortunately forms so large a portion of the "religious" life abroad, and to its consequence that they absolutely do not know even what the word "training" means.

But it would be merely an "odious caparison" to mention individual orders if this did not lead me to an answer to your question about

the “higher motive.” I call it the “*higher motive*” to do *the very best you can* for your sick and the children under your care, to leave no means untried to know (and to be able to practice) *how to do the very best you can*. The “professional” who does this *has* the “higher motive.”

The “religious” who thinks she can serve God *anyhow* has *not* the “higher motive.” And can there be anything more contemptible, more mean, or farther from the “higher motive” than a “religious” who will not take the trouble to learn and use the best means to serve God and man, not even the trouble which a “professional” will take to fit herself for a lucrative place, let alone the higher “professional” ambition? I should call the “religious” the *lower* motive and the “professional” the *higher* in this case.

The founder of a “religious order” in London, with whom dear Agnes Jones once was, told me with his own lips that he did not think his “sisters” required much training, for (he said to them) “you are at all events better than Mrs Gamps.”<sup>31</sup> I would gladly go and see this man (who yet is a good man) prosecuted for “cruelty to animals” or for “ecclesiastical misdemeanour.” O if the Court of Arches would but call *this* an ecclesiastical misdemeanour! If you know Sir R. Phillimore, could you not ask him? And this man told me exactly what you did, viz., that Pastor Fliedner<sup>32</sup> told him he must always look for the “higher motive.” And he calls it the “higher motive” that these ladies give themselves up to the service of God, in order to be and to serve Him, a little better than Sairey Gamp, or rather not quite so badly as Sairey Gamp!!!

The consequence in his hospital and in these ladies’ good works is just what you would expect! In short, they won’t do for God what we do for any trade, any profession, any occupation in which we are heartily engaged. And they call that the “higher motive”!

But we come to (3) the religious motive—and I do entirely and constantly believe that this *is* essential for the highest kind of nurse or teacher, especially for the highest kind of founder. There are such disappointments, such sickenings of the heart, such “contradictions,” not of “sinners” only—those are easily borne—but of good men, such falling short of the ideal in one’s own work and in that of the best disciples, that I do not believe any founder was ever carried through

---

31 Sairey Gamp was the fictional drunken nurse Charles Dickens satirized in *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

32 Theodor Fliedner (1800-64), founder with his first wife, Friederike (1800-42), of the Kaiserswerth Deaconess Institution.



them all except by feeling that she or he was called to the work by God, that it is a part of *His* work, that he or she is a fellow worker with God. "I do not ask for success," said dear Agnes Jones, even while she was taking every human means to ensure success, "but that the will of God may be done in me and by me." This *is* the "higher" religious motive. But the care of one's own soul is not. Poverty, obedience and celibacy, whether with or without "vows," are not.

I do not believe it possible for a founder to go on year after year through what always seem, to him or her, want of success (even though it may be really success) because it falls so far short of the ideal which every founder has in imagination. I do not believe it possible for any founder to go on without *this* "higher" religious motive. I think one would strike work. I am sure *I* should.

But if you ask me which will do best, the "professional" motive of doing the best one can for those under one's charge without the ordinary so-called religious motive, to "make one's salvation," or the ordinary so-called religious motive, "faire son salut," without the professional exertion, I answer that the professional *is* the "higher motive," the so-called religious motive the lower, and that the latter will not only not do best—it will do nothing.

Not to give particular illustrations, I look upon some of the teaching "sisters" and "brothers" I have seen as some of the lowest creatures on the face of the earth. (And yet, I contend, they are never what is usually called "immoral.") But, undoubtedly, the *standard* of nursing of the Paris hospitals was, and is, I am afraid still, higher than the standard of the London hospitals. The standard of the German hospitals was, all over Germany, north and south, lower, ten [to] fifteen years ago, not only than those of Paris but even than the unreformed hospitals of London. And this year you must take into account in the unprecedented success of Kaiserswerth. But, though I say it with the greatest regret, the standard of nursing of the Kaiserswerth deaconesses even when in the secular hospitals of Germany is not only far below that of the Paris Augustinians and Soeurs de Ste-Marthe at Paris, but it is lower than that of an ordinarily good London hospital.

(The Soeurs de Ste Marthe are, as I dare say you know, the last surviving representatives of Port-Royal in France, of Jansenism, the successors of the Mère Angélique. You, the daughter of Sir James Stephen<sup>33</sup>

---

33 Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld (1591-1661), superior of the Convent of Port-Royal, condemned by the church for the heresy of Jansenism; Sir

ought to admire them with something more than a sentimental admiration. And I think it was *his* review of the Port-Royalists which fired me, as a youth, with a zeal to see whether the truth and the duty which was in them could not be made one with the truth and the duty which is in the moral and political philosophy of the present-day, as I firmly believe from experience it can). It is absolutely bad, compared with that of a hospital like St Thomas'. It is the normal school, the penitentiary, the infant school at Kaiserswerth which is so good, not the hospital. Above all, it is the spirit which Pastor Fliedner and his wife<sup>34</sup> infused into the deaconesses, "parish" deaconesses included.

I have but two or three words more to say. It is so difficult to guard one's meaning sufficiently in such a moral dissertation as you have launched me in (for I am but a poor moralist) that I must fain return to something about the "higher motive." All "societies" and "orders," if they tell the truth (which I have an unfortunate way of doing, much to my own expense through life) will tell you that they have often their greatest scourges and their greatest troubles from skilled, efficient nurses, superintendents, or "sisters," who yet, from want of a feeling of honour in what they say, from an undisciplined temper, from a love of show in what they do, from habits of pride or of self-indulgence, etc., are always destroying all the good they are doing. And here you may truly say it is because the "higher motive" is wanting.

Mme Fliedner is quite right in saying that these faults, if they exist in the doctor, do not harm his surgery, at least not much. But they destroy the nurse and the teacher. (The nurse you have always with you, the doctor not.) But then I contend that the "higher motive" is the serving of God and man by the very best means which human wisdom and industry have discovered in political economy, in education, in the health of hospitals, etc., not what is usually called the "religious motive." These scourges are serving *themselves*, not God or man.

And I say that they are just like those who go into "orders" for the good of their souls. Both are seeking *themselves*—serving themselves—not God or the poor. One more thing, which I am rather loath to say: a man of immense experience not only in the Western but in the Eastern religions, whose home is now in Paris [Julius Mohl], told me that

---

James Stephen (1789-1859), regius professor of history, Cambridge, colonial under secretary.

34 Caroline Fliedner (1811-92), second wife of Pastor Fliedner and head of the nurses when Nightingale was at Kaiserswerth.

he had never seen and did not believe that there was any fetishism equal to that of some of the female religious orders of France, not even in any Eastern religion. I agree, but I go farther and say the grossest heathenism in Christianity is often mistaken for the “higher motive.”

And you need not go farther than London to see this, to see the deepest self-devotion, worshipping an idol, a barbarous heathenism, without a spark of Christianity, cruelty, fanaticism. And these people are called the highest type of Christians. And this is called the “higher motive.” But, if you want to see it in its perfection, you must see it as I have, by having Irish “orders” under your own charge.

**Editor:** A letter from Caroline Stephen the following year asked Nightingale for help in establishing a system for training volunteer ladies as nurses, who would be on call for emergencies such as war or epidemics. Stephen thought that if ladies spent some weeks or months in a hospital it would test them for their seriousness of purpose, nerve and hardiness. She thought this system could also be used for nurses to be sent to India.<sup>35</sup> Nightingale replied that one to three months’ training in a hospital was utterly inadequate. Stephen replied that she intended these volunteers to serve under a fully trained nurse but would defer to Nightingale’s judgment. She fully saw the difficulties of trying to classify amateurs.

Source: From a letter to Henry Acland,<sup>36</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford University

Embley

Romsey

20 July 1869

Private and Confidential. I have thought over and over your note and thought, when I received it, my impression was very strong upon the subject on which you wrote, yet I would not answer—the matter upon which you do me the honour of consulting me being very important—till I had given myself time for consideration.

I am the more anxious to say nothing hastily, because I am afraid I shall differ from some of the best men on the subject and because I certainly, had you asked me the same question fifteen or sixteen years

---

35 Letter 7 September 1870, ADD Mss 45802 f181.

36 Henry Wentworth Dyke Acland (1815-1900), later 1st bart; regius professor of medicine at Oxford University.

ago, before I had the experience I have had since, should have fallen in eagerly with your project. Experience then teaches me now that nursing and medicine must never be mixed up. It spoils both. If the enemy wished to ruin our nurses in training at St Thomas', it would be by persuading me to accept your noble offer of a female special certificate<sup>37</sup> (or any degree) for them. (And I say quite unaffectedly that it *is* a noble and generous offer.)

If I were not afraid of being misunderstood, I would almost say: the less knowledge of medicine a hospital matron has, the better; (1) because it does *not* improve her sanitary practice; (2) because it would make her either miserable, or intolerable to the doctors, miserable, because, in the immense diversity between doctors' opinions and doctors' practice, she would fancy that she knew which was wrong, intolerable, because, if she were not a woman of self-control, such as we do not find one in a thousand possesses, she would let her criticisms leak out, perhaps through the nurses. And this would ruin the nurses. On the whole, believe me, keep medicine and nursing perfectly distinct.

Do not let a nurse fancy herself a doctor. If you have "medical women," let them be as entirely distinct from nurses as "medical men" are. Let them, the "medical women," have as thorough an education as "medical men" have—not a smattering of lectures (if there *are* to be "medical women"). A smattering of nursing does a doctor good. A smattering of medicine does a nurse harm.

I am afraid that you will think I am making myself as pragmatism and disagreeable as possible. If I had but half an hour's more time and strength, I would try to explain that there *is* not sufficient medical or surgical knowledge, not sufficient scientific or literary knowledge, in a nurse's or matron's education, to form *a basis for a degree or registration* or certificate (it would be quite possible for the worst matron or nurse to pass the best examination); that the real qualities of a good nurse or matron are those which are generally comprehended under the words "character," "practical ability" and developed by *practical training*.

(It is true that we give our nurses lectures, though this forms but an infinitesimally small portion of our course, and make them take notes. These, but much more the notes which we make them take of their cases, form an item of their examination. But otherwise their exami-

---

37 "Medical degree" struck out.

nation is entirely *current* and *practical* and bears no kind of resemblance to a student's examination, that is, the training nurses keep a weekly record, by a system of marks, of the progress each probationer is making in each of her ward duties and in character. The training matron keeps a similar monthly record under the same heads. From all this we test the probationer's progress, and, for the life of me, I cannot see how any other examination, any *school* examination, would test a *nurse* at all.)

Had I time, I would try to explain how, in my opinion, any "recognition" of the kind so generously proposed by you would fatally interfere with some of the essential points in a nurse or matron. It would fatally interfere with discipline, because, e.g., you might have a bad "registered" nurse placed under a first-rate unregistered matron, or a good unregistered nurse who would see at once that her (registered) matron did not know her duty, placed under such a matron, and with what results anyone may perceive.

(It may be said that this may be the case in *any* civil service examination. That is true. But the real points of a nurse escape any examination but a *current* one—just as the real points of hospital work escape any inspection but a *current* one.) I know what you will say: that it is not a female medical registration or a female medical certificate<sup>38</sup> that you propose, but rather (say) a female sanitary registration, a female sanitary examination. But you cannot test good sanitary nursing by the answers which can be given, but only by the work which has been done. It is not the rolling a few answers trippingly off her tongue about the chemistry of foul air that makes a good nurse, but the keeping her patient's air always fresh without giving him cold and the thousand and one cares which go to make up a careful nurse.

She has not to plan sanitary engineering works or a healthy hospital construction (it would make her miserable if she had, because all hospitals but one or two are upon such unhealthy principles of construction). She has not to write treatises on hygiene; all these things do come within the domain of examinations; she has only to practise it every minute of her day and night and this comes only within the domain of a *current* continuous examination. (A nurse should, however, certainly know the sanitary facts of the origin of disease in defective drainage, defective water supply, etc. And I have been much pleased to see lately, in our probationers' notes on cases, such notes as

---

38 "Degree" struck out.

these: e.g., "A. came in with typhus. A.'s husband and mother died of typhus in the same house." (An ignorant nurse would have added "how contagious" but) this nurse added an account, evidently accurate, of the defective drain which had produced this sweeping away of a whole family. But this sanitary knowledge is only, or is best, conveyed to a nurse by the practical knowledge of her own cases and not by lectures. And, whatever we do, let us not commit this sort of examination to a "doctor."

With two or three brilliant exceptions, "the doctors" are far behind a humble, experienced, observing nurse in such matters as how disease is produced, "contagion" and the like. Poison a nurse with medical "contagious" theories and she will be ruined. For yourself alone.

*Private.* I come now to your second question, about female "medical education" and whether it should be the same as men's. I will try to answer this in the way which alone would *not* be impertinent to you, viz., from the point of view of my own experience. There is one medical sphere which is indisputably woman's and this conviction is becoming every year, I believe, more general, viz., that women should be attended by women, especially in all the pertains to childbearing. The objection to it, of course, is that all education for midwives in England is so bad that, if a lying-in woman persists in preferring an accoucheuse to an accoucheur, she does so at the risk of her life. A midwife is, in England, almost a synonymous term for ignorance.

But, it seems to me, that people have taken up this cry of female "medical education" here at the wrong end. They cry out, at least the women do: let women have the same medical education as men. Should we not rather give women a thorough scientific and practical education in a branch which is indisputably their own, viz., midwifery, disputed by no men, so far as I am aware, on general grounds, but only on the accidental ground that there is no proper midwifery education for women in England? *Then* it will be very easy to find out whether *ultimately* women may "receive the same medical education as men." (Midwifery may, I need not say, be made to include the special diseases of women and children.)

But what has England done since this new movement has arisen? Some things, which call themselves "female medical colleges" (*à non* being colleges, I suppose) give a superficial course of lectures, leaving the female students to "pick up" the practice, as they can—a lying-in hospital gives a certificate after a *month's* attendance. And these women go out, sometimes to India, to practise as accoucheuses. What

but disaster can follow such ideas? And is it not ridiculous in the most practical nation of the earth?

Yet it is the fashion for these new “female doctors” (in England) to “despise midwifery” (and, I believe, in America). What has France done? For sixty-seven years she has had a school for midwives who go through a *two years’* course of scientific and practical education in midwifery, as good as, or better than, any education for men. (I take this, of course, not on my own word but on that of the best men.) Without a certificate, which cannot be had except after this *two years’* course, midwives cannot practise.

All the professors are women, excepting, I believe, one. This school has produced a succession of lady heads second to no accoucheurs in Europe—either in their practice or their writings. (This, again, I take on the word of man—I am not an accoucheuse. I wish I were. There is nothing I should wish to do so much as to go through a two years’ course at that school.) The sanitary practice and the pupil discipline at this Maternité are abominable. This I take on my own word. But is this not curious?

The sanitary work, which is essentially women’s work, is neglected—whereas (the turning), the operations (in short), in difficult and abnormal cases, which it is said women have not the science, the nerve, not even the strength, to perform, are all performed there to perfection by women, taught by women. The high death rate is from puerperal fever, etc., not from surgical accidents in childbirth.<sup>39</sup> Now it appears to me that something of this kind (*not* sanitarily) should be done in England. Why not? But then it must be done thoroughly, as they do it.

You would scarcely believe how many propositions we have had to ally our St Thomas’ Nurse School with “female medical colleges,” always steadily refused by us on the ground “we are not ‘medical women,’ we are nurses—all attempts to confuse nursing with medicine must prove fatal to both.”

You would scarcely believe how many applications I have had from ladies who, having had the smattering of lectures, begged to be admitted as *nurses*, nominally to “pick up” as “the students do,” then *to go out to practise*, perhaps in India. You would scarcely believe how hard these applications were to refuse, nor how angry they were at being refused.

---

39 The anomaly of extensive training of midwives occurring with high death rates of birthing mothers is treated extensively in the midwifery section below.

Yet I need hardly say it would have been ruin both to them and to their future patients (to say nothing of our nurses) had such been admitted.

One of these ladies, after having been refused by us, took only *a month's* certificate from one of the lying-in hospitals in London, and went out to India to *practise*, this *plus* a few lectures being her *whole course of medical education*. (I do not blame these poor silly women. It is the men who are to blame. If this is the idea of medical education which physicians and surgeons, who *are* educated, allow women to have, certify them, upon who is to blame the poor women who accept the certificates?)

In my humble little midwifery school at King's College Hospital we gave a not less than six months' practical course, *plus* lectures. Yet we would not certify the pupils as *midwives*, but only as *midwifery nurses*, i.e., they were to know enough to know when a case of "abnormal parturition" was past their skill, in their future practice (and that is more than most English midwives know) and to call in "the doctor." Yet we were frequently applied to by ladies for one month's, two months', instruction there. (I was obliged to close that school on account of the high lying-in death rate—though not so high as at some London and all Paris lying-in hospitals. But we mean to open it again under happier sanitary conditions.)

*This, viz., the examination and registration of midwives (accoucheuses) laying down your conditions and course, which should certainly be not less than that of the French in scientific and practical things, and a great deal more in sanitary things, for every midwife should certainly know the causes of puerperal fever and those conditions which generate the long train of puerperal diseases, and that childbirth is not a disease; this, it appears to me, would be the proper function of such a machinery as you propose.*

Afterwards it may be left to public "opinion" to decide whether "women shall be doctors like men," shall be "admitted to the ordinary medical and surgical diplomas." Let me have my beef before my mustard and do not give me mustard without my beef. Let me have my midwifery diploma—first—and a good one—and then I can think whether I will have "the ordinary medical and surgical diplomas."

I must apologize for this letter as being both too long and too short, i.e., too abrupt. It is impossible to me to lay my experience before you in any compact form and therefore my conclusions may seem jerky. Time and strength are very short with me—I am often almost unable to write. And I am thankful when I am able to write



even one additional letter to my most pressing business. I hope, however, that you will give me credit for having done my best. I thank you for your proof on “State Medicine.”<sup>40</sup> I will, if you please, say something about that in a separate letter. This is too long already. Pray believe me, my dear Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: Incomplete letter, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/143

[c1870]

I send what I have jotted down, because you asked me and because it is possible you may be waiting for it. But you must not, please, use this—jotted down in haste as it is without the possibility of consulting my own correspondence and documents. I will almost ask to have it returned to me.

ever yours

F.

I should put off the question for at least a century: shall women have medical education the same as men? Let them be instructed midwives (i.e., physician-accoucheuses) first. [page missing]

P.S. The “tall talk” ladies, who mean little and prove nothing, try to drag in the question of medical females everywhere. Mrs Butler could not ask me to sign her petition for the repeal of the “Contagious Diseases Acts” without inserting a passage about the usefulness of medical women. “The interlude was delightful. It had nothing to do with the bill—But what of that?” However, I refused to sign till the “interlude” was taken out.

I can write no more. I have put down what I could, but I am “trembling like a cloud driven by the wind,” as the Veda says.<sup>41</sup>

I could not enter into the controversy without attacking medical education for *men*, and this is impossible to me—I have neither time nor strength for it—and would not use them for this, if I had.

See what a hideous mess Dr Acland has made of this by writing to the *Times* about it in an entirely confused state of mind without having really apprehended his question at all.

---

40 Henry Acland was a member of the royal commission chaired by Lord Norton that recommended the creation of a government Department of Health.

41 The supplicant prays: “If I go along trembling like a cloud driven by the wind, have mercy, Almighty, have mercy!”

**Editor:** Nightingale was incensed again in 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War, by the proposals of Dr Garrett, this time with Dr Blackwell, “Doctresses Blackwell and Garrett” as she called them, about women nurses. To Emily Verney she objected: “*Because* American servant girls were of use on American battlefields, because French peasant women were of use to French wounded—which most undoubtedly they were—therefore these ladies want us to send “100 untrained poor women” and “fifty kitchenmaids or *drudges*” (rather unwomanly, I think, to call them so) English-pure to Sedan and Saarbrücken.”<sup>42</sup> Nurses needed to be properly trained. Local help was good in emergencies. Women doctors were not experts on what was needed in nursing.

Source: Note to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 f179

[c1872]

At least it is *less* easy to educate a woman out of a man than a woman out of a woman. I therefore think women physicians will not come out of men physicians so likely as out of accoucheuses or midwives.

Source: Letter, Wayne State University, Folder 9, letter 13

London

18 September 1872

Sir [W. Gill Wylie, MD<sup>43</sup>]

First let me explain that your letter from Paris of 26 August was most unfortunately not forwarded to me till the day *after* that on which you proposed to leave England. When it reached me I was overwhelmed with business and illness (I should perhaps add that my medical advisers have warned me that if I have business interviews of more than half an hour, it is at the risk of my life). Add to this, at the moment of receiving your letter, my niece who was to me like my own child, Sir Harry Verney[’s] only daughter—had been but two hours dead (she would have done a great work in God’s service, had she lived).

But I have been so little used to regarding my own life or the lives of those dearest to me as preventing God’s business that I would have seen you as you desired, had it not, as I have explained, been alas! too late. Excuse me for giving these personal details. I wish to show that

<sup>42</sup> Letter 6 October 1870, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/122.

<sup>43</sup> W. Gill Wylie (1848-1923), New York State Women’s Hospital.

there is no indifference on my part, that if I could have been of service, I would. I wish your association Godspeed with all my heart and soul in their task of reform, and will gladly, if I can, answer any questions you may think it worthwhile to ask.

You say “the great difficulty will be to define the instructions, the duties and the position of the nurses in distinction from those of medical men,” and you are “anxious to get” my “views” “in relation to this subject.” *Is this a difficulty?*

A nurse is not a medical man, nor is she a medical woman. (Most carefully do we in our training avoid the confusion, both practically and theoretically, of letting women suppose that nursing duties and medical duties run into or overlap each other—so much so that, though we have often been asked to allow ladies intending to be “doctors” to come in as *nurses* to St Thomas’ Hospital, in order to “pick up,” so they phrased it, professional medical knowledge, we have never consented even to admit such applicants—in order to avoid even the semblance of encouraging such gross ignorance and *dabbling* in matters of life and death as this implies. You who *are* a “medical man,” who know the difference between the professional studies of the medical student, even the idlest, and of the nurse, will readily see this.)

Nurses are not “medical men.” On the contrary—the nurses are there, and solely there, *to carry out the orders of the medical and surgical staff*, including of course the whole practice of cleanliness, fresh air, diet, etc. The whole organization of discipline to which the nurses must be subjected is for the sole purpose of enabling the nurses to carry out intelligently and faithfully such orders and such duties as constitute the whole practice of nursing. They are in no sense medical men.

Their duties can never clash with the medical duties. Their whole training is to enable them to understand how best to carry out medical and surgical orders—including (as above) the whole art of cleanliness, ventilation, food, etc., and *the reason why* it is to be done *this* way and not *that* way. For this very purpose, that is, in order that they may be competent to execute medical directions, to be nurses and not doctors, they *must* be, for discipline and internal management, entirely under a woman, a *trained* superintendent, whose whole business it is to see that the nursing duties are performed according to this standard. For this purpose, may I say:

1. That the *nursing* of hospitals, including the carrying out of medical officers’ orders, must be done to the satisfaction of the medical

officers, whose orders regarding the sick are to be carried out. And we may depend upon it that the highly trained intelligent nurse and cultivated moral woman will do this better than the ignorant stupid woman. For ignorance is always headstrong.

2. That all desired changes, reprimand, etc., in the nursing and for the nurses should be referred by medical officers to *superintendents*; that rules which make the matron (superintendent) and nurses responsible to the house surgeons or medical and surgical staff, *except* in the sense of carrying out [illeg] medical orders above insisted on, are always found fatal to nursing discipline; that, if the medical officers have fault to find it is bad policy for them to reprimand the nurses themselves. The medical staff must carry all considerable complaints to the matron—the current complaints, as, for instance, if a patient has been neglected or an order mistaken, to the ward “sister” or head nurse who must *always* accompany the medical officer in his visits, receive his orders and be responsible for their being carried out. (All considerable complaints against a head nurse or “sister” to go of course to the matron.)

3. All discipline must be of course under the matron (superintendent) and ward “sisters.” Otherwise nursing is impossible. And here I should add that, unless there is, so to speak, a hierarchy of women, as thus: matron or superintendent, sisters or head nurses, assistant and night nurses, ward maids or scrubbers (or whatever other grades are, locally, considered more appropriate) discipline becomes impossible. In this hierarchy the higher grade ought always to know the duties of the lower better than the lower grade does itself. And so on to the head: otherwise, how will they be able to *train*?

“Moral influence” alone will not make a good trainer. Any special questions which you may like to address to me, I will do my very best to answer—as well as I am able. But I am afraid that, without knowing your special case, I shall be only confusing if I add much more now. I will therefore only now mention, as an instance, that the very day I received your first message (through Mrs Wardroper) I received a letter from a well-known German physician strikingly exemplifying what we have been saying as to the necessity of hospital nurses being in no way under the medical staff as to *discipline*, but under a matron or “lady superintendent” of their own, who is responsible for their carrying out of medical orders. You are doubtless aware that this is by no means the custom in Germany (in France the system much more nearly approaches to our own). In Germany, generally, the ward nurse

is *immediately* and for *everything*—under the ward doctor—and this led to consequences so disastrous that, going to the opposite extreme, Kaiserswerth and other German Protestant deaconesses' institutions were formed, where the chaplain and the "Vorsteherin" (female superintendent) were virtually masters of the hospital, which is of course absurd.

My friend then, who has been for forty years medical officer of one of the largest hospitals in Germany, wrote to me that he had succeeded in placing a *matron* over his nurses: then that after 1½ years she had been so persecuted that she had been compelled to resign; then that he had remained another year trying to have her replaced; lastly that, failing, he had himself resigned his post of forty years, believing that he could better work for his reform outside the hospital than in it. It seems extraordinary that this first essential, viz., that women should be, in matters of discipline under a woman, should need to be advocated at all. But so it is.

And I can add my testimony as regards another vast hospital in Germany—to the abominable effects of nurses being directly responsible *not* to a matron but to the economic staff and medical staff of their hospital. And I am told on the highest authority that, since my time, things have only got worse. But I will not take up your time and my own with more general remarks, which may not prove, after all, applicable to your special case. But I think I will venture to send you a copy of a paper, the only one I have left. The original was written by order of the (then) Poor Law Board for their new workhouse infirmaries and printed in their reports. So many hospitals then wrote to me to give them a similar sketch for their special use, and it was so utterly impossible for me to write to all, that I abridged and altered my original paper for their use. And this (I fear dirty) copy is the last I have left. Pray excuse it.

Again begging you to command me, if I can be of any use for your great purpose, to which I wish every success and ever-increasing progress, pray believe me, Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

You will find in an Appendix to the printed paper all the steps of our training at St Thomas' Hospital under our admirable matron, Mrs Wardroper. But as she may probably see this letter, I must abstain from praising her as it were "to her face," which all noble natures dislike.

F.N.

Source: Incomplete, unsigned draft to an unknown recipient, Add Mss 45804 ff218-19

[before July 1877]

Sir, Though I could almost have thought that the important object of having fully qualified female physicians would rather have been brought about by beginning with a lying-in hospital, and also a female hospital where women could be fully trained as physician accoucheuses and physicians for the diseases of women and children, at the bedside as well as by lectures, than by the methods which have been used (my reasons I will not trouble you with) yet the object in itself has my so hearty concurrence that, if you think my poor name will be of any service, I would gladly ask you to add it to your memorial to the Senate of the University of London, as you desire.

May I venture to ask you to accept a copy of a little book of mine on lying-in institutions? I am only waiting for some reprieve from illness to publish in a second edition the courses for training midwives or physician accoucheuses in the great towns of Europe, for which I have all the materials ready, including the magnificent four years' course at St Petersburg.

Source: From a letter to J.S. Wood, Northwestern University

18 May 1881

I am truly sorry to be compelled to decline the honour that you do me by asking me to write my name on the papers you enclose for your most desirable Chelsea "Hospital for Women." I am fain to explain how I am always under the severe and ever-increasing pressure of overwork and illness—how I am beset, like others, with similar applications from all parts of the world—but how unlike others it would be impossible for me to carry on the duties I have undertaken, were I to answer these applications—and how in order not to give offence I have been unwillingly forced to take notice of none. If I were to make exceptions, I should of course receive applications which I could not decline. Pray accept my regret, which is greater than yours can be, and allow me nevertheless to wish Godspeed to your hospital.

**Editor:** Nightingale commented on plans for the proposed new Women's Hospital on Euston Rd.<sup>44</sup> She was concerned with light and

---

44 Letter to Douglas Galton 20 June 1888, Add Mss 45766 ff98-101. More on this is reported in *Hospital Reform*.

air. "You see it is to be filled with the cases which of all others requires sanitary precautions and it is to be a women doctors' medical school!" A subsequent letter expressed concern with "that out-patients' department, underneath!!!"<sup>45</sup>

By 1888 Nightingale was in favour of a women's hospital because women were kept out of hospital positions even when medically qualified.

Source: From a letter to W.B. Richmond,<sup>46</sup> Harvard University, Countway Medical Library Archives

17 October 1887

*Private.* Your wishes are law to me. And your account of the young lady of eighteen who wishes to devote herself as a nurse is so very interesting.

But have you thought whether eighteen is not too young, both physically and morally? There are sacred secrets belonging to the sick which eighteen could not and ought not to be able to understand. And there are secrets the very reverse of sacred, the secrets of vice, about patients which their nurse *must* know if she is not to be made a fool of, which one shrinks from any young woman, gentle or simple, knowing. (Alas! the "simple" know them far too soon.) A gentlewoman, or gentle girl, would either be shocked and run away, or she would be hardened, which is the worst evil of the two. Then about the physical side—we do not take anyone into our training school at St Thomas' Hospital under twenty-three, though I think we strive to make it a home where the mother of *any* girl need not object to seeing her daughter.

Whatever you "take out" of a woman in nursing life before twenty-three or twenty-four you more than take out of her at the other end: indeed you may reckon two years for every one at this end that she loses at the other. Even in children's hospitals I believe they take no "probationers" under twenty. It is true that the present matron of St Thomas' [A.L. Pringle] (just appointed), who was matron of the great Edinburgh Infirmary for thirteen years, came to us before she was twenty, and has been in the service ever since. But the exception proves the rule (this lady is a pearl of the finest water) and I think even *she* would have better health had she entered later.

---

45 Letter to Douglas Galton 31 August 1888, Add Mss 45766 f148.

46 William Blake Richmond (1842-1921), later Sir, RA, friend of the Verneys; the portrait he did of Nightingale that year is at Claydon House.

We even prefer not admitting *gentlewomen* earlier than twenty-six or twenty-seven, for two reasons: one that gentlewomen are younger in *knowingness* than those who have had to rough it, the other that posts of superintendence will be theirs if they persevere in the life (i.e., after their year's probation) and twenty-four is too young to superintend.

Having laid these things, as an old nurse and trainer, before you and Mrs Richmond, I will gladly see the young lady whenever we can make an appointment. Pray do not think that I cry down hospital life. To me it is the most sacred, the holiest of all. What is the highest character worth but to use it for those who have none? What is holiness for but to spend it for those who are unholy? And the lovely things one sees among patients, the return of good feeling among those who, for years have never heard a "good word," would alone make the life a delightful one.

Pardon me for not having answered your note before. I have been so driven both by work and illness since I came back that I have scarcely had time to breathe, and shall be. But in *November* I hope to have a little more time and to make an appointment to see your maiden fair. May she run her noble career in life is the earnest wish of,

yours ever faithfully

Florence Nightingale

How can I thank you enough for your picture of me; for my sister is more than delighted with it!! That is what genius can do.

Source: Extract of a letter by Nightingale with a contribution of £50, in "The New Hospital for Women," *Times* 9 July 1888

You want efficient women doctors, for India most of all, whose native women are now our sisters, our charge. (There are at least 40 millions who will only have women doctors, and who have none.) But for England, too, you want them. Give them, then, besides a women's school of medicine, a practical school in a women's hospital. Life and death depend on the training.

Source: Letter/draft/copy, ADD Mss 45818 ff237-59 and Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H13/EGA/230

[c1888]

I have been asked to say a few words about your proposed new women's hospital. First, many of the cases which will be received into this hospital are those which are above all sensitive to want of fresh air, to whom any crowding is fatal overcrowding, to whom the first condition of a hospital is that it shall do them no harm by want of air, light and sun



and room and space. She must have space—plenty of windows—cross ventilation, to whom these things are *life and death necessities*. Some operations *must have a ward each to herself*. All these things cost money.

Why is a women's hospital served by women so insisted upon? Because women doctors, though they may have the best theoretical teaching, lectures, examinations which the greatest professors can give, can only be parasites if they have not responsibility and practice. That is a hard word, but it means others thinking for them, others feeding them with knowledge which they do not assimilate. No general hospital even if it admits women students appoints them to any post. Without not only dresserships and clinical clerkships but without the independent practice and responsibility which house and assistant house surgeons and physicians have, without resident hospital posts, any woman student, however successful her examinations, however high her honours, must be more or less a parasite. None feel it more than themselves.

If this is the case with women doctors remaining in England how much more so must it be for those going to India, where they may find themselves called upon to attend the most critical cases, to perform the most capital operations, not only whether there be a doctor within say 200 miles or no. Nothing on earth, no suffering, no danger to life, will induce Hindu and Muhammadan women who are purdah or gosha, and many many Hindu women who are not purdah, to allow a medical man to approach them, especially in childbirth.

This is the case in England. Many poor women will rather go through any suffering and die than be examined by a man doctor. It is singular, or perhaps not singular, that those women who know most about examinations to [illeg] hospital head nurses are sometimes the strongest in this feeling, that they cannot bear to undergo the examinations at the general hospital with men students round them. They risk life and suffering rather. And can you blame them? The year's practice secured by a hospital post to be gained *only* in hospitals served by women. We all know what parasites are. They are plants or animals which live upon others and not working for their own food degenerate, for the work to get food is quite as necessary as the food itself for healthy active life and development.

Now, there is a danger in the air of becoming parasites in nursing and midwifery, of our becoming nurses and midwives by deputy—a danger now when there is so great a tendency to make a book and examination, school, and college education, all sorts of sciences and arts even nursing and midwifery business, a profession, in the low, not

the high sense of the word—a danger that we shall be content to let the book and the theory and the words do for us what one of the most religious of men says we let the clergymen and the going to church do for us, if we have the parasite tendency. He says that we become satisfied to be prayed for, instead of praying ourselves, to have our work for Christ done by a paid deputy, to be fed by a deputy who gives us every Sunday a week's supply, to substitute for thought what is meant as a stimulus to thought. This is the parasite of the pew, he says (as the literary parasite is one who fancies he knows everything "because he has a good library"). He enjoys his weekly, perhaps his daily worship, while character, will and life are not only not progressing, but are actually degenerating.

Do you remember Tennyson's "I heerd 'im a bumming away over my head? And I thowt he said what was right and I cumm'd away." We laugh at that. But the parasite is really little better. Now the registration, the certificates, and especially any midwifery certificate which may demand the minimum of *practice* which may substitute for *personal* progress in active proficiency, literary or work progress, all ambulance classes and the like may tend this way. It is not the certificate which makes the nurse or the midwife. It may unmake her. The danger is lest she let the certificate be *instead of* herself—instead of her own never-ceasing progress as a woman and a nurse. This is the "day" of examinations in the turn that education, both elementary and the higher and professional education seems taking. It is a great step which has substituted this for what was called "interest." Only let the day of practice, the development of each individual's practice, keep up the material for growth, for correct knowledge, that with examinations in the nurse's life, which is above all a moral and practical life.

Source: From a note, Remarks of an Expert of Standing on Poor Law Questions, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/97/7

[c1897]

Strictly *Confidential*. F.N.'s experience leads her to believe that a medical inspector of nursing is impossible *except* perhaps in seeing that the nurses obey medical orders implicitly. (Every well-trained nurse acts only under the doctor's orders to carry out his treatment—she never "*quacks*.") And indeed F.N. is not far from considering that one of our principal reforms was in taking the nursing from under the doctors' department and constituting it a Tiers Etat [Third Estate], a third element, department of administration, under its own female heads.

As long as it was *under* the medical department the arrangements as to conduct, accommodation, means of decency and, above all, *moral trained* and skilled *supervision* and influence of its own heads, were simply disastrous, and it was by no means impossible for doctors to denounce justly a nurse for something immoral and then to give her a testimonial of good conduct. They do not know what it means or how to secure it.

Yet there is no profession with finer qualities than the medical one, but it is easy to see how it comes about. Even now doctors treat too much “*secundum artem*” [according to theory] and not *secundum personam* [according to the person] or *secundum feminam* [according to the woman].

It is said, I think by Lord Monteagle<sup>47</sup> himself, that people even now are not accustomed to the idea that nursing is a distinct department of the administration and not only a supplement to the doctors.

### Employment and Income Security for Women

**Editor:** It seems that Nightingale accepted that a worker’s lot would include long hours and she was normally quite sceptical about the value of trade unions, in both respects following the views of her class and indeed most of the population. On wages, salaries, pensions, holidays, meal breaks and occupational health and safety she was radical in what she considered basic necessity. Her ideas of what would much later come to be called “minimum standards” were high; not all have been achieved in her own country today. People in stressful occupations should have generous holidays. She advocated lunch breaks of a good hour (see p 446 below). She raised occupational health and safety issues in *Notes on Nursing* and even more so in *Notes on Nursing for the Labouring Classes*. The young Nightingale, following the progress of the Ten Hours’ Bill (to limit hours of work for women and children), felt that if all good people did not support the cause of the factory women she would think human nature was “worse than lions’, tigers’, monkeys’ or stoats.”<sup>48</sup>

---

47 The 2nd Baron Monteagle (1849-1926); Nightingale was then working with Lord and Lady Monteagle on getting nursing into the Irish workhouse infirmaries.

48 In I.B. O’Malley, *Florence Nightingale 1820-56: A Study of Her Life Down to the End of the Crimean War* 130.

On women in paid employment Nightingale was less radical. The material below will show her sceptical of its benefits, especially of “extra work” (see p 71 below). She was concerned about the cost to family life (she assumed marriages would remain intact and women would not require independent pensions). Yet she was also aware of the damage that unpaid work could do in bringing down wages. If a charity helped nurses out with pensions hospitals could keep wages down (see p 81 below).

In many places Nightingale reflected negative views of trade unions, both that they would price workers out of their jobs and that they rewarded mere quantity of work and thus failed to recognize quality. Yet she could see the value of unions, “combination” for women. She supported the first women’s trade union, founded in 1875 by Emma Paterson<sup>49</sup> as the Women’s Protective and Provident League, which later became the Women’s Trade Union League. Nightingale saw it as a model for nurses, that is, its benefits and protective measures (she certainly disapproved of strikes for nurses). There is apparently no direct correspondence with Mrs Paterson but numerous letters to Frederick Verney, who actively promoted her league. He indeed continued this work after Paterson’s death. In 1907 he sent Nightingale its annual report, reminding her: “Many years ago you kindly helped to start this little organization among working women,” which he said was “still alive.”<sup>50</sup>

Nightingale was always a supporter of self-help measures for workers, male and female. Workers should not be “pauperized” or depend on handouts. Wages should be high enough for a decent life, but then workers should put aside money for bad economic times. Society and government could assist by providing savings banks and other means. Nightingale in turn promoted savings banks and various schemes to encourage home ownership by workers, reported in *Society and Politics* (5:166-86).

The correspondence is reported chronologically so that letters on other aspects of employment and income security for women are interspersed with those on the women’s provident league. The last, to the schoolmaster at Lea, combines issues of thrift, savings banks and

---

49 Emma Paterson (1848-86), wife of a cabinetmaker; on whom see Harold Goldman, *Emma Paterson: She Led Women into a Men’s World*. In 1888 Nightingale contributed a sizable 50 guineas to the Paterson Memorial Fund (1:753).

50 Letter 23 March 1907, Claydon House Bundle 364.

needlework with the progress and funding of pupils at the school (Nightingale paid the fees for numerous poor children in the neighbourhood). It interestingly comments on the crucial role of Frenchwomen—and their thrifty habits—in the recovery of France after the Franco-Prussian War.

The first item is a previously published letter written to Lemuel Moss (1829-1904), an American Baptist minister, later president of Indiana University, who had asked Nightingale for information about her own life. She loathed this apparently not infrequent request. A slightly earlier letter to a friend has her fuming about a “female ink bottle” who wanted to write her life, and with whom there is no surviving information, if ever there were (see p 720 below). The letter here, while it denies the specifics asked for, is frank about her own motivation and its basis in her relationship with God. Moss’s own comments on it following it show that the letter—offered as advice to young American and Englishwomen—was appreciated. He refers to Nightingale as “one of our most eminent working women,” and wanted to spread her advice abroad for it let people “into the secret of the preparation which she was willing to undergo to fit herself for useful labour.”

Source: Florence Nightingale, Letter to Lemuel Moss, *The Queen* 21 November 1868

London

13 September 1868

My dear Sir, I could not do what you asked me to do in your kind letter of 12 July, viz., give you information about my own life, though if I could it would be to show you how a woman of very ordinary ability has been led by God—by strange and unaccustomed paths—to do in His service what He did in hers. And if I could tell you all, you would see how God has done all, and I nothing. I have worked hard, very hard—that is all—and I have never refused God anything, though, being naturally a very shy person, most of my life has been distasteful to me. I have no peculiar gifts. And I can honestly assure any young lady, if she will but try to walk, she will soon be able to run the “appointed course.” But then she must first learn to walk, and so when she runs she must run with patience.<sup>51</sup> (Most people don’t even try to walk).

---

51 An allusion to Heb 12:1.

1. But I would also say to all young ladies who are called to any particular vocation, qualify yourselves for it as a man does for his work. Don't think you can undertake it otherwise. No one should attempt to teach the Greek language until he is master of the language, and this he can become by only hard study. And

2. If you are called to man's work, do not exact a woman's privileges—the privilege of inaccuracy, of weakness—ye muddleheads. Submit yourselves to the rules of business as men do, by which alone you can make God's business succeed, for He has never said that He will give His success and His blessing to inefficiency, to sketching and unfinished work.

3. It has happened to me more than once to be told by women (your countrywomen), "Yes, but you had personal freedom?" Nothing can be well further from the truth. I question whether God has ever brought anyone through more difficulties and contradictions than I have had. But I imagine these exist less among you than among us, so I will say no more.

4. But to all women I would say, look upon your work, whether it be an accustomed or an unaccustomed work, as upon a trust confided to you. This will keep you alike from discouragement and presumption, from idleness and from overtaxing yourself. Where God leads the way, He has bound Himself to help you to go the way. I have been nine years confined a prisoner to my room from illness, and overwhelmed with business. (Had I more faith—more of the faith which I profess—I should not say "overwhelmed," for it is all business sent me by God. And I am really thankful to Him, though my sorrows have been deep and many, that He still makes me to do His business.) This must be my excuse for not having answered your questions before. Nothing with the approval of my own judgment has been made public, or I would send it.

I have a strong objection to sending my own likeness for the same reason. Some of the most valuable works the world has ever seen we know not who is the author of; we only know that God is the author of all. I do not urge this example upon others, but it is a deep-seated religious scruple in myself. I do not wish my name to remain, nor my likeness. That God alone should be remembered I wish. If I could really give the lessons of my life to my countrywomen and yours (indeed, I fain look upon us as all one nation) the lessons of my mistakes as well as of the rest—I would, but for this there is no time. I would only say work—work in silence at first, in silence for years—it will not be time

wasted. Perhaps in all your life it will be the time you will afterwards find to have been best spent, and it is very certain that, without it, you will be no worker. You will not produce one “perfect work,”<sup>52</sup> but only a botch in the service of God. Pray believe me, my dear Sir, with great truth,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

Have you ever read Baker’s *Sources of the Nile*,<sup>53</sup> where he says he was more like a donkey than an explorer? That is much my case and I believe is that of all who have to do any unusual work. And I would especially guard young ladies from fancying themselves like lady superiors, with an obsequious following of disciples, if they undertake any great work.

Source: From a letter to Charles Plowden, Wellcome Ms 5480/15

31 May 1873

There is a society whose main object it is to enable women who work to gain the highest wage that the market will give them—it is called the “*Women’s Protective and Provident League*.” Its chief champion was a Mrs Paterson, the wife of a cabinetmaker. She has lately died of this and other hard work—it is an obscure little society, numbering only a few hundred women belonging to various trades. This makes it all the more remarkable that it should have lived for eleven years, a hard but healthy life on what has practically been its own independence and the sympathy of a few friends who have shared in its work.

The funds of the various sections of this society have been created out of the weekly twopences of its members, invested in savings’ banks and utilized when the members are sick or out of work. We want to extend it to a Labour Registry Office, where any woman can have indicated to her where she could get work and the value of it, where both employers and employées might have a house of call—the employers to find the hands and the employées to find the work, and the money which we do not wish should ever come without it to a healthy working woman.

2. To extend it to be a fund where any woman may, by paying in, receive weekly allowance in time of sickness—a fund which, strange to say, does not exist for *women* in this England of ours.

---

<sup>52</sup> An allusion to Jas 1:4.

<sup>53</sup> Probably Samuel W. Baker, *The Albert Nyanza Great Basin of the Nile and Explorations of the Nile Sources*.

I enclose a circular. But, should a public meeting be held, the objects will be explained much more fully. I hope it has your blessing.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/165

Lea Hurst

5 September 1878

I think on inquiry Mrs Holmes must have misexpressed herself to you about the work at Smedley's:<sup>54</sup> what is really the case and what she must have meant is that there is twice as much EMPLOYMENT for the women as there used to be at Smedley's and that they can have as much *extra* paid work, for which they are of course *extra* paid, as they like (it is very bad for them). They can earn 10/ or even 12/ a week, I believe. (In Smedley's time IN the mill if, when he went round, he saw a woman tired he would say, though roughly, "Now rest a bit." There is nothing of this sort now. This is perhaps what she alluded to.) But are they any the least bit the better for all the money they earn here?

**Editor:** In 1879 Nightingale asked Harry Verney about village and country schoolmistresses, "And is there any chance of government appointing an *inspectress* of *county schools*? It is so wanted."<sup>55</sup>

Source: From a note to A.W. Croft,<sup>56</sup> ADD Mss 45805 f190

9 May 1879

Lady inspectors in England are quite as much needed for Poor Law girls' schools and asylums and indeed under the Education Department too for needlework and some other branches in elementary schools under government inspection—all over England (we have made wonderful progress in the last five years in *high* schools for girls).

---

54 There is correspondence later with Mrs Holmes, a poor villager in Lea Holloway; the textile mill there, Lea Mills, was then owned by John Smedley (1803-84).

55 Letter to Harry Verney 11 February 1879, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/179.

56 Alfred Woodley Croft (1841-1925), surgeon-general, director of public instruction.



Mrs N. Senior, sister of T.B.,<sup>57</sup> a noble woman, was the first and alas! the last P.L. lady inspector. She died a premature death and her post has not been filled up.

I don't go on—tiresome to you to hear your own report. I gratefully await further letter you are so good as to promise. Grateful thanks for your assurance my letters not troublesome but welcome to you.

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, Add Mss 68882 ff99-100

My dear boy Mr Fred

23 June 1879

I delight in your Women's Protective and Provident League. Some day I want to consult you about all these women's resources or no resources. Workingmen have their benefit, medical and union clubs. In Derbyshire, where wages are high, every man can, if he please, by putting into his club, have his doctor, his 10/ or 12/ a week when he is ill, and his old age provision. *Women* have nothing; and for the old spinsters and widows, though wages for *women* are in Derbyshire very high too (three girls may earn 25/ a week, sisters), they have nothing but charity or parish relief for sickness or old age.

Owing to my want of time and strength to organize anything, Lea Hurst costs me £500 a year, chiefly among the old and sick women (the doctor's bill alone is £160 a year), and the children of widows. About our trained nurses, I feel there is no investment more attractive than the P.O. Savings' Bank. There is no "home," where, in intervals between employment or in sickness, they could go. There is no sickness allowance or old age allowance to be had anywhere. *Employment* we can find them more than enough, and well paid, but I have no time to organize any of the rest. (Mr Gladstone<sup>58</sup> was explaining to me that in the P.O. Savings' Bank every shilling costs the government eleven pence.)

2. I am obliged to refuse my name as patroness so much (on the score that I don't like to give my poor name where I can't give my work) that I hardly like to give it to your concert. But *take it if you like it*. Only I had rather it had been in some other way. I send £1.1, and hope (when I am less "hard up" than I am now, with Lea Hurst and Bosnia and some other things) to make it more.

---

57 Née Jane Elizabeth Hughes (1828-77), wife of the economist Nassau Senior; her brother was Thomas Hughes (1822-96), Christian socialist, MP, author of *Tom Brown's School Days*, 1857 (see p 784 below).

58 William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98), many times chancellor of the Exchequer, four times prime minister.

3. You “band together working women to lay by small sums to help themselves.” *How do you invest this money? And what interest do you have?* Please tell me.

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68882 f103

27 July 1879

7 A.M.

About “Mrs Paterson” going “on a missionary tour” among the “Derbyshire girls,” that too is a delightful prospect. But I must go down first to enlist the “mill” manager (a son of an old schoolmaster of ours) who is the greatest man in the place, and who must think that *HE* has originated it himself, if it is to succeed at all.

A thousand thanks for all you have done. God speed the Provident Leagues and all your works.

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68882 f97

4 August 1879

I was just going to write you a line to say that Miss Simcox wrote me a very kind answer to my question to you. And I was going to ask you several questions of this sort: how many years have your (most useful) women’s provident leagues been going? I mean, has it been long enough to prove them perfectly solvent? Are not (men’s) trades’ unions, which give such very high advantages, often *not* solvent? Could you give me any information of this kind?

I have not been idle; I have seen all our trained matrons. And I saw Harry Bonham Carter yesterday, who is going to have some actuarial calculations made for me. I meant then to apply to Miss Simcox again, who is kindly willing to answer me some further questions. But I wanted to know from you on *what sound* and *permanent* basis the women’s societies are, as to granting sick allowances and superannuation allowances and not becoming bankrupt.

Source: Note, ADD Mss 68882 f109

24 August 1879

Apparently the mill (Lea) *is* a sort of provident society for it *professes* to give half pay to women (sick) for thirteen weeks and quarter pay for another thirteen weeks. But this also prevents them from saving. What relation has this to the Female Friendly Society? Who is its doctor? Does the Lea Mill provide and pay a doctor? give £10 to Guarantee Fund. . . .

Guy's Hospital contemplates only superannuation pay, Female Friendly Society only sick pay and medical attendance, which appears is given by the mill. Why does it not contemplate *old age pay*? Is it connected any way with a SAVINGS BANK? Are there *Crich* women's clubs? Is this only for Smedley's?

Source: From a letter to and notes for Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68882 ff110-41, draft Add Mss 47720 ff49-81 and 73

Lea Hurst  
October 1879

*Women's Provident Societies*

I cannot thank you enough for all the trouble you have taken and are willing to take for provident societies for women in general and for trained nurses in particular. What you have done for your upholsteresses' and bookbinders' societies is quite extraordinary, though, as you say, it does not give many data for actuarial calculations. Yet it does one good to see how much real benefit and of the best kind must accrue to these women by helping them to help themselves.

It is well to take care, as you do, that each member is a "competent workwoman." This is something toward the same security that we obtain by "training." You cannot train your upholsteresses: but you do the next best thing and you have outstripped us sluggards by making them "*save*."

2. *Upholsteresses' society*. The increment of balance steadily decreases every year during the four years. This I think you pointed out yourself. I suppose it may be easily accounted for, and need not continue.

3. The rate of subscription, /2d a week, to provide 5/ a week for eight weeks in the year is wonderfully small. In our Lea "Female Friendly Society" for the same 2d, it is 4/ a week for ten weeks, 3/ for ten weeks more.

4. May you keep free from strikes! No, there is no danger of strikes among trained nurses. Only imagine if there were!

Where the feelings are so strongly interested as the nurse's about her patients, there scarcely could be, however, strikes among trained nurses. And the point of honour among them is too high. To desert her patients would be like deserting in the army before the enemy. The others, instead of "striking" with her, would be more likely to execute some kind of summary punishment upon her.

5. *Would you thank Mrs Paterson very much for her kind trouble?* It is impossible to overestimate the good that is being done by raising women, not from without but from within: the employment register,

the sick or “out of work” allowance, the pleasant “tea,” the lending library, the co-operative store.

6. N.B. I am sorry to say the *co-operative store* at Lea Hurst is going the wrong way like Turkey. And this from very obvious and rather disgraceful causes. One is the men don’t know how to choose a manager; they don’t like one *above* themselves and they never have one who knows how to *buy*. It is said that the refuse, the rejected goods of Manchester, are palmed off upon our co-operative stores, the secretary’s wife, who knows nothing about it, being now the buyer. (2) They allow some members to run deeply in debt and refuse others who might be better leniently dealt by. The consequence of this and other causes is that their dividends are small and uncertain. And the people do not make it their savings’ bank, with 5 percent interest, as they used to do. And a man I know, the best man in the village, withdrew himself first as secretary and then as auditor, because when they could not otherwise declare a dividend, they grossly overestimated the value of the goods in store.

We have no clergyman and no resident landlord or gentleman who ought to, and generally does, see to these things. It is well, when one hears of “Co-operative Stores” “not answering,” to inquire the *homely* causes and to see that it will hardly do to leave the people altogether to their own management while carefully adhering to open, businesslike ways) with them. And it is also well to inquire the homely causes of female friendly societies not answering—of this more anon.

7. To return to your women’s societies, I have understood that the temptations among poor young girls in trades from the want of good homes and interests are untold and unknown, that this temptation to vice prevails even among those quite “respectable” in dress and appearance. I should think the good of a well-conducted women’s society is also untold.

Thanks for the “Hearts of Oak” Friendly Society book. But, as you say, they only recognize the existence of women “in giving £10 to bury the wives when they die” and apparently in giving lying-in benefits to help them when they lie in. Henry Bonham Carter had some indirect communication with Mr Marshall as a very able, trustworthy man, the society being one of the largest in the kingdom? is it not? after “Odd-fellows” and “Foresters.” H.B.C. did not however get so much out of them as you did.

We do not agree with Mr Marshall that “women” are a “bad lot,” in being “so apt to be ill, or to think they are.” Our experience is just the reverse. A nurse will hold out at her work when ill, where a man

would give in. *Our* rate of sickness at St Thomas' among our nurses in training is very much lower than it is, I am sorry to think, at some of our other hospitals, e.g., Edinburgh. But in the new Edinburgh Hospital we trust it will prove otherwise. The nurse's occupation is not necessarily an unhealthy one, I am sure, far less so than that of "mill" women, when nurses are properly cared for.

The South Bucks Friendly Society (Mr Hardy) gives valuable information, because it admits *women*. But as you say, that information is by no means encouraging, and the prolonged rates of illness of women are indeed alarming. (a) Sanitary conditions and rules should always be introduced into all benefit societies' rules, should not they?, as having a twofold advantage: (1) increasing the allowances, (2) and encouraging sanitary practice. It is done in lying-in clauses for wives of members. E.g., the woman is not to be employed, except at light household work, within her lying-in month or the money is forfeited. But in Lea "Female Friendly Society" she is not to be employed even at household work. This gives them some idea that women are not to be allowed to work in the mills or the fields or the wash-tub (laundry) at certain times, and so saves wives from a common cause of "prolonged illness."

But why not make other such simple sanitary rules or conditions for receiving "benefits"? rules about drainage, sinks, water supply, vicinity of pigs, etc. This would have extreme value as a sanitary education, besides so facilitating the operations of friendly and provident societies by diminishing this alarming rate of "sick allowance" for women as to increase their "benefits" all over town and country.

In this (Lea and Holloway) which ought to be the healthiest of all villages, I should NOT like to tell the experience of this one summer—a typical epidemic, solely attributable to the most obvious causes: abominations of pigs percolating into the drinking water supply; (three patients in one room); drink overflow from cesspools allowed to lie or to percolate poisoning water or air; contaminated "holy" wells, which gives its name to the village (Holloway); sinkstone drains not ventilated; traps taken up and left aside. A woman, a farmeress on the estate, a laundress and altogether a substantial yeowoman, is just dead in her first confinement of blood poisoning (baby dead too) under the most provoking circumstances of stupid blundering. There ought to have been an inquest.

A sink in the kitchen, owing to the lead pipe being corroded and having been corroded for years, had completely saturated the wall of

the dwelling house. The smell had been smelt for years, and taken but little notice of. The masons went to put in the new lead pipe and stench trap on the very morning the woman was taken in labour!! There was an immense fire in the kitchen and, through the hole in the wall, then open, by which the pipe passed, there blew in by means of the great draught created, all the foul air from the saturated wall and open sink-stone drain, and so up the stairs. The woman had a remarkably good confinement but was seized within twenty hours by the most intense symptoms of blood poisoning and died within the week. Death in the sink. Had it not been for the most extraordinary neglect, she might have been here now. (Possibly that poor Lady Constance Amherst Middleton's heart-rending death<sup>59</sup> may have had some cause akin.)

7 October 1879

It is well too if these isolated cases do not become epidemics of puerperal fever. WOULD THE ENFORCEMENT OF SOME SANITARY RULES BY "BENEFIT SOCIETIES" BE AN EXPENSIVE AND THEREFORE DIFFICULT OPERATION? It would seem as if the same machinery which is or ought to be set agoing by boards of health, or as there are in the country boards of guardians, the same principles which are or ought to be laid down to govern these local boards of health might be set agoing for "friendly societies."

There *are* officers of health, inspectors, etc., all the apparatus of local boards of health even in such a place as this: (small gain we had to let them come, less loss to let them go). *Could "benefit," "friendly" societies, not large enough to have sanitary inspectors of their own, make use [of] existing health machinery?* It would be of countless importance.

*Medical certificates are required.* It would seem as if there should be no more difficulty in having "sanitary" certificates. (b) *Lord Norton*,<sup>60</sup> you say, has established a "friendly society for women" and you *kindly promised me* ITS RULES AND TABLES, *worked out by Mr Hardy. Are they come?* (c) MR MARK KNOWLES, a most capital man. May success shower upon him.

"*Women's Lodge.*" The wisdom of his rules strikes one, especially the power of leverage in a "friendly society," for moral and sanitary pur-

59 Lady Constance Middleton (1843-79), daughter of the earl of Amherst and wife of an MP, died several days after giving birth to a son (*Times* obituary 10 October 1879:4).

60 Charles Bowyer Adderley, later Lord Norton (1814-1905), chair of the royal commission that recommended a government Department of Health.

poses might be made much more of. I see “*improper or immoral conduct*” comes under investigation. Also: the rules about lyings-in, and again one asks MIGHT NOT SOME SANITARY RULES BE ALWAYS (logically) attached to “PRIVILEGES”?

I note what is to be done with married women, and that he EXCLUDES women employed in “manufacture OR SALE” OF ALL SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS, BEER, etc., as well as in “hazardous trades.”

(d) I wish “Godspeed” with all my might to the proposed “*Women’s Division*” of the “*Church of England Temperance Sick and Burial Society.*” And if they have not completed their “*Guarantee Fund*” for it (twenty-five guarantors of £20 each”) I would gladly ask to be a *guarantor* of £20. I enclose a cheque which I shall be grateful to you to make use of. This is *not* enclosed. *Shall I send it?* Or is it *too late*?

(I am rather “hard up” this year, *not* through a course of “riotous living” and should be rather glad if not called *this* year to pay up the money, but the good of the “Women’s Division” before all.)

I see that “*total abstainers*” receive *one tenth more sick pay* than “general” members. I do most strongly appeal to experience in favour of this rule and *more than this rule* being enforced in ALL “*friendly societies.*” It is a truly “friendly” rule. (It is a common thing in our neighbourhood in Derbyshire for quarrymen to be in the receipt of 28/ to 40/ a week. If simple young men, they may spend all this, say, from eighteen to thirty-two years of age, in eating or drinking, but specially in *drinking*—except what they pay to their club. And this they often forfeit by not paying up.

Is it not a crying shame that these men, whose health suffers so much from drink (that the excellent club doctor told me he said to them: “Stick to your sobriety, and you will be able to stick to your work, drink again and you’re a dead man”), should have *the same sick pay* as those who have denied themselves every self-indulgence to bring up their families and that the latter should *suffer* in a *lower (general) rate* of sick pay, or of old age pay?

There ought to be a DRUNKEN *sick pay* and a *sober* sick pay, ought there not? In agreeably conversing with quarrymen, they have informed me that they could easily have saved £200 by the time they were thirty and *have* not a penny, that the *minimum* loss *every* week of drinking on Saturday night and Sunday and making “Black Monday” is 6/ a week, and that they frequently attend neighbouring markets (hiring a fly for the purpose) after 8 o’clock P.M. for the sake of getting drink and not being seen, because the Lea Mills turns off drinkers.

The terrible custom of being paid in gangs and adjourning to the public house to divide their money is the root of much of this evil. (Much of the above may be said of the *miners*, too. And people call this a “civilized” country! And talk of us having a “mission” of “civilization” in India!!)

But what I would ask again is: could those observing certain sanitary rules and certain rules about SOBRIETY be entitled to a certain *higher rate of sick pay*? (It would be vain to have an abstinence or even a temperance club in Derbyshire for it would starve for lack of members, but something like the above must be possible.) Just as it is hard that people who pay their bills should suffer in high prices for those who do not, so it seems hard that those few who are *in spite of us* models of every sanitary and moral principle of carefulness and cleanliness, should suffer in a lower rate of sick pay or of *old-age pay*. (I see there are *prospects of annuities at sixty-five years*) for those who bring on their own sickness by every kind of carelessness, dirt and neglect.

The “allowances” seem extremely liberal even for “long continued sickness,” which will be the main insurance in the way of *sickness* necessary for any *trained nurses’* society, because, for all ordinary illnesses, they are provided for in their own hospitals, and their pay not stopped. They would not be parted with while there was prospect of recovery or death, if they wished to remain.

*Would you kindly* THANK MR KNOWLES for his great goodness in being *willing to obtain information for me*? and say I shall no doubt avail myself of it. Probably the progress of his own “*Women’s Division*” will be my best information. *I suppose we could not tack ourselves on to THEM*? “Entirely self-supporting”—that is the thing to aim at, and *that* he does aim at.

You see we shall for our nurses necessarily labour under a disadvantage as to *numbers*, because we do exact the conditions as to morality as to sanitary and other good conduct involved in the circumstance of her being a *trained nurse*. It is the highest and longest test of her being a “competent workwoman,” a good woman, etc. (because all are dismissed who do not fulfill our requirements as to “duties,” competence and good conduct, whether during the year’s training or after. And the grand difficulty will be how to prevent these dismissed ones, who are all taken on without a “character” by the Advertising Nurses’ Offices as “*trained nurses*,” from entering any benefit society of ours.) The tests which are required more or less feebly in other associations are in ours necessarily most strictly carried out, during a



year of constant testing under organized “eyes,” and during subsequent service and promotion.

*Woman Thrift Movement.* At my request, Henry Bonham Carter sent the following questions to Mr Sutton, the government actuary for friendly societies on this subject, to whom you also were so good as to apply: “Do the friendly society returns afford any data on which to base allowances to women during sickness or by way of superannuation?” “It is desired to establish a provident fund for nurses with these objects.” (Henry Bonham Carter did not mention the proposed Central Home for Nurses permanently infirm or sick or out of place. (While actually serving in hospital, a nurse, i.e., a trained nurse, would always be cared for during temporary sickness.) And he did not mention the savings which might be connected with it. I think we should call this *the growth of the woman thrift movement*) and you are its “prophet.”

“Is it likely that any existing friendly society would admit women? Or if a union of say 50, 100 or 200 members or more were formed from women employed exclusively as nurses for the sick either (a) in hospitals or (b) as private nurses or both, is it likely that any friendly or provident society would affiliate such a union?” signed Henry Bonham Carter.

Mr Sutton replies to Henry B.C.’s inquiries in the same sense: he says that he did to you when you were so good as to go to him: “That the Friendly Society statistics afford no trustworthy data, in fact no data as to female lives. That in his opinion the best course to pursue would be (1) to deal with superannuation allowances by providing for each individual separately through the means of the Government Deferred Annuities granted by the P.O.”

(This would be *very* unattractive to nurses: a FEW of our nurses insure their lives but, as far as I can make out, only to *bury* themselves. One only of our nurses, a lady, has a deferred annuity (and that is not a P.O. one) that is, as far as I know) to provide for sick allowance by an annually divisible fund until such time as sufficient experience shall have been acquired to found a permanent table.” . . .

“Assuming that there would be always sufficient new members coming in to maintain the original number, he, Mr Sutton, considers that the plan of dividing any surplus annually will not give rise to any great inequalities, while the division avoids much difficulty as to rate of contribution, the members getting back the surplus.” signed L. Sutton.

Excuse all repetitions—I have been so interrupted.

Shore Smith next went to the "Prudential" Assurance Office for me, "a sound concern, which takes something like a million a year in pennies or small sums" and "do every sort of insurance." The "Prudentials," however, came to the conclusion that there was no way in which they could bring us in with their own business. They recommended that the nurses should be formed into a separate benefit society for themselves and thought there was no difficulty about their being women and sent their industrial tables. Since this however the secretary of the "Prudential" (who must be a good fellow) has written to me saying he has made further inquiries.

After mentioning that there are friendly societies "who do the class of business referred to," but do not "warrant unlimited confidence in their stability," and that "most insurance offices only transact ordinary insurance business (together of course with the granting of annuities), and *do not make any provision for being laid aside by old age, sickness or other cause*," he says: "There is one excellent office however with a "*benevolent fund*" attached to it, viz., "*the Provident Clerks' Mutual Life Association*," which might answer the requirements in "some degree." And he encloses their prospectus.

This fund seems to grant "*annuities to distressed members*, annuities to widows, *annuities and allowances to distressed members*," loans, etc., DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS "BENEVOLENT FUND"? (The prospectus gives their "deferred annuities.") Mr Goodman, my correspondent, goes on to say: "If you thought it advisable to adopt a separate scheme for nurses, and the numbers are not sufficiently large to warrant its being floated on a sound actuarial basis, I feel confident that the public would readily supply the deficiency and thus enable the amount payable to be much more liberal." And he actually goes on to offer his own subscription and also his "services" in very earnest words.

(I should however, if it is only possible, try to make this NOT a charity, by taking only business and not charitable subscriptions.) I think "charity" is particularly to be avoided here, because of its probable effect in preventing hospitals from raising the nurses' wages if they see us stepping in with pensions and the like, thus doing what *they* ought to do.

Already we, i.e., our training school, have an effect we little anticipated in keeping wages down instead of keeping them up. Not only does St Thomas' Hospital take advantage of our probationers to do at least half their nursing, but it takes advantage of a clause by which we

bind our probationers to take service for -- years to engage them at a lower rate of wages than the great hospitals give our trained nurses and all the nurses in St Thomas' are of our training.

Liverpool obtains higher wages for its nurses than St Thomas' and gets itself repaid for its training by the institutions which it supplies with nurses.

*Guy's Hospital* [is] the only hospital I know which has a provident fund for its nurses, but it is *compulsory* for "sisters" and not *one* nurse has ever joined it. At Guy's the principle is that the sisters contribute *one half* (and it is stopped out of their "quarter") "of the amount that will be necessary," and the governors the other half. (Virtually, though not nominally it is, I suppose, a deduction from their pay.) I had thought of for ours (and *that* I thought was high) 1/ a week for nurses (or 12/6 per quarter) 2/ a week for sisters (or 25/ per quarter). . . .

GUY's is simply a superannuation fund and not a sickness allowance fund. That is fair enough, because Guy's like all other hospitals of any repute takes care of its nurses in temporary sickness. The pension (superannuation) is *12/ a week at the age of sixty-five*. Or in the event of death or of leaving the hospital *before sixty-five*, the *amount is returned with 3 percent interest* (except in cases of misconduct).

Owing to the number of sisters dying or leaving (the contributions of the governors are invested) Guy's can now afford to give each sister £36 a year pension (instead of £30). (A great mill manager in the North told me that he had wished to do this with his own "hands," but found that it was "illegal," but Henry Bonham Carter says that it cannot be illegal if it is made a matter of contract.)

Now we come to our own affairs at *St Thomas' Hospital*: after great delays and questionings (which I shall afterwards explain), the matron was persuaded to go round all the nurses, taking their views. "*In case we marry, what portion will be returned?*" was one common question on the nurses' part. "*In case we leave the nursing service, or in case we could not afford to pay up our subscription, what then would happen? Should we have the money returned to us? or a portion of it?*" was another universal question. (As needs scarcely saying, the case of women and *especially* of nurses is so different from that of *men*. Men do not change their professions when they marry, nor do they give up their professions till old age becomes disabling, perhaps not even then.

Nurses must of course leave their profession when they marry but, less and less, perhaps in consequence of the very excellence or rather *advance* of the training now given, is it looked upon as a *life* profes-

sion. A woman over forty can scarcely obtain a new engagement as matron or sister or obtain a training. Nor will private sick people take a sick nurse over forty. Because, they argue, training makes such rapid strides we wish to have the last and best. Besides, in hospitals generally, if not in ours, nurses wear out sooner than in other professions. But so much the more reason for making them *save* and lay by for a provision. (It is sometimes made a rule that matrons and nurses must resign at *sixty*. In that case superannuation allowances should begin at *sixty* instead of *sixty-five*.)

Of their own accords, as a New Year's Day (delightful) surprise to me and it *was* delightful, the nurses of St Thomas' sent me, under the following heading, a paper which was signed by about sixty (out of a number of about seventy, probationers *not* counted in either case, who number about thirty-five more):

We the undersigned sisters and nurses of St Thomas' Hospital, from the Nightingale Training School, and others, agree to enter into a "self-benefiting" provident society, by depositing in the P.O. Savings Bank or other safe investment (as I devoutly hope some better investment and as safe may be devised for them by us with your help and that of societies) a sum quarterly in proportion to our means, sisters not less than £1, nurses not less than 10/ and as much more as may be convenient.

(I must premise that, in the autumn, I had received a petition, signed by a few less than 200 of our trained nurses, at St Thomas' and elsewhere, for me to "sit" for my "picture" for them. And I had responded that, if they gave me some assurance of saving—some "saving" assurance—then I would think about it.) Appended to this document, besides the names of the fifty-seven undersigned, were notes of those who already saved, twenty-three, some two who had insured their lives (but chiefly to bury themselves) and one or two, not more, who had "gone in" for annuities, i.e., one for a life annuity, one had invested.

To return to "*matron's investigations among the nurses*": it would seem as if—with almost all—the sine qua non were the power of taking *their money out* again *when they want it* as in savings' banks. (More than you would believe have, too, relatives depending on them) five out of sixty-eight of St Thomas' nurses.

For *disabling* illness they would like an "allowance" for superannuation (for convalescence the hospital provides) for being *bona fide* out of place there is not so much call as you would suppose for an

“allowance” and for idlers it would not be desirable. A central “home” smiles to some, but it was agreed to put off the consideration of that for the present. The scheme does not seem applicable to hospital nurses, viz., of sinking their individual interest in a common fund for the sick ones, or those suffering from other contingencies to profit by (the hospital is their “common fund” for this) as in a women’s club or men’s friendly society. Nurses *must* have their money out again when they want it. (They were told this would necessitate a larger contribution to any provident fund.)

In hospitals where the food is not very well served, nurses frequently buy the food which tempts their appetites for themselves. And their annual holidays (which are quite necessary) cost them something. *Ultimately* there seem to be three things desired: (1) keep to the savings’ bank or, as I fervently hope, some as safe and better investment. IS THE BIRKBECK QUITE SAFE? (2) allowance or insurance for superannuation, permanent infirmity, disabling illness. (3) Central home for nurses infirm and out of place.

N.B. (Causes of this great delay in answering you: autumn holidays in all hospitals for matrons and nurses, winter session very busy time. All our trained matrons were to ask their nurses whether and what they would subscribe to a nurses’ provident society. Nurses asked: for what contributions *what advantage*? Societies asked what numbers and what contributions do you offer? Nurses, what advantages do you offer if we contribute? This was rather awkward. . . .

18 March 1880

1. Could you send me a *report of a meeting* (*not* at the Mansion House) on thrift some *three months* ago, where Professor *Bryce* and Mr Blackley were and spoke?

2. And is there any *published report* of the *Mansion House meeting* on *thrift* of 12 March?

3. Please also tell me IN WHAT TRADES were those two *women’s strikes*? And what was the *result*? (It is a curious fact that there has never been a strike in the great Lea Mills.)

4. Please also answer *question about cheque for £25* (“*Women’s Division*”) p 6 “*Guarantee Fund*.”

You see what Lord Derby<sup>61</sup> says that, if there were a *penny savings’ bank in every mill or workshop or place of employment or pay office for working*

---

61 Edward Henry Stanley (1826-93), 15th earl of Derby, as Lord Stanley the chair of the royal commission on India.

*men, some millions of pounds* would be annually added to the country's riches. Q.E.F.N. I would we could say, when is that "year" to come?

I had to ask your forgiveness for my long delay. I have now to ask it for my long letter. Give it me for both, dear Mr Fred. I have had six years and more without one day's rest of body or mind, ending with dear mother's going home. Doctor says my future work will depend on being "free" for at least a year "from the responsibilities that have been forced upon" me (and he might say that I have so badly fulfilled) and from "letters."

Source: From a letter, Private Collection of William and Win Bensen, Ancaster

2 July 1881

Dear Mr Haywood<sup>62</sup>

Thank you for your most interesting letter. I share your hopes that the savings banks in schools and other means of encouraging thrift will make the next generation of young men and women more provident, more sober, less *dressy*. Otherwise I should really fear that we were losing our national habits of manly and womanly independence which we used to think belonged to Derbyshire and Yorkshire and the North.

But France is now the land of thrift, and when we think that on the thriftiness of her women—their powers of cooking, needlework, domestic economy, etc., making saving possible—has mainly depended the extraordinary recovery of France from the German War of 1870-71, we might well ask ourselves what are we Englishwomen doing?

I am delighted to hear what you tell me that our Lea School needlework is improving. I have in the last few years known things at Holloway as to the utter fecklessness of the women in this respect, that you might as well expect of little boys as of mothers, which have surprised and grieved me.

You see how great a stir is now being made with a "Domestic Economy" Congress, etc., on the needlework and other questions. This is good as directing attention to them. There is a lady inspector of needlework in the London board schools. There are lady guardians, some of whom I know, on the principal boards of guardians. These ladies, if not properly qualified, may do harm. But some of them are excellent and will do great good.

---

<sup>62</sup> W.J.P. Haywood, schoolmaster at Lea and secretary of the institute.

I earnestly trust that you will be able to get a good assistant to Miss Barker,<sup>63</sup> though disappointed that we cannot find her among ourselves.

That is a very interesting inquiry, though a grievous one, that out of twenty-six scholars *paid for* only five are depositors in the penny bank. I shall be very much obliged to you to let me know, as you kindly propose, whether the other nineteen have any money laid by, that these poor children should be, if possible, rescued from improvidence.

I am much disappointed that Mrs Thompson's son has not taken advantage of your kind offer. They are, I am afraid, a helpless family.<sup>64</sup> I shall write to Mr Yeomans<sup>65</sup> about it, as it is wrong to help those who *will*, not *cannot* help themselves. Please tell Nelly Botte how glad I am to hear such a good account of her. I should like to give her some book or needlework implement by way of encouragement and friendliness, if you would kindly choose for her.

Edwin Bunting is very disappointing. I hope he will pick up. The school in general seems very promising, as it ought to be with your unwearied labours. And one may trust that besides the bright prospect of passing a good examination, it will tell sensibly on the moral prospects of Holloway, Lea and the neighbourhood, for there is much room for improvement. Drink and dress, and what it leads to, pleasure and unthriftiness give God much trouble.

Do you want anything for your Bible examination next year? Do you think it tells upon the children much in love to God and their neighbour?

I beg to enclose a cheque for £5.

Balance due 3.17.5

In hand 1.2.7

With many thanks.

It is rather grievous that the Institute give you so much trouble in collecting the arrears of the second quarters subscription. I am afraid that it does not make much head against the public house. The elec-

---

63 Agnes Barker, schoolmistress who later married a missionary of the British and Foreign Bible Society; correspondence assisting her with arrangements to go to China is in *Theology* (3:504).

64 Mrs Thompson was a charwoman at Lea, a widow with eight children who lived above Mrs Holmes. Nightingale arranged medical care with Dr Dunn for various of the children, and for the second daughter to enter the women's club at age fourteen.

65 William Yeomans, Nightingale left him £100 in her will "with thanks for his kindness to the people of Holloway for me" (1:854).

tion of the “Yew Tree” to be Captain of the Cricket ground strikes me dumb. Would it not be possible to make a by-law that all refreshments for cricketers on that ground, whether strangers or otherwise, shall be provided from the Institute? It is degrading the Institute into a feeder to the public house.

God bless you and all your works.

ever yours faithfully

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Margaret Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/70

10 April 1896

Strictly *Confidential* Anent Buckingham “Female Lodge”

I have no doubt that you, blessed Margaret, and Mrs Creighton, have satisfied yourselves that it will be sound and solvent. I have had applications from other places and I consulted a safe man who very kindly consulted a well-known actuary (*not* on yours). His observations were pretty nearly as follow:

These people think that the female lodges will rest on the same sound footing as the Odd Fellows *men*. Now it is quite uncertain whether the women will not have higher rates to pay than the men because they have more sickness. Also, though the local Odd Fellows men will very likely help the female lodges over a pinch, yet the central authority does not acknowledge them.

My “safe” man is going to interview the great man next week to talk it over and get from him a final opinion. In the meantime, it is quite unfair of me both to him and to you to give the *not* final opinion of the great man. But I know you will not make use of this. Of course all depends in giving one’s name whether one is bolstering up an unsound concern or a sound one. (I have seen enough in my life, even at Steeple Claydon, of the misery from unsound concerns.) I will give you the earliest final opinion I can get. But I thought you would like to know that we have not been idle on such an important subject.

## Marriage, Celibacy and Vocation

**Editor:** Nightingale’s views on marriage or celibacy for herself have been described in *Life and Family* (1:23-26). For our purposes here the salient points are her concern that women be able to control their own lives, pursue their own goals or vocation. For obvious reasons combining marriage *and* a career was seldom possible for women.



Nightingale explored the theoretical possibility of a woman's sharing a calling with a husband—but largely marriage for women precluded professional work. Women nurses and other working women would mainly be single, then, hence the need for alternative living arrangements. Given the lack of modern conveniences and the long working day, “homes” for nurses to live in were needed, to provide food and shelter certainly, but also to be a surrogate family for single women. A religious community was the other obvious way to foster single women's vocations, but one with many disadvantages in Nightingale's view.

The marriage of trained nurses had the obvious drawback of losing a woman to the profession (some few did continue and some returned on widowhood or for other reasons). Nightingale accepted the inevitable with good grace (so long as the husband-to-be was suitable), sent congratulations and good wishes and, for some brides, a bouquet or nosegay. For example, when Charlotte Jeanette Munro married Dr Milton in 1889 Nightingale sent flowers.<sup>66</sup> She gave a bouquet to the distinguished Isabel Hampton Robb for her wedding, a “delicate white bouquet, with long white ribbon bows,” which “gained more attention than any other detail, for everyone in the church knew that Miss Florence Nightingale had just sent it.”<sup>67</sup> A nosegay for her wedding day went to a nurse of Adelaide Ward.<sup>68</sup>

Nightingale evidently had some notion of a middle way, that a woman could remain single, un beholden to any man yet not in a religious community and subject to its regime. She could then pursue her own goals, even a “calling,” in the world. The very loose Protestant community she sketched out, but did not pursue, might foster such a life for nurses (see p 528 below). “Homes” for nurses at the very least would give a woman practical support in her daily life, freeing her up for serious work with long hours.

Despite her obvious self-identification as a single, celibate, woman—she even referred to herself as a nun—Nightingale also saw herself as a mother. This is clear during the Crimean War, when she referred to soldiers as her sons and in her later years when she was called “mother chief” by nurses. It also occurred in her own family, when she called her cousin Shore, eleven years her junior, as her “boy” and described

---

66 Letter of thanks from Mrs Milton 20 November 1889, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC2/V79/89.

67 “A Wedding at Westminster,” *Hospital Nursing Supplement* (14 July 1894): clix. The bouquet is preserved at the Johns Hopkins University Archives.

68 Letter of thanks by M. Haydon 13 September 1897, ADD Mss 45815 f9.

him as like a son (see p 546 below). When Arthur Hugh Clough, who was her age, wanted to marry her cousin, Nightingale described the situation (jokingly) as his wanting to become her “son-in-law.”<sup>69</sup>

Nightingale’s convent experience undoubtedly familiarized her with the practice of calling senior women “Mother.” She called Laure de Sainte Colombe “ma mère” and referred to her as “the madre.” She routinely addressed Mary Clare Moore as “dearest reverend Mother.” Caroline Fliedner, barely Nightingale’s senior in years, was “Mutter” at Kaiserswerth as the wife of the pastor. When Nightingale was (briefly) considering a sort of Protestant religious community for nurses she specified that the superior would be addressed as “Mother” (see p 529 below).

Marriages for relatives were all more positive matters and appear routinely in quite a rosy light—none of them, of course, entailing the loss of valuable nursing resources. Congratulations on engagements and wedding anniversaries appeared periodically in family correspondence and will be seen also below.

Here we give but two examples of general statements, one early and one late, on marriage as an institution, and several short comments.

Source: Notes extracted from missing notebooks of Florence Nightingale, in I.B. O’Malley, *Florence Nightingale 1820-56: A Study of Her Life Down to the End of the Crimean War* 17 and 126

26 August 1827

On Wednesday Aunt Mai was married to Uncle Sam. I, Papa, Uncle Sam, Pop and Mr Bagshaw (the clergyman) went first. Mama and Aunt Mai in the bride’s carriage. Aunt Julia and Miss Bagshaw came last. When they were married we were all kneeling on our knees except Mr Bagshaw. Papa took Aunt Mai’s hand and gave it to Uncle Sam. We all cried except Uncle Sam, Mr Bagshaw and Papa.

[1846]

I don’t agree *at all* that “a woman has no reason (not caring for anyone else) for not marrying a good man who asks her,” and I don’t think Providence does either. I think He has as clearly marked out some to be single women as He has others to be wives, and has organized them accordingly for their vocation. I think some have every reason for not marrying and that, for these, it is much better to educate

---

69 Letter to Richard Monckton Milnes 25 March [1851], Trinity College Cambridge, Houghton 28/128.

the children who are already in the world and can't be got out of it than to bring more into it.

The primitive church clearly thought so and provided accordingly, and though, no doubt, the primitive church was in many matters an old woman, yet I think the experience of ages has proved her right in this. I cannot look upon marrying as an impersonal verb. "It marries" is not an absolute blessing. Everything depends on the accusative case, and though I think it the very greatest praise to a woman when she *can* marry "anybody," yet every woman cannot make herself into the complement of that particular man, which act is necessary to make of the two the one being almost divine which real married people *is*.

**Editor:** On the marriage of her cousin Beatrice Smith (c1838-?) in 1865 Nightingale wrote William Coltman, husband of Bertha Smith (1836-1923): "I agree with you that Mr Godfrey [Lushington] has drawn a prize above his merits. I love you for appreciating Beatrice so well. I hope he will take care of her (health). But, in short, God and she have decided. She loves him and we could not wish it otherwise. He is certainly most heartily in love."

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, Add Mss 68888 f184

2 July 1896

Mr Morant. Thank you for sending me Mr Morant's letter—so characteristic of the man. I do feel very glad, and should feel gladder if I knew who was "she." There was a "she" when he went out to Siam, of whom he told me in London. I wonder whether it is the same "she." Please tell him how I give him joy.

I should like to send the "she" a wedding nosegay on her wedding day, if I knew who and where "she" is.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

**Editor:** Nightingale sent a "nosegay" to a bride for a family wedding 26 June 1900. "These poor flowers bring every best of wishes to our dear Grace on her wedding day from us all. Florence Nightingale." She wrote Bertha Coltman the day before as to where to send them, with a fill-in-the-blank return to make it easier, as to what time and where to send them.<sup>70</sup>

---

70 Letter 25 June 1900, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU225.

## Gender and Class—Ladies or Women

**Editor:** Social-class issues occur at all stages of Nightingale's working career. She was herself meritocratic and liberal in her beliefs. Her family was wealthy and she was privileged in her upbringing (which did not give her independence, which she gained only at age thirty-three when her father gave her an annuity). She wanted all women to use their talents for the common good. Women from a privileged background, "ladies," had the advantage of general education and culture (which did not give them any particular expertise). They posed problems for her throughout her life by expecting to be allowed to skip training altogether or take only abbreviated training for a position. The 1867 letter to Dr Acland below stresses this point, among others on the issue.

Nightingale saw that "ladies" had much to offer in some hospital situations: they were respected and obeyed more readily. They were especially good with syphilitic prostitutes. Nightingale always wanted to see more educated women enter nursing, but was not willing to compromise on proper training. As a letter above has already shown, to give an untrained person a superintendent post simply because she was a "lady" could be positively harmful (see p 33 above).

Nightingale wanted women of all social classes to be serious in their endeavours. Women who did not have to earn an income and could then be "lady philanthropists" disappointed by their "want of earnestness":

The lady philanthropists who do the odds and ends of charity, especially in the country, all wanting of earnestness—all deteriorate on doing their charity, as you would expect. It is a kind of conscience quieter, a soothing syrup. They take no pains to do it (or anything) *as well as it can be done as a work*. And the consequence is a degeneration of their quality of character under it.<sup>71</sup>

Nightingale, in a letter to Douglas Galton dealing with the dismissal of nurses, referred to the "love of patronizing a woman with a case against a woman, inherent in all men." She said it had "been found so in governors of civil hospitals, in medical officers, etc., so much so that now, in the best civil hospitals, all matrons are entirely protected from anything of this kind being attempted."<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> *Society and Politics* (5:259).

<sup>72</sup> Letter 10 October 1863, ADD Mss 45761 f146.

When William Farr asked Nightingale if he could propose her for membership in the Statistical Society he stated: "Will you allow yourself to be proposed as a member and thus brake [break] down the barrier? You know that in your own Florence ladies have worthily filled academical seats and let me remind of your orthodox maxim, put Socratically: what is the difference—intellectual—between the two halves of the human race?"<sup>73</sup>

The first two items below, in effect letters of reference for a relative of a relative, also make a point about the desirability of "ladies" taking on serious work.

Source: From two letters to General J.H. Lefroy R.A., Wellcome Ms 5479/33 and Add Mss 43397 f271

14 November 1864

This morning, a little to my surprise, a lady, Miss Maria Kingdon, cousin of a cousin of mine (J. Bonham Carter, MP) writes to me her wish to be elected lady superintendent of your "Royal School for Daughters of Officers" at Bath. I can only say I think they will be fortunate if they can get her. (But, as she tells me that there are two candidates already in the field, "a Miss Mosely and a Mrs Tuckett," I think it so probable that the former may be your "*Mrs Moseley*," that in that case all your influence would be naturally in her favour. If this should *not* be the case) I should tell you what I know of Miss Kingdon.

She has great talents of management and of education—is one of the warmest, wisest, most modest Christians I know—most religious and self-devoted—a person who, had she been a R. Catholic, would have been enlisted at once as a "Soeur Supérieure." But when her cousin, my cousin, Mrs Bonham Carter,<sup>74</sup> dies of a long and painful illness (cancer), she was her right hand, her nurse, the mother to her seven children. And after her death, she continued her charge till J. Bonham Carter married again (Miss Baring<sup>75</sup>) this spring. She was then at liberty to do what I believe she had wished all her life.

She consulted me and I could have given her work at workhouse or hospital. She was making up her mind—shrinking a little, I believe, like others, from the "professional" training needful—when her inclination led her strongly to the "Daughters of Officers" School. (Gen-

---

<sup>73</sup> Letter 16 November 1858, Add Mss 43398 f92.

<sup>74</sup> Néé Laura Nicholson (1824-62), daughter of Aunt Anne and Uncle George T. Nicholson.

<sup>75</sup> Mary Baring (1827-1906), daughter of 1st Baron Northbrook, second wife of John "Jack" Bonham Carter (1817-84), MP for Winchester.

eral Lawrence, the chairman, who first spoke to her about it, wishes for her election, I understand.) I do not hesitate to say that I am very sorry to lose her—though I had not caught her. But I wish, above all, that she should go where she can work best.

She is, I guess, a little more than forty, but does not look so much. When she consulted me, I understood that she wished to work without a salary. But most institutions prefer (and I think rightly) to give a salary.

I have known her, directly and indirectly, my whole life. And I have always thought what a valuable superintendent she would make. I have said my say and am ever, my dear Sir,

yours faithfully and gratefully

Florence Nightingale

25 November 1864

I thank you very much for your kind letter about Miss Kingdon. I confess I am very much divided between fear of her disappointment, certainty that they will be very lucky if they get her, and a kind of feeling that ladies to whom money is not “an object” should leave these sorts of places to ladies to whom it is. I have a kind of feeling that, when one is so fortunate as to be able to work without salary, one should take the most difficult and repulsive places, such as hospitals and workhouses.

No, I do not think them more difficult than education, but certainly they are likely to attract fewer ladies than educational institutions. And I never could bring myself to enter into competition at these more attractive places with those to whom the pecuniary benefit was almost a matter of life and death and whom nothing but the pecuniary necessity would induce to face the matronship of a hospital, workhouse or prison. But I did not mean to take up your time with these theories.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47714 ff89-90

10 February 1865

*Private.* But it seems to me that, the more the cant about women’s missions, the fewer the really efficient women become. It makes me mad to hear the din about unemployed women. If women are unemployed, it is because they won’t work. But I am sure, from my own experience of governesses in Harley St., these women had rather shamble on in their ill-paid, ill-performed work than go through the training we offer (on half the training I went through myself) to become highly paid matrons. The only matron they ever had in India was paid £360 a year (and everything “found,” as the servants say). The highest salaries women receive at all (queens and actresses excepted) might be secured

by women trained by us. Sir John Lawrence says, “Whatever expense is requisite, might be met.” We have, as I need not tell you, twenty-three probationers now at St Thomas’. Mrs Wardroper (with whom I have communicated, as well as Miss Jones) proposes to keep on twenty-three probationers, as the standing number. Supposing we train for India—if the committee agree. (I do not exactly know what terms as to expense.) Of course if we train for India, we must advertise and engage women expressly for that purpose, as health and other circumstances must be taken into account. Terms must also be offered—and this I cannot do, without a reply from Sir John Lawrence.

A great difficulty will be that women will accept our terms, on purpose to be sent out to India on very advantageous conditions for marrying well.

Miss Jones says she cannot possibly receive more probationers into K.C.H., as she has already ten for Manchester, besides her own. She would however undertake another hospital for the express purpose of training probationers for India, if desired (we had better say no more about this at present).

Source: Undated note, ADD MSS 45845 f2

Why we should not have our portraits taken: (1) I wish to be forgotten. Some of the best things the world has had done for it have been done by we don’t know whom. I think we should give our work to God who does it and then be forgotten ourselves. (2) But I don’t think it worthwhile even for those I care for most to be remembered. “Where are the great that thou wouldst wish to praise thee?”<sup>76</sup> Can you even depend upon the same thing being thought in the afternoon that was thought in the morning? (3) I think the greatest evil of this world is men and women meeting together in idleness and not in work; vice (immorality) is not what I am thinking of. That is by no means the greatest of its consequences. It is the total misunderstanding of woman’s life, of her work in the world, in men’s minds which it brings about—and generally the misapprehending of men and of women by each other as human beings.

It is as yet unknown for men and for women to meet together *to do the world’s work* (whatever Mrs Jameson<sup>77</sup> may say), for married people

---

<sup>76</sup> A.H. Clough, *Dipsychus*, Part 2, scene 2.

<sup>77</sup> Anna Brownell Jameson (1794-1860); probably a reference to her *Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour: Two Lectures on the Social Employments of Women*.

as little as any. This being the case with living people, it is impossible to one to see a woman's statue in a drawing room or a man's either for that matter, doing nothing. I think it is indecent. I have seen the statue of Diana Artemis without any more clothes than [she was] born in. Atalanta in Calydon<sup>78</sup> had nothing but a ray of a veil on, I suppose because clothes would have hindered her work. And these do not appear to me indecent (improper). I have been a matron of a hospital—the only position in which a woman is really in charge of full-grown men, and that does not appear to me to be indecent. I have lived a more public life then ever queen or actress did. And that does not appear to me to be improper. But it is improper to my mind to see a man's on a woman's portrait staring, doing nothing, in an idle assemblage of men or women or men and women.

**Editor:** Nightingale frequently had to write discouraging letters to “ladies” who wanted to nurse without taking the training required. For example, to a woman who requested an interview with her to enter military nursing she replied: “We do not look out for situations for ladies—we train them for situations.” She suggested that her correspondent contact the superintendent at the Netley Hospital, who:

would give you every information you need, either by letters or otherwise. She is extremely anxious to find superintendents. But then they must be trained. The same thing I can say for ourselves. We desire to find ladies to be trained as hospital superintendents, for whom there is an ever-increasing demand—with good salaries—for hospitals both at home, in the colonies and in India. The demand is, in fact, far beyond our power of supply. The Society of St John's House experiences a similar difficulty.<sup>79</sup>

Source: From an incomplete letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/112

[1867?]

I have always said to Mrs Wardroper and to Henry Bonham Carter our object ought to be to take *any* woman from *any* class of *any* church (provided her qualifications are suitable) and train her as well as we can, and then make the best bargain we can on her behalf for pay.

<sup>78</sup> The mythical Atalanta refused to marry anyone unless he first defeated her in a race; a defeated suitor had to die.

<sup>79</sup> Letter to an unknown recipient 16 February 1867, ADD Mss 45800 f46.



Source: From a letter to Dr H.W. Acland, Convent of Mercy, Birmingham

20 January 1867

*Private.* I will try at once to answer (from experience) your questions as to admitting “ladies” into a hospital to learn nursing:

1. It answers perfectly provided (a) they are admitted not *qua* ladies, but as members of a training school, as are other probationers, in short, (b) let them be admitted, not as amateurs but as going through a regular course, carefully laid down, with regular tests (i.e., practical examinations) to end in trying for a regular certificate; (c) no difficulty can arise about religion if the care of the sick and not the care of their own souls is the main motive and qualification.

(Sisterhoods have succeeded or failed exactly in proportion as the “sisters” have been there mainly as *nurses* or mainly as members of a religious order, “sisters” of a sisterhood.) If the latter, then all sorts of ridiculous trivialities (fanciful rules, peculiar “vestments” and the like) must form the tie of the sisterhood (which binds it together) and *not* the care of the sick, which is their professed object.

Practically, there is but little difference between the religious scruple of the “sister” who neglects her patients for her rule and the irreligious scruple of the nurse who neglects her patients for her drink.

(d) But nearly everything depends upon your matron, both upon what she is personally and upon what she is officially. Unless she is the acknowledged, qualified and capable head of the nursing, unless she is commander-in-chief and the ward head, nurses her regimental officers, unless there is an organized system of nursing under her, into which probationers are admitted, after selection, and with a view to a regular course, unless the same standard is required from all the probationers, be they “ladies” or women who are to earn their bread by it, experience tells us that to admit persons to learn is a mere fiction, both as to themselves and as to the hospital. They don’t learn. The hospital does not teach. And, what is worse, all sorts of confusion are introduced into the hospital, justifying the repugnance and opposition of the medical officers to this kind of thing. I have no doubt you will understand what I mean with half a word. I will add however,

2. With regard to (a) and (b): I have frequently been asked to admit ladies (into hospitals I have been connected with) “for three weeks”! I was once asked to admit the “Bible women”<sup>80</sup> “for ten

---

80 By 1867 there were 267 “Bible women” at work, of the Ranyard Mission, founded in 1857 by Ellen Ranyard to bring Christianity and good hygiene to working-class women.

days”!!! It is an extremely common thing for ladies and even nurses to ask to be admitted for two [to] three months. I have constantly declined entertaining these applications. Nothing but a smattering, no real standard of good nursing, can be attained in that time. And the hospital order is upset for what benefits no one. Besides, the fault of our English ladies *is* smattering-dilettante work. And what a pity to pander to this!

With regard to the two [to] three months I am constantly obliged to keep our training matrons up to the mark, viz., to refuse this, *except* as an *exception*, to remember that quality and not quantity is the object (in the nurses we train). Our period of training is twelve months at the least. And, whatever period of training you decide upon at your hospital, I would strongly advise you never to depart from unless by a written decision of your committee or governing body, for *that* particular case, constituting it an exception—constituting it also an exception, if your probationer, be she lady or not, does not “go in” for a certificate.

Also, we require a written engagement, after a part of the probation is passed, that the probationer intends to devote herself for -- years to the nursing of the sick. If this is departed from, it should be by a formal, written permission, given by the body which grants the certificates. A hospital is a place of very serious work, and not at all a place for any religious or other freak.

3. You will understand me too when I say: Never let your chaplain be your matron, nor let your medical officer be your matron either. Let the chaplain keep to his functions, the medical officers to theirs, and the matron to hers. Few of the difficulties which we have heard so much of in late years would have occurred if this *prima facie* rule had been carried out.

And I will say this, for the French R. Catholic orders (among whom I have lived and served), that this rule is with them practically understood and adhered to, in a way which puts our English sense to shame. I cannot see that any difficulty can arise as to (c) if this rule be observed. We have never had any difficulty. And we have had probationers of every church and sect almost. With regard to (b) again I would say: don’t make any difference between your “lady” and other probationers. This is not to say that a lady must scour and scrub. *No* probationers ought to have scrubbing to do. *Every* probationer is there to learn nursing, not housemaiding: to be a nurse, not a charwoman.

And, with regard to the other (so-called disgusting) little offices of cleanliness about the patients, a “lady” must do them just like any other nurse. She must not call another nurse to do them. And *no* “lady,” *no* good head nurse that I have ever known, who was worth her salt, ever shirked doing her share of this kind of work. Rather, she did more than her share. A “lady” can’t learn by walking about the wards and looking on—she must put her hands to the work at the bedside.

Lastly, I can’t think that any training can answer, if the probationers (ladies or otherwise) do not live during the period of training within the precincts of the hospital, under the charge and control of the matron. But, as I have tried to say as strongly as I could in (d), unless there is an organized system of learning under a capable and responsible matron, the hospital is better without its pupil “ladies” and the “ladies” are better without the hospital. As an engineer of ours said of a Turkish fort (in the Crimean War), he had rather be outside than in. I will not enter more into detail, because it is only wasting your time and mine, unless the plan comes to some practical beginning. If it does, I should be most happy to help in any way in my power that you may desire.

In order to show what I mean by the necessity of having a regular course, tests, records and certificates, so that we may know that our probationers are really learning and from which we never depart, except by an express decision of our committee, I send you some of our forms, not as a model but as an example. We have improved on one or two of these, as I think. And, if your plan comes into practical action, I would, if you wished it, send you our last “editions.” I trust that you will see that this letter is only for yourself.

As you may suppose, I have frequent applications, of the nature of yours, from many parts of England. And people, after giving me a week’s writing, after getting me into sundry scrapes with every conflicting authority, ecclesiastical, medical and matronal, by reading my private letters at a “general meeting” (so that I have afterwards a week’s “explanations” to do, like any MP) give up their plan—never having known their own minds from the first. Latterly I have made the rule by my friends’ advice, not to answer fully unless formally asked by the governing body, which ensures at least some kind of serious intention. But this does not, of course, apply to you.

I deplore exceedingly, as I am sure you must, the abortive attempts made by well-meaning individuals to introduce in different London hospitals ladies to learn, without any system or organization whatever

by which they could learn. They were just to “pick up” as they could, like birds. It has, of course, only ended in discrediting the whole thing.

**Editor:** Expertise was always the main issue, social status only secondary. To an inquiry in 1869 about the establishment of nursing in Buckinghamshire Nightingale explained:

It does not appear to me that the “lady nurses” ought to be the first consideration, if at all. No “lady” or any other nurse will be able to instruct others to much purpose in the theory or practice of nursing in the manner proposed, i.e., *by taking up their residence in the county town*. The place to have the nurses instructed is at the county *hospital* if not at some London hospital.

She suggested that they “begin by training one or two women, well selected, not necessarily, better not, ladies.” Only when established, and only if numbers increased might it be advantageous to “provide a lady nurse” for general supervision.<sup>81</sup>

In the introduction to an 1880 article, “Hospitals and Patients,” Nightingale made it clear that “ladies” were welcome in nursing only when trained. Hospitals were not made “to find a career for educated women . . . as if the sick existed for ‘the ladies,’ not ‘ladies’ for the sick,” so that “so many ladies who want a livelihood may find one.” Better to keep such “ladies” out of the nursing profession than be guilty of “high treason against nursing,” which she described as making use of “living bodies and souls in a mean spirit of ‘ladyism,’ that is falsely ladylike exclusiveness . . . not to helping the suffering, or not to this as a first object.” Ladies may not enter “as a privilege, claiming privileges on account of their class.”<sup>82</sup>

In a letter to William Rathbone in 1887 Nightingale noted:

The irresistible temptation seems to be, is it not? that where there is private (paid) nursing too, the best nurses must be generally given to the rich who pay, and the poor go “to the wall” in having the poorest nurses, and where a large part of the income is derived from the payments of the rich, this is more unavoidable by the superintendent than it sounds. (N.B. “Ladies are more fitted for district than *private* nursing”).<sup>83</sup>

---

81 Letter ca. 13 March 1869, ADD Mss 47716 f66.

82 According to E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* (2:452), this article was set in print but not published.

83 Letter 14 August 1887, ADD Mss 49623 f5.

In 1892, when Nightingale was asked if a nurse being considered for a matron's position was a "gentlewoman," she replied carefully, aware that the patients at the institution, the Consumption Hospital at Ventnor, were of a higher class than workhouse or usual hospital patients:

In answer to your question I do not think Miss de Laney is what would be called gentlewoman-born (though I remember your remarking that her name showed an old family). But as for her habits of thought and principles and to my mind speech, I think no truer gentlewoman ever breathed.

Further Nightingale gave examples of Delaney's tact in handling people without offending them, kindness and insight.<sup>84</sup>

### **Religious Communities for Women**

**Editor:** Nightingale liked and got along well with nuns, Roman Catholic and Anglican. She respected women who saw a religious life as their vocation, but she did not see a typical convent as any kind of model for her purposes. During her European travels she visited a number of convents. She spent some months at the Deaconess Institution at Kaiserswerth, which again, much as she loved the experience, she judged negatively as a model for hospital nursing.<sup>85</sup> In Paris in 1853 she lived with the Sisters of Charity for several weeks. Nightingale's objections to religious communities, whether Protestant deaconesses or Roman Catholic or Anglican nuns have already appeared in correspondence with Caroline Stephen (see p 41 above); there is further material in *Theology* (3:298-318) and the letter to Dr Acland above. The issue of interference by church authorities in the Anglican order of St John's House appears in the midwifery section and is dealt with also in *Theology* (3:444-79).

In outlining to Selina Bracebridge, in 1853, a hypothetical community to run the institution at Upper Harley St., Nightingale specified that entry must be possible for women of *all* classes as sisters, unlike the case for Catholic and Anglican orders which were limited to "ladies," conventionally requiring a dowry from the family to support the nun. She thought that the provisions should take into account the different financial resources and difficulties of possible members (see

---

84 Letter to Henry Bonham Carter 8 May 1892, Add Mss 47724 f48.

85 See *European Travels* (7:489-602).

p 530 below). She proposed what she considered to be “absolutely necessary, if *all* classes are to be admitted (as I hope), as sisters,” i.e., as full members and trained nurses. There should be opportunities for women to enter as servants without a serious vocation, again with the possibility of the person being accepted later as a sister. She noted that “no Catholic order . . . not even the St Vincent of Paul, receives those who have been in service [domestic servants], as sisters.”<sup>86</sup>

In fact this plan was not proceeded with at all, and hardly needed given the small size of the Harley St. institution. It serves to show that Nightingale was seeking some kind of community to support single women in nursing. The religious activities described would support a spiritual life, but the focus would clearly be work, definitely not the numerous services from morning to night as in a typical convent, and which Nightingale saw as precluding a serious commitment to nursing.

Here we present two short items: on the merits of secular versus religious training for nurses (whether Protestant or Catholic nuns or deaconesses) and much lengthier extracts from the Rule and by-laws of a French nursing order (made in 1853 when Nightingale was in Paris). These extracts show both how rigorous the life of a nun was, and how little place was left in its heavy schedule of prayer for actual hospital work. Material on a religious community dealing with “penitents” (also gathered while in Paris) appears at the end of the section on the regulation of prostitution.

The extracts show their derivation from a French document. Nightingale apparently sometimes simply copied out the French (here translated); in other places she seems to have translated on the spot (indicated as “English resumes”).

Source: Undated note, ADD Mss 45845 ff17-21

[On religious communities:] The fact is that the only great error of Pastor Fliedner is the main point of *resemblance* between Kaiserswerth and the high church communities. The fact is that the great merit of the “Romish charitable orders” is, what Pastor Fliedner lost sight of, what St John’s<sup>87</sup> has *not* lost sight of. The day has come when “woman’s

<sup>86</sup> *Theology* (3:447-48).

<sup>87</sup> St John’s House was an Anglican, high-church, religious order for women, some of whose sisters nursed with Nightingale in the Crimea.

work” will be taken up in the church *not* in the way our high-church communities have done it, but in the way Mr Rathbone has done it. And there is not a man in England who has done more than he, or as much as he, for “woman’s work in the (true) church,” though his work has all been *secular*.

I do not think the probability of marrying the difficulty that some do. I am not sure that I think marriage one of the seven deadly sins (though I hear it spoken of in the sisterhoods as if it were the *other thing*). And I *am* very sure that our trained nurses and superintendents are much more fit for wives and mothers than they would have been without. If they fulfill their engagement, usually for three, four or five years, I think we have no sort of right to complain. But, our very best do not marry, they become so interested in their work that they give it a lifelong devotion.

I am an old woman now, and have knocked about the world a good deal. And my experience is that “vows” are a work purely gratuitous. Those who devote themselves to the work need no vows to keep them from marrying. And those who need vows to keep them from marrying had better not make them. This is my experience. Agnes Jones<sup>88</sup> [was] just as little likely to marry as if she had made twenty vows. Another coming on, though not yet with her divine qualities, who needs no vows. With regard to sisterhoods, choice should be left to idiosyncrasy of particular character.

Obedience: the best will always obey, for the qualities which lead to the best obedience are the same as those which enable you to command, viz., love of order, a power of discerning the whole and the relation of the parts to the whole an essential element in an organization, a willingness to carry out the common good at any personal cost. None who cannot obey will ever be able to command. For she who has to command has to make more sacrifices to the common good than anyone else. If she looks upon her command as anything but a service, she will be the slave of all—she *must* be the willing servant of all. But the service of obedience is far easier than the service of command, for the servant is the servant of one, but the superintendent is the servant of all.

*Health:* Would not women have better health if they led more active lives? Is there no medium possible between women who are ill

---

<sup>88</sup> Agnes Jones, a lay Anglican, led the first trained nursing in a workhouse infirmary, in Liverpool, and died on the job.

because of overwork and those who are ill because of underwork?  
Does Providence intend each of us to be the one or the other?

Source: From a letter to William Rathbone, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/62/2

11 July 1862

Mr Howson<sup>89</sup> was so good as to send me his “deaconesses” some time ago through Miss Jones. Perhaps you would someday perform for me the same kind task of thanking him.

I read it with the deepest interest. On the spiritual side I see nothing wanting. But I could not but regret that he did not enter a little more into the practical side, as, if this were done, it might almost become a guidebook to this important subject. I mean, if he would point out, e.g., the respective merits and demerits of having a religious training school for nurses in a *secular* hospital, and again in a hospital *of its own*. In the latter, you avoid, I had almost said shirk, a whole class of difficulties, while, if you bravely confront the rubs and wears and tears of the former, you secure an infinitely higher object, and, I may without contradiction assert, an infinitely better and more thorough practical education for your nurses.

Thus I would not hesitate to say that Miss Jones and Miss Merryweather, though the work develops itself much more slowly, are laying a much safer cornerstone than the many German and English Protestant and R. Catholic societies who train their nurses “at home,” and who, if they have a hospital, manage it themselves. So the Augustinians at Paris, who train at the Hôtel-Dieu. And generally, both French and English, from their act of common sense, train much better than the Germans.

Source: Extracts from the Rule and other material of a Nursing Order, Add Mss 43402 ff123-30

[c1853]

[trans. from French] We must pray for all those for whom we have some obligation, *for all those who wish us some wrong*, which we can do only on applying strictly the intention to our offices. [English resumes] The sisters are not to belong to any other confrérie. [trans. from

---

89 John Saul Howson (1816-85), priest and principal of Liverpool College, presumably a reference to his *An Essay on Deaconesses*, 1862; he had deaconesses from Kaiserswerth working in Liverpool.



French resumes] They must avoid faults, even the very least, that are easily committed in this occupation worthy of angels.

[English resumes] No novelty can be introduced by the superior every day for more than a month without the consent of the discrètes [advisers to the superior], nor for more than six without that of the chapter.

Two examens [examinations of conscience] morning and evening, very carefully done, as these are a principal means. To be very short in their confessions, making more resolutions to amend than scrupulous researches into their sins, and if anyone is too long, let the superior give her some method. If they want to communicate about their conscience with some prudent person, the mère [mother] will be charitable, without asking the subject of the com[munication].

[Let] all be careful to read every day a bit at a time [illeg] in a book given *by the superior*, and they will read no[thing] without her permission. Besides their private readings, every day a reading aloud. Once or twice a month [a] *conference*: the superior reads some rule [and] the conference is upon that, or upon the manner of doing well [its] daily business, the sisters either asking explanation or the superior making them tell their opinion. In these conferences [they] must be ready to answer when they are questioned, to transpose some point of edification, principally when they are [illeg], to listen quietly and let each take well the resolutions to no one but herself, what is said for all. [These] are the helps to acquire the first part of our end, [the] love of God. [We] come now to the perfect love of the neighbour, which [is] the other arm of charity, or the other part of the end to which we are all to aspire.

Let us pray for our institute and remember that its health depends upon the health of all its parts. Therefore, if the heads put the work upon the subs, if ambition creeps in, it is killing the whole thing. If a factious sister, after having been several times warned, goes on, the superior must assemble the chapter to impose the punishment before all.

The superior shall be called Mother and shall call all the rest Sisters. Let them never speak of each other's faults, but if one person perceives another in some fault, after having gently warned her, if the fault is continued and is hurtful she may tell the superior, taking care that it is with a great love of the person, that she has certainty and sufficient proof—*never* giving to those *du dehors* [outsiders] a bad impression of the house or of any individual in it. That there may be

no murmurs, let no one speak either in private or in public of the sick or the dress, treatment, nor of the work of any sister, nor of her illness nor of any disorder which might happen, but tell the superior and, if she must tell it in the chapter, let it be with discretion. Let no one mix themselves in another's business, nor reprove [illeg] without orders. Let each receive what is necessary for her office with gratitude, and if it is not proper, let them say so without complaining. If refused, they will not apply to the mother nor to the chaplain yet what they want, nor to complain without saying why they were refused or (if it is to the chaplain) why they were rebuked by the mother. They will never tell any fault of the house to the chaplain without the mother has been told of this fault first. They are to preserve their mother's authority, to be always [illeg] and never for anything granted or refused. . . .

[trans. from French] We must assist the sick with a heart full of love, a gentle and joyful face, a promptness full of cheerfulness, avoiding the most diligently possible a hardness or insensibility to the ills of others, which lengthy contact with the sick customarily induces if one is not on one's guard, comporting ourselves in such a way that the sick person knows that we serve her without disgust, but with pleasure, however long and difficult might be the sickness. On the other hand, the sick must be obedient to the doctor and nurse, giving testimony by their humility and patience that they accept the illness as a gift of God, not seeking any superfluous comfort, mortifying themselves with courage, embracing the cross of the Son of God with love, and giving all the care of themselves into his holy providence.

[English resumes] Humility consists not only in recognizing one's own faults but being glad that others should recognize them too, glad to be [f]ound fault with, never excusing oneself, receiving blame with a true feeling of one's deserts.

Let no sister speak of herself, of what she has left, of the affairs she has treated [?], nor of her temptations and difficulties, nor of any extraordinary favour, excepting to the superior, of whom she will not conceal the good or the bad to which she feels herself inclined, that she may be succoured in her wants. She must be glad that all the faults which have been remarked in [he]r, should be told by anyone whatsoever to the superior, without [he]r asking or trying to find out from whom it came. When the [illeg] shall reprove them, let them never show in any fashion [illeg] they are not glad. Let them detest le respect humain [human respect] and kill as quickly as [illeg] les petits désirs [the little desires] to be loved or more prized than the others,

[illeg] this into a desire to be despised, by a real feeling of their poverty.

The superior's assistant will go first, all the others taking their place by the length of time they have been there: sisters first, probationers next, servants last.

[trans. from French] They must study themselves diligently, not to appear now joyous, then suddenly overcome by sadness, passing from one extreme to the other, but they should guard, in the bottom of their heart, an equality of spirit, in the inequality of sentiments, always to show to persons outside peace and tranquility, to be humble and serious, as persons whose attention is continually toward God, but always be serene and joyous, giving witness to their interior peace. They should not touch or kiss one another, not even in jest, nor as a sign of friendship, except at comings and goings. All will make a bow to the mother each time they meet her, and salute the others with a modest bow.

[English resumes] Don't they spend their whole time in speaking of one another. If you could get them to make a vow that, for six months, they would not speak of another just for an experiment. The liberty of speaking continually does indeed bring the worst consequences. Why you may say that everything comes from that—that, without that all would go right. . . .

[trans. from French] Let their speech be quiet, let them cede one to the others, never contesting or debating, not by a word, or a gesture or sign if some sister is opinionated, or refuses to do her duty. One must not argue with her but gently advise the superior.

[English resumes] Let the superior change the rooms of the sisters as often as she finds necessary from such considerations as these, never being obliged to give any reason but their improvement.

Let their laughter be modest remembering [trans. from French] but smiling sometimes to please the Son their spouse. They must add no affectation in their personal habits and clothing. They must not be curious to see what their companions do. Coming and leaving they must draw no attention to themselves, not speaking so loudly that the sisters will be distracted. Our silence is not just to avoid unnecessary words, but much more to banish far all vain relations with creatures, occupying our thoughts and desires as much as we can with God, and with His beloved citizens of heaven, so that we may say with St Paul that our conversation is in heaven.<sup>90</sup>

---

90 An allusion to Phil 3:20.

[English resumes] Silence must be kept in the chapel, dining room, dormitory and chapter and, above all, after the evening's recreation till after the morning prayers. If anything must be said, let it be said short and low. The liberty of speaking continually brings the worst consequences and is a sign [trans. from French] that a soul is dissipated and that it has no taste for relations with God, *who seeks frequent conversation with His creatures*.

[English resumes] Let no one speak to those, *du dehors* [outside] of what is done in the house, unless by desire of the superior, nor ask their advice without leave, nor listen at the parlour, nor ask what has been said there, nor speak of what has been done in chapter, nor guess or conjecture what has been done by the *discrètes* [senior professed nuns], but throw themselves into the arms of God.

[When] the sisters go to see anyone or anyone comes to visit [them] they will first ask God for His blessing, then try to bring forward [illeg] discourse to excite to good works, that the visitors may perceive that they have no longer any taste for the vain and curious conversations [of] what is done in the world. . . . No visit shall be made without the order of the superior. No visit shall be longer than  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour. There shall be a clock for this purpose.

No one shall eat and drink out of hours, without permission. Sisters shall serve at table each one week and wash up each [illeg] week except on Sundays, when the servants shall wash up. There shall be no difference made in food for those in health, [illeg] between the superior and the sisters, except that the superior shall be served [illeg]. . . .

An hour's recreation twice a day (?). They are to dissemble their ill humours to accommodate themselves to the good inclinations of the others. Let them never speak all at once, nor interrupt, but let them listen to one another, and let those who speak too much remember that they sin, that it is a great impropriety to interrupt the others, and a pride to talk incessantly, without giving time to the others to speak in their turn. It shall not be permitted to bring any news about the poor or the patients, which shall be a bad example.

Seven hours they shall sleep before they go to their patients, everything shall be in good order in their rooms, which they will sweep once or twice a week.

Six converses [lay sisters] to thirty professed. The converses will be under the assistant.

[trans from French] They must support each other in their faults, but not encourage each other in wrongdoing without pretext of

friendship or compassion. [English resumes] Religion treats and serves them *comme les filles bien-aimées* [like well-loved daughters]; let them work [trans. from French] with as much consolation they would use in God's house, in occupations where they are united with God with a sweet internal order.

[English resumes] It is difficult to know which of the two must have most patience and devotion, the patient or the nurse—both have such real opportunities for impatience and coldness. But Jesus says that the patients are his other selves and that we serve him in them. With what affection should we not serve Jesus Christ if he came back? With what affection did not his mother serve Him? How he loved the sick and the poor that he should say that?

We imitate Christ, “having mercy” upon *him* too; we save souls as well as for him; we have given all to the work of God and must not draw back the prayer which is carried upon the wings of mercy [pre]sents itself boldly at the throne of God.

[illeg] The sisters never sit upon the patients' beds, nor [must they be] laches or abattues [slipshod or despondent], but let it be read upon their faces the joy they have in serving Jesus Christ. Let the sisters have a holy contention who shall serve the sick who are most revolting, obtaining victories over themselves worthy of their calling.

Let them edify, not scandalize, the visitors, answering shortly any questions, saying simply that they have not leave, and referring them to the superior. Let them use the same retenue toward the chaplain. Let them never lose their time in laughing with the patients, nor in making curious inquiries, nor make herself too easy or light-mannered with the visitors.

Let the sisters know some true stories, which excite to the horror of sin, to confidence in the goodness of God, examples of those who have loved suffering, and been resigned to the will of God in their illnesses. But let them never be troublesome, speaking too much or too loud. Let them be able to suggest to the patients short acts of hope, acceptance of their sufferings, etc.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour instruction to the patients every day. As the dying can sometimes hear without being able to make a sign, let a few words be frequently said near them. The sisters must strive that all patients they send away with health of body may also take with them health of soul.

Hospitière/head nurse, who must nurse the [illeg] patient like Jesus Christ Himself if He were sick. At 7 o'clock at latest she will inform those who are to sit up of what they will have to do with each

particular patient, giving them what is necessary for the night. She will tell the superior at meals what is necessary for each patient. She will then go to each bed to see if anything is wanting to their meal and supply it. She must take notice whenever any sister is too free with the patients or surgeons, and after having warned her two or three times must tell the mother, no fault being small in this respect. She will receive and accompany the doctor during the visits, the apothecary sister being present, who will write the prescriptions in the vulgar tongue<sup>91</sup> in a book which she will [illeg]. She will send away no patient without the permission [illeg] the doctor and superior, and, this being registered, she will cause [illeg] prescriptions to be executed and see that each patient has them regularly, unless a notable change should take place in a patient.

She will take care of all the furniture of the hospital, as belonging to the Son of God, and give a register of it every year to the mother in her inventory. She will receive the linen from the wash, keep it and distribute it to the sick at the proper time. She will keep the hospital clean and sweet, open the windows at proper times, see that the slops are emptied and that no linen or anything indecent is ever lying about.

She will see that the chaplain visits once a day at least all the sick; if he is negligent, she will warn the mother. She will not stop to talk with anyone who visits the sick, not even the chaplain, longer than is necessary to answer their questions shortly, discreetly and civilly. If anyone is troublesome to the patients, she will tell the mother.

When there is the sacrament, she will take care that everything is solemn, clean and neat, even more than usual. She must never be out of the hospital, must see that the patients have prayers read to them if they like it.

In the men's rooms, no sister shall, under any pretence, go except those who serve there, nor any after 8 P.M. If any sister has orders to go there, she must be accompanied by one who is there. A bell must ring into the men's wards, to give notice to the sisters there, if any other sister wants anything. No sister is to stop to talk with any of the infirmiers [male nurses], and if she does so, either the infirmier must be sent away or the sister charged. Nor is any infirmier to talk with the female patients.

---

91 That is, in French, not Latin.

## Nightingale's Draft Novel

**Editor:** Nightingale's three-volume *Suggestions for Thought* has fascinated its readers from the very few who were permitted to read it during her lifetime to the large number who have read excerpted versions of it from Ray Strachey's publication of "Cassandra" in 1928 on through several publications in the 1990s. Since the full text, with related material, appears in a later volume of the *Collected Works*, our attention here is confined to an early draft, 1850-53, which Nightingale then put aside. The writing dates from that bleak period of her life when she was not permitted to work, so many years after her "call to service" in 1837. This is a handwritten draft, in the form of a novel, with characters, dialogue and the setting of scenes, albeit heavily in the genre of a novel of ideas. The result was too talky and did not work (Nightingale herself loved adventure stories). Whatever one might think of the style, the overuse of adjectives and laboured exchanges, the desperate message that is its main theme comes across with force.

Nightingale then removed all the dialogue and flowery descriptions when she had the text printed for comment. Preparing the manuscript for the printers she simply struck out the quotation marks and characters' names. "Portia said," became "It is said," etc. As a result, it is not always clear who is speaking in these texts, for often only the person addressed is named ("dear Fulgentia, you say . . ."). The lavish settings do not appear in the printed *Suggestions* at all.

Nightingale referred to *Suggestions for Thought* as her "novel" and her "tailor's novel" so that commentators have thought that she was influenced by Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet: An Autobiography*, 1850. Cook in his biography, however, stated: "Of the novel, no manuscript has been found among her papers," either a (rare) mistake or he was not given access to the material (which was deposited with other papers at the British Library). Cook went on to explain: "It may be conjectured that the form of the novel was abandoned after 1852, and the theme treated instead in the pages of 'Cassandra'" (1:119). To be precise it seems that the novel form was abandoned some time after the death of Nightingale's grandmother (25 March 1853), for that date appears near the end of the text. Much of the material was indeed recast into the third person and included in the printed text of 1860, but much—the most personal, that in dialogue form with characters, that is, the novel aspects—was simply dropped. Undoubtedly some, possibly much, was destroyed, for there are great gaps in the story, as will be evident in the excerpts below.

The work is of interest in this volume for the main characters in the first section excerpted are three intelligent and serious young women, if with amazing names: Fulgentia, Portia and Columba. Two married sisters, Mary and Kate, play minor roles as conventional wives. The mother is the first narrator and the father appears in dialogue later. Historical characters also contribute dialogue in places: Ignatius of Loyola, Jacob Abbott, Auguste Comte and Harriet Martineau (a Roman Catholic, an evangelical and two agnostics respectively). That material, however, is not included here as it survived with less change in the final, more philosophical, text.

The name "Cassandra" of course comes from the failed prophetess of Troy whose warnings were not heeded and who herself was killed. In the printed text it appears as the title for the long, anguished essay on the destructiveness of the family. In the draft here she appears initially as "Aunt Cassandra," who tells "something of the difficulties of a 'Daughter at Home,' as her mother had told something of those of a 'Mother at Home.'"<sup>92</sup> "Aunt Cassandra" appears once more in the handwritten text: "There He has been through His life, with His hands in the hearts of my poor Aunt Cassandra all through her life," changed for printing to "in the hearts of the poor suffering human beings all through our life" (f172).

Thanks to all the crossing out, the name "Cassandra" appears only once in the text itself of the printed version. Because it remained in the title it survived in the table of contents. It also appears in the sub-headings and sidebars, such as "Is this all Cassandra has to complain of?" and "Cassandra preaches on Marriage." The last section is titled "Cassandra dies."

To add to the complications, another source for Cassandra appears in the second section excerpted below, now as the choice of name taken by the character "Nofariari" shortly before her death. Her unhappy story is the same as that of the frustrated, purposeless life of the wealthy young woman with brains and commitment in the first segment. Now the story is told by "Fariseo," Nofariari's brother, who had asked her to explain her unhappiness to him. He then wrote it down shortly after her early death, at age thirty.

---

92 Draft novel, Add Mss 45839 f90; in the printed text there is no reference to either but simply "We have heard something of the difficulties of a 'Daughter at Home.'"<sup>92</sup> . . .



It is not clear what if any relation the two sections have to each other. Possibly there were two draft novels? Such as they are, the excerpts show an attempt to write of ideas and aspirations in the first person and to conceive of an appropriate physical setting for them (Nightingale borrowed from the Italy trips). The social level depicted is her own, the wealth and the constraints of a wealthy family all very personal. The ball scene early on is a good example. So also is the statement by a character that she longed for a man's education, and thought of disguising herself and going to Cambridge, Nightingale's father's university (see p 114 below). We see a frank condemnation of her mother's life, with the admission that she, on marriage, could not expect to do better. In the printed text this becomes an impersonal "many a woman" (see p 118 below).

Marriage between first cousins is an issue here, one treated in detail in *Society and Politics*. The discussion about inheritance is revealing, where one daughter pleads for Fulgentia, the character most like Nightingale, that she should not have to wait for her parents' deaths to inherit, which might not be until age fifty or sixty. Nightingale in fact was thirty-three when her father finally gave her an annuity, in 1853 (after the writing of this draft). She was over fifty when her father died, nearly sixty when her mother died. Again the printed version makes no mention of her own family but only the "mother."

There are flights of fancy, even escapist dreams, which Nightingale hated in herself. There are beautiful maidens, magicians, an enchantress and phantoms. Romantic, Italian, settings are used, drawing on her earlier European travels. Images from Renaissance art are used. We see, in short, quite a different side of Nightingale from the prosaic nurse, statistician, reform advocate and administrator.

There is very little action in the surviving manuscript (how much was destroyed or lost is anybody's guess). At the end of what we do have, Columba, the defender of Roman Catholicism and religious orders, has made her decision not only to convert to Roman Catholicism but to become a nun, a Sister of Charity.

The purpose of publishing this draft material here is to bring out Nightingale's views on women, their place in life and God's intentions for them, as she had then developed them. Selections have been drawn from a 276-folio British Library volume, focusing on those excluded from or drastically amended in the eventual *Suggestions for Thought*. The ellipses show where material has been dropped because it is in the final, less altered, printed version. < > indicates included material, with a footnote giving the modification.

Source: Excerpts from a draft novel, Add Mss 45839 ff33-56, 69-77, 115-17, 133-34, 150-51, 194-95

My daughter and I were walking together. The high south wind was hurrying by, the sun shining bright and hot in the cloudless heavens, but the air was filled with a fog of dust carried before the gale, which blew ceaselessly, fiercely, like a destiny never weary of suffering—so at least said my poor foolish girl. The dust formed into whirlwinds and whitened all the fresh grass and the yellow spring buds which were coming out. “So it is with my life,” she said. “The wind has blown down all my supports and hopes and plans. The dust has dried them up. But the sun is still shining high in the heavens and the fresh wind is still blowing.”

“How often I think of our Saviour’s temptation,” she said.<sup>93</sup> <“It is the epitome of all life. It, as it was no doubt, the epitome of his own, which he told his disciples in that form. A sensitive, noble, spirit could perhaps hardly bear to tell it in that form.” “But how can you,” I said, “have the experience of our Saviour?”<sup>94</sup>>

“Have not we all?” she answered. <“Do not we live for forty days, often for as many years, in the wilderness, seeking bread and finding none? Have I not lived these many, many years trying to find bread in society, in literature, the literary trifling of a civilized life, in the charitable trifling of a benevolent life, in the selfish elegance of an artistic life? Have I not, in these deserts, these long, long weary years, tried to pick up food, and at last, craving and despairing of anything better have I not eaten that which was not bread—have longed for applause and sympathy for that which is not good—the vulgar distinction of social praise, the temporary forgetfulness of excitement?”

Christ was never satisfied with anything short of the highest. He resisted the temptation which presses so sore on weaker minds, of making stones into bread. Then comes the temptation to make the great leap—inconsiderately to disengage oneself thoroughly and entirely from this life of starvation. With some this temptation comes first, with others later, as St Luke has it. But in all, it comes from a religious impulse, as it was from a “pinnacle of the *Temple*”<sup>95</sup> that Christ

93 An allusion to the temptation of Jesus in Matt 4:8, which followed the forty days in the wilderness.

94 2:205: but in the third person and no quotations.

95 In Matt 4:5.

was tempted to throw himself down. And it is in “the city,” not of solitude, that such resolutions are generated, from the monotonous trifling of commonplace intercourse.<sup>96</sup>>

<Three times I have tried to take the great leap. Once, fourteen years ago, when I longed for a man’s education at college, and thought of disguising myself and going to Cambridge.<sup>97</sup>> <Once, seven years ago, when I endeavoured to enter a hospital to learn my profession there, in order afterwards to teach it in a better way.<sup>98</sup>> <And once when all other “trades” having failed, with all my hopes blighted and all my plans destroyed, I resolved to try marriage with a good man, who loved me but who would initiate me into the regular life of the world.”<sup>99</sup>>

“And why did you take one of these leaps, my child?” I said. “The first I myself had not courage for. The second you, of course, would not suffer—and I gave it up! <It cost me my life, if by life is meant all spirit, energy, vitality<sup>100</sup>>—the vocation was so strong in me. I had thought of it ever since I was six years old—I might have been the Howard<sup>101</sup> of hospitals, which I mention, not, I think, from any puerile vanity now but merely because I believe, in *that case*, <while the vocation would have been the angels’ wings to bear me up and I should not have dashed my foot against the stones.<sup>102</sup>> <Oh! if I had done it what a different creature I should have been.<sup>103</sup>> But you could not tell that. I do not blame.”

“Oh!” said I, “How I wish you had some sensible man to talk to you, whom you would listen to, who would convince you of the folly of these ideas. You talk of Howard. What good did Howard do? Did not

---

96 2:205-06: without quotations and with “we” instead of “I,” “ourselves” for “oneself.”

97 2:206: Women sometimes try to take the great leap . . . they long for and sometimes.

98 Nightingale described in a letter to Hilary Bonham Carter, 11 December 1845, her thwarted attempt to learn the practical aspects of nursing for a few months at Salisbury Hospital (Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 1:44). The wording in the printed text (2:206) is: They endeavour to enter institutions, to learn a charitable profession.

99 2:206: with “they” instead of “I.”

100 2:206: Disappointment often costs a woman her life.

101 John Howard (c1726-90), prison reformer.

102 An allusion to Ps 91:11-12, quoted in Matt 4:6; 2:206. Now slightly reworded and in the third person.

103 2:206: If parents would let their daughters. . . .

the prisons remain in the same state as they were for a century after all his efforts?" She made no answer to this and we walked a long time in silence by the side of a little stream, which ran over its rocky bed in the midst of the high, uncultivated, barren moorlands. At last we came to the rock where, leaping over a fall of three hundred feet, it fell with a tremendous noise into the boiling dark bottomless chasm below. But drifting on the air and sparkling in the sun were a thousand bright rainbows on the spray.

"Yes" she said, "how like the course of that little stream is to ours! The 'devil' shows us the glory of the 'kingdoms of the world.'<sup>104</sup> It comes sometimes in the shape of the vanity of colloquial or literary or social distinctions, of reigning by the intellect or by the word or by love—oftenest, to the woman, in that of power over a heart. It comes in the desert, is most seductive to those who live out of the common vanities of life and it comes, with overpowering force, upon those who have long wanted for bread and found nothing but stones. Christ resisted the vanitous devil, but how few do, when weary, faint and wounded, having prayed every day for their 'daily bread' and found none, they see how almost any reputation is to be made by cleverness and none by wisdom, and yield to the temptation!"

<In the evening we were at church, for it was Easter Day. "I like going to church at night, when it is lighted up," she said, "for the light reminds me<sup>105</sup>> of the times when they worshipped in catacombs and in dens and caves of the earth, they of whom the world was not worthy, as St Paul<sup>106</sup> says—I should say of whom the world was so wanting of a saviour. <It reminds me of the first churches in the third storey below the earth in the catacombs at Rome, where they renounced the beautiful life of the sun and the campagna and lived, a greater sacrifice than to die." . . . <sup>107</sup>>

The first of May, on Easter Monday, we were at a ball. Up and down the splendid marble staircase, brilliant with lights, the air heavy with the perfume of hothouse flowers, passed pale, sad fair figures, floating in light draperies and crowned with wreaths. The buz, the warm and loaded atmosphere, the music, the pomp of dress and luxury, the beautiful figures moving about contrasted strangely with the grave

104 In Matt 4:8.

105 2:207: Going to church at night, when it is lighted up reminds one. . . .

106 Heb 11:38.

107 The catacombs are extensively described in *European Travels* (7:215-17, 269-73); 2:207 in the third person.

melancholy countenances of the dancers. Here and there a girl, quite young, pleased with the light and flowers and motion, the atmosphere of riches or a vulgar matron triumphant in her success appeared to enjoy themselves really.

Fulgentia, white as the pearl which glistened in her dark hair, looked that night like Correggio's Magdalen<sup>108</sup>—as she stood for one moment at the door of the London palace the resemblance struck me particularly. Like that picture there was nothing but the dark background behind her, typifying the darkness of the past. She had gone through nothing but darkness—the sharp stones of the courtyard were in front, for there was nothing before her but a hard, stony, struggling life. The light was upon her face and she looked straight-forward, far out into the night as upon a distant point on which all her faculties were concentrated, all her thoughts were absorbed. The future was everything to her. She had no other thought or hope. I noticed the peculiar expression of her countenance as we stepped into the carriage and I asked her whether she did not like society. She pressed my arm and said:

<What has "society" done for us? What is the mission of society? of mankind? To civilize and educate us. How does it fulfill this mission?<sup>109</sup>> Did you see those "women on the street"? Those who have committed actual crime it takes possession of, and either makes away with or condemns to a place where they must lose all hope as well as all desire of reformation. <One would have thought that society, which had done so badly for them in their childhood, would now have wished to remodel them> and repair its error. <Not at all. That is not the question. To punish them is all that is wanted. They must go where the poisoner becomes corrupted and the forger loses all feeling, divine and human. They must be punished by being deprived of all lingering claims to being thought human creatures and our sisters. "From him that hath little shall be taken away even that which he hath."<sup>110</sup> But if indictable crime has *not* been committed, what does society do? What protection does she give those wretched women? What constraint does she put upon those men who make them what they are? Does she ever turn a shy look upon them? Not at all. On the

---

108 Allegros Antonio Correggio (1489?-1534), described in *European Travels* (7:482-83, 486); Nightingale's print of this painting she left to be divided with other prints between cousins Alice Bonham Carter and Elinor Dicey.

109 2:209: and not in dialogue form.

110 A paraphrase of Matt 13:12.

contrary. She throws open the doors wide to them, vicious as they are, and like the beggars whom she puts in prison, while she praises those who give to them (curious anomaly!). . . .<sup>111</sup>

The next morning they were all sitting in the drawing room, reading and working and visitors coming in and out. She had been doing her part with the latter and came into one of the large embrasures of the room where I was writing. The sun shone in through the lofty window, which was full of flowers, the large white azalea like a Grecian statue opening its rounded fair snowy petals to the sun, with its rich and yet delicate forms, like a beautiful antique, in calm, deep, yet not melancholy meditation, rejoicing like the sun of Homer, yet philosophical like all his heroes—the grand casts of antique happiness, of powerful, not frail, beauty, grave, imaginative, but not dreamy or sad, upright, not drooping, with open eye, not bent head. The crimson geranium, like the passionate Italian, with its warm colouring and crimson robe of divine love, like Titian's devout Virgin,<sup>112</sup> rapt in ecstasy, rapt in pure contemplation, in impassioned religious enthusiasm, and the "Venus's hair" fern, like the dreamy maiden of the north, hiding itself in damp and solitary crevices, hiding the seeds under its bosom, which are to fructify over the world, always incomplete and dissatisfied, never bringing all its seeds to perfection at once, showing no flower, with rolled-up germs of future leaves, yet graceful in its fragile beauty beyond all other daughters of the earth: the Mediterranean heath, like the pale ascetic, with its rigid leaves, and sharp points.

She was arranging all these plants for she had a love of art and of beautiful forms which I never saw surpassed. I spoke to her—I spoke first about the plants which she characterized in the way I have described, then about her morning's work, which was the epitome of half the mornings of her life.

"My past life?" she answered. "Oh! If we lived in a race which knew how to employ my power of work instead of frittering it and repressing it, how different it would be. But now, when it has a member with a great power of work it is disagreeably surprised, it does not know what to do with her, something extra and troublesome, which it had

111 2:209-10: with omissions as indicated; "women on the street" becomes "fallen women."

112 Titian (c1490-1576), possibly his Ancona Virgin, which Nightingale presumably saw when in Ancona in 1850 but did not describe; see *European Travels* (7:361); she left her reproduction of this painting to her cousin Margaret Thyra Barbara (Smith) Stephen.

rather were not there. The will is not intended to be frittered away in little decisions about every moment. It is meant. . . .

The youngest of my girls, Mary, has by far the richest nature of the whole family. She is always at the bottom of the ladder. In fact, it must be so for those natures which have the strongest affections, and they cannot bear not to please the others, not to be in the same key with the others, and therefore they follow where they ought to lead. . . .

Of my life I was thoroughly weary. The ennui of existing was too great for me. I who could have done everything—now I can do nothing. Well, be it so! If it is right that I should die to show the effects of this killing system, I am resigned, I am glad. . . . <I could not resign myself to lead the life I had seen my mother lead, I had seen every woman about me lead—of manufacturing parties, laying out the grounds, reading the newspapers, superintending children whom they could not influence, servants whom they could not manage, schools which they knew nothing about and seeing them all fail.<sup>113</sup>> (I knew I should do no better, but perhaps worse.) <And this unsustained by any real deep sympathy with the good man she had married. He was thinking of other things—he did not cause her to partake his ideas and plans—except indeed his desire to have such and such a person at the house, such and such a disposition of the furniture or the garden.<sup>114</sup>> I had no faith in myself that I could lead a better married life than this—though I really loved.

I hoped, I wished, I prayed for a better destiny—I could not give up this trust. Oh God! what despair I have since felt in having given up what I might have had, woman's natural strength and solace, and in attaining nothing else. <How I did labour for a profession. How I did struggle to open to women the paths of the school, the hospital, the penitentiary, the care of the young, the sick, the bad—not as an amusement, to fill up odd times, to fancy they have done something when they have done nothing, to make a sham of visiting—but<sup>115</sup>> as the Roman Catholic Church (whose name I hardly venture to pronounce in your presence), systematically, as a reality, an occupation, a “profession.”

And how much good does your R. Catholic Church do, I asked, with its systematic encouragement of beggars, its making the people dependent, its hideous demoralizing influence, in the giving away of

---

113 2:214: Many a woman cannot resign herself to leading the life she has seen every woman about her lead, of composing parties. . . .

114 2:214: in the third person and slightly reworded.

115 2:215: Such a woman longs to find a profession, and otherwise in the third person.

alms? "That is the harm it does, not the good," she answered. "I was afraid to bring up her name, because of all this harm. But I am convinced that the hold she has upon female minds, especially at this time, is from the vocations, the real work, which she opens to them. <What does our church do for us? As for me, I can say what has she ever done for me?> . . . <sup>116</sup>>

We broke up the conversation for she had to dress to go to a marriage, where she was bridesmaid. For description see Sir Charles Grandison.<sup>117</sup> "What a dangerous and hairbreadth speculation it is," said she to me as we drove back "to bring up children on the plan of doing a thing because 'you like it.' Because 'it pleases you.' What does it signify whether I like it? What *God likes* is the question, not what He likes by an arbitrary fancy as we often imagine, but what His laws, His eternal, immutable laws, the expressions of perfect Goodness and perfect Wisdom, are for or against." . . . <sup>118</sup>

<Let then the question be not what Mr A. or Mrs B. or Mary think but what God thinks, God's laws.<sup>119</sup>> Those are first cousins who were married today—relations intermarry or persons with scrofula or insanity in their families. <In the whole family, which is a very large one, the question perpetually arose: "Does Elizabeth like it?" "I don't think Selena does like it. John, I am sure, does. He has quite got over all his prejudices against it." "And she was always inclined to it." I am sure the question never once presented itself to the minds of either bridegroom or bride or any of those in authority over them, does God like it? Is there a law of His or is there not a law which favours or discountenances marriage between blood relations? or between persons with hereditary disease in the family?<sup>120</sup>> and how do you know there is not?

I know nothing at all about it. I am not saying that there is not. I only know that the question never arose for an instant before their minds. I think if the case had been in my family, I should have investigated physiological laws, consulted statistics and made out what I could." . . .

In looking over her old letters, I find a few more relating to this time of her life. I was amused with some of her speculations, inter-

116 2:215: For such women, what does the Church of England do?

117 Title of a novel by Samuel Richardson.

118 This is a major theme in Nightingale's theological essays, both published and unpublished; see *Society and Politics* (especially 5:41-48 and on cousins 5:658).

119 2:217: without "Mary."

120 2:217: in the third person and with initials instead of names.



ested in others, but merely as speculations. To endeavour to carry out such things into shape and form in actual life is simply absurd. The world must wag on as it pleases, and the thing we have to do is to make the best of it. The vehemence with which she urged some of her opinions sometimes annoyed me, but I never had the least idea that she would step out of her position, forsake her duties and do what she did. Her sister, who married and married very well and satisfactorily, as I have said, partook some of her strange notions, and, I always thought, supported her in them, though marriage had considerably modified her, as it always does, and taught her to recognize the wisdom of many conventionalities which she had formerly rebelled against. I was proud of both of them, though they frightened me when I was anxious and made me laugh when I was merry.

But here is a letter which I found among Fulgentia's, from her married sister, relating to her five children. I hope *they* did not see it. "Honour thy father and thy mother." But we honour that which is *honourable*. . . .

Portia and Fulgentia were driving together in Hyde Park. "Well," said Fulgentia, "what did my father say?" Portia showed her his letters. "And is he not right," said Fulgentia, "do we not owe our parents duty?" "And how are you to show duty to your parents, my dear child? By destroying yourself. They say they want you to stay at home to take care of them. Why, the whole thing is a falsity! They don't want you to stay to take care of them, they don't want you to stay for their sakes, but for your own sake, for fear the world should think evil of you. That is the first falsity. And you can't benefit them by cramping yourself, any more than a slave can benefit his master. That is the second falsity. An injury to any one person is an injury to all the world. Oh! that parents should fancy that they can be benefited or that anybody else can be, just by the cramping of the daughters!"

<"But ought not parents to have the services of their children, in return for all they have done for them during their childhood?"<sup>121</sup>> "My dear child, <the parents don't want the services of the daughter. But they are obliged to pretend to do so, for fear of something unfavourable being said of her by the world, out of kindness to *her* therefore and for *her* sake. I really think the parents as much to be pitied as the daughters."<sup>122</sup>>

---

121 2:231: the sentence in quotations is the heading and there is no dialogue.

122 2:232: without the dialogue.

"But our time and our faculties at least we have." <"My dear, daughters can do nothing but what their parents approve. They may, it is true, play at one hour and draw at another, as they choose. But they must come down to the company which the parents have invited. They cannot make even their drawing a pursuit, for fear of appearing singular, of not performing what are called the 'social duties.' " "But we can marry, if we like it." "Well, about the marrying? You can only have a choice among those people whom your parents like and who like your parents well enough to come to their house and among those few, if one suits you, well"—if not, not so well.<sup>123</sup>>

<"Christ did not marry,"> and there comes the confusion about His being half God and half man. <We profess, but it is only a profession, to take Him for an example.> But, however that may be, the young woman is preached to all her life to take Him for her pattern. Now He was so devoted to God and mankind that he appears not to have wished for marriage. And then she is told, "Oh! you would be like Christ, would you?" <"I cannot be like Christ, I am sure," said Fulgentia with a deep sigh, "I have not his objects to fill my soul."<sup>124</sup>>

<"There are two alternatives, either of which might be a happy one—a good marriage or this devotion to God and mankind. But, we say, she shall not be devoted to God and mankind. She shall be devoted to doing what her parents do."<sup>125</sup>> . . .

My dear mother had a sort of pride in our being literary ladies, in my having five books lying upon the breakfast table at once and quoting from a heap of authors. She used to say with a sort of half pride, half regret, that there was not more done, "You know they are literary ladies." "And do you know, Portia, I was such a fool that I thought it was something peculiar in me and that I ought to break up my mind too, in order to enjoy it and take part in it?"

"You ask me why it is a confusing life. You cannot bring forward an opinion without exciting a storm of words. You have made up your minds to live always in this whirlwind. What can be so confusing?" <"You say you pity the mother quite as much as you do the daughters." Why?"<sup>126</sup>>

---

123 2:232: without the dialogue.

124 2:232: but "we" instead of "I" and no Fulgentia.

125 2:232: except not in quotations.

126 2:239: Why are mothers like the Church of England? Why are mothers so much to be pitied?

"I do. The impossible is demanded from a mother. She is expected to undertake all—to sympathize with and understand all her children among whom is the most dissimilar character—the most unlike her own. Yet by our method of imprisoning in families she is to supply all these different kinds of characters and wants, with sympathy, instruction and help. It is like having no division of labour. <The end is a mother does nothing well, only interferes with everything, looks for the faults in those she deposes, and painfully feels, if she sees the faults, that she knows not how to prevent them." . . . <sup>127</sup>>

<"Dear Fulgentia, you say that you have no sympathy. In thinking over life, as it is now, practically it seemed to me very desirable to understand, to feel truly as to our *possibility* of sympathizing with each other. Sympathy must and ought to be a want to man where the essential nature of mankind is to be one.> Where mankind is, as I should call him, *the Son*, <we should not wish *not* to feel the want of it, if without it the evil is that people throw themselves into the outward, so that they do *not* feel the want of it.<sup>128</sup>>

I see how very few people for instance *can* sympathize with each other in any pursuit or thought of any importance. I am sure that you wished for my sympathy in your music, in your politics, you used to try to incense me. But if there have not been the means to learn, if one knows nothing on a subject to pretend or try to sympathize is more balking than giving it up. If people do not give you thought for thought, receive yours, digest it and give it back with the impression of their own character upon it, then give you one for you to do likewise, it is best to know what one is about, and not to attempt more than kindly, cheerful, outward intercourse, or occasionally each giving *information* to the other which the other has some pleasure in receiving, though not able to make much of it.

Thus I like to hear what you tell me, though I don't understand half, and my father likes to hear my opinions and this is all well as far as it goes, but it is better not to fancy it can be more. Poor little Mary is so sympathizing she likes to think she does understand when she does not, sometimes, because she has such keen sympathy and want of sympathy.

<To think of the sympathy we don't have, as merely *absence* of sympathy, not fault in others (who often would gladly sympathize if they could), nor fault in ourselves (who also gladly would if we could)

---

127 2:157: reworded substantially and in the third person.

128 2:236: reworded slightly and material omitted as indicated.

this,> I am sure, helps us. <Solitary confinement? should you be afraid of it? It *is* solitary confinement—what are we all in but solitary confinement? To be alone is nothing—to be without a sympathy in a crowd, that is to be confined in solitude.<sup>129</sup>>

<I believe that some of the most painful suffering in women of our class arises from not understanding that sympathy cannot be *willed*, cannot be given at will nor attraction felt at will. The want of sympathy is painful enough, without the aggravation of blame to oneself or others. Some find amusement in the outward [and] do not suffer inwardly because the attention is turned upon the outward. When this is not the case, and there is this want of sympathy, of attraction given and returned—must it not be a feeling of starvation? Sympathy, being one of the essentials of the human spirit, must the human spirit be famishing without it, as the human body is without food?

I believe not. <I cannot say that I never have felt what I can call happiness, without attraction or sympathy. I have felt it in certain exercises of the nature, where God has had a part.<sup>130</sup>> If it is really true, I would not shut my eyes to the fact, if it be really true, that there is no alternative but to suffer, for those who are not outward, or who have not sympathy and attraction.” . . .

“But, Father,” Portia said to me one day, “I brought them into the world without their consent. The law gives them nothing. God gives them their time and faculties. May they not have these? And, if the life which their parents and the other members of their family lead does not interest them, does not employ those faculties and employ satisfactorily that time, may they not use them elsewhere than at home, or would they be wrong if they sought to earn their own livelihood by them? It does seem unjust that, whereas, if they were to marry, I might give them £30,000, that they are not to have a farthing (*because* they don’t see anybody who tempts them to marry) till I their father die.

<The age of a man is threescore years and ten. He may live to it, maybe eighty. The days of our years are threescore years and ten and if, by reason of strength, they be fourscore years or even fourscore and ten, the daughters may be fifty or sixty years of age when he dies.<sup>131</sup>> Our daughters were all born while we were between the ages of twenty and thirty. <And is it not hard, because the customs of conventional

---

129 2:236: slightly reworded, “you” changed to “we.”

130 2:237: reworded without “I.”

131 2:278: slightly reworded.

society forbid their earning their bread with their own faculties and time, without losing their class, and because they may not see anybody whom they like well enough to marry to earn their bread by marriage that therefore they should have nothing, no kind of independence till their parents' death?<sup>132</sup>> You gave me a thousand a year when I married—you give Fulgentia nothing, is this not a premium upon thoughtless marriage?"

"My dear," I said, "don't flatter yourself <that marriage gives people independence.> You must know that yourself. I might give you a *hundred* thousands at your marriage, but the law gives it to your husband. You will not have half a crown of it. <A married woman does not exist in the eyes of the law—she cannot sue or be sued—her husband gives her a cheque when he thinks right—or rather not when he thinks right—he *never* thinks it right, but when she bothers him.<sup>133</sup>> You must know these things very well. Does your husband, or does he not, whenever you bring him one of your housekeeping bills, say "That seems a good deal, does it not?" or "How can you use so many cabs? I can't think," although he may say at the end of the year, "Well, Kate, we don't seem to have spent much in housekeeping this year, I wish you would spend more upon yourself." Does he or does he not, every time you come upon him for £100, say, "Why, it is only last week I gave you fifty?"

"Dear Father, I know all that. But I ask you, <has a married woman more or less the command of money than a 'daughter at home'?> Have I more or less to spend than Fulgentia? <The law may be against us, but still married women *have* very much of the disposal of their husbands' incomes, and daughters have not, of course, of their fathers' during their mothers' lifetime." "Well then let Fulgentia go and earn her own bread if she will, self-willed girl! I shall not prevent her. But she may depend upon it, I shall leave her nothing."

"No I am not prepared to say that she *ought* not to give up her share of what you will distribute among your children, when you no longer want it yourself, viz., at my death?<sup>134</sup>>

Yes, if you believe her wrong, you will probably think it right not to leave her anything. But, if it is *not* wrong, that will not be fair and I, for one, should not think her justified in being *willing* to give up her

---

132 2:278: slightly reworded, "caste" becomes "class," omitted material indicated.

133 2:278: reworded to remove "I" and "you."

134 2:279: reworded, personal material omitted.

share. Nor would you, I am sure. <Therefore should not parents ask themselves, “Are the following facts true or untrue? We have adopted the mode of life which suits ourselves, before our daughters exist[ed], or before they are [were] capable of having a preference one way or another. Perhaps this mode of life gives no interest to them, or perhaps all but one would choose it by preference, that one only cannot. Are we to alter our mode of life to suit that one or any one of our children? Certainly not. Are any or all of my daughters to be condemned to my mode of life which may exercise none of their faculties and to be entirely dependent as long as we live, which may be till they are fifty or sixty years of age? It seems to me that whatever I intended to give my daughters if they married, I would give them when they come of age—deducting from it the cost of their maintenance at home, *if* they choose to remain at home?”

“You will find it very inconvenient, my dear, I can tell you, to pay that ready money from the common stock to a parcel of foolish girls coming to the age of reason or of unreason.” . . . <sup>135</sup>>

I was in despair. I had taken Columba to stay at her sister’s house, hoping that she would have more influence with her than I had, and would prevent this mad scheme of becoming a Catholic. And now they held long disquisitions together upon the comparative merits of the Roman Catholic and Moravian<sup>136</sup> systems—and went into the minutiae of the religious orders—I entreated Portia to take the matter seriously. Columba was a person who pursued everything to extremities—and I begged her to do her best to keep the girl in the church in which she was born. . . .

<I pointed out to her the absurdity of the Roman Catholic claim to unity and infallibility—the difficulties which beset *all* churches, but her most of all. “I believe,” she said, “as much as the Roman Catholics that there will be unity and infallibility. I don’t see how the preachers of toleration of the present-day can say, ‘take the religion which suits you best’ any more than they can say “it *may* suit your mind better to believe that the sun moves round the earth—if so, take the belief which you find best for you’?”

There may be a mind which, from want of imagination, want of cultivation, cannot be made to apprehend that the earth is not an

135 2:279: reworded, personal material omitted; “It would be inconvenient to pay ready. . . .”

136 The Moravian Brethren, a Protestant group of German origin, had a simple, unworldly form of Christianity; a London branch influenced John Wesley.

immoveable body but one flying through space and, it is true therefore to say, “there are minds which must believe that the earth is stationary *till* they are more cultivated.”<sup>137</sup> . . .

I could not help recurring here to the idea ever present to my mind, and I begged Portia since she was so far removed from Roman Catholicism herself, to exert her influence to keep Columba out of it or at least *not* to exert her influence to urge her into it.

“I may be very clever,” she answered, half laughing, “but if a person has no stability in their belief beyond my *not* exerting my influence, I do not see what is to be done—I cannot fancy, I mean, your belief depending upon a person. And as to my dear Columba, you may keep your body in one room or another, but how can you keep your heart in one church or another? How can you keep it from following your convictions? You say, dear Father, that it is your happiness and her duty to stay in the Church of England? How can it be your happiness and her duty that she should stay where her convictions no longer are? Would you say of a man who, having heard and thought and read (especially the Bible) and prayed and found that his convictions were in another church, that it was his duty to stay where he was? I do not quite understand the line you wish me to take—do you wish me to use the arguments (which have convinced myself) with her? or do you wish me to use persuasion that it is her duty not to distress her friends?” “I wish you to use both argument and persuasion.” . . .

The last letter I can find of Portia’s to my poor Columba is this—it is dated 28th March 1853. . . .

There appears to me a doubt in theory and in practice—a fear of losing weight in bringing forward other opinions through having been believed to have adopted those of the Roman Catholic Church, even if afterwards leaving her. These, as I have said, are but queries. I shall believe in your inward truth, whatever course you take, Columba.” It was too late. On Lady Day<sup>138</sup> my poor Columba had already joined the Roman Catholic Church.

**Editor:** In this second set of excerpts the characters are now Nofariari and her brother Fariseo. The narrator seems to be Nofariari, until we learn that she is dead and the story is being told by her brother to

---

137 2:293: reworded into the third person.

138 Lady Day 1853, 25 March, was also Good Friday and the day of the death of Nightingale’s grandmother, Mary Shore.

remember her. Nofariari only at the end of her life takes the name “Cassandra.” What relationship this material has with the preceding is not at all clear in the available material. It does however closely resemble and was presumably was a draft of the “Cassandra” essay at the end of volume 2 of *Suggestions for Thought*. The overlapping sections are indicated < > in the text and footnoted, with variations of wording.

The handwritten draft and the printed version begin identically with the call of John the Baptist. But while in the gospel his voice is “crying in the wilderness” here it is a voice “crying in the crowd,” Nightingale’s social world, and heard even less. The printed and manuscript drafts then promptly diverge. They come together again at the end.

Source: Excerpts from a draft for “Cassandra,” ADD Mss 45839 ff236-72

<The voice of one crying in the *crowd*, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”<sup>139</sup>>

The night was mild and dark and cloudy. Nofariari was walking to and fro before the beautiful façade of a Palladian palace. All was still. Not one light through the windows betrayed the existence of any life stirring within. “I, I alone am wandering in the bitterness of life without,” she said. (She went down where, on the glassy dark pond, the long shadows of the girdle of pines whose tops seemed to touch heaven were lying. The swans were sleeping on their little island. Even the Muscovy ducks were not yet awake. But she had suffered so much that she had outlived even the desire to die.

“All must be gone through,” she said, “why not this side the grave as well as the other?” . . . She resumed her walk on the terrace by the struggling light of the moon, which at this moment shone out from between the clouds. The sharp cornice of the Venetian palace building stood out against it in the clear pale blue of the morning dawn. “Would,” she said, “that I could replunge myself in the happy unconscious sleep of all my race! They slumber in one another’s arms. They are not yet awake. To them evil and suffering are not, for they are not conscious of it, while I alone, awake and prematurely alive to it, must wander out in silence and solitude. I have risen up too soon. I have awakened too early. I have rejected the companionship of my race. I am unmarried to any human being. I see the evil

---

139 “Cassandra” 2:374; a paraphrase of Isa 40:3, quoted in Matt 3:3.



they do not see yet I have no power to discover the remedy for it. Would that I were back again warm and innocent, in sleeping ignorance, but not alone!"

She re-entered the palace and reached her balcony where, throwing herself down on its cold pavement, and resting her arm upon the stone balustrade and her long hair of the golden tint, which the Venetian painter delighted to honour, bound with radiant gems which sparkled in the moonlight, fell upon her bare arm, but hardly for a moment could her energetic nature requiesce in this humiliated despairing posture. She started up like the dying lioness who fronts her hunters and, standing at bay as it were, she bared her forehead to the night breeze and, stretching out her arms she cried, "God, to Thee alone can I say all. God, hear me. Why didst Thou create us with passion, intellect, moral activity, these three, and place us in a state of society where no one of the three can be exercised? God, to none else can I make my complaint without being rebuked for complaining, scourged for suffering! There are men who say that Thou too dost punish us for complaining. I do not believe it. Men are angry with misery." . . .

And, moved by the spell of the enchantress, there appeared the phantoms, the larvae of the most beautiful race of the world, the maidens of the ranks whose white hands have never been made hard by toil. Graceful and lovely, pure and ethereal, they floated by and their thoughts and fancies took shape and form at the word of the magician. With each maiden there was a phantom one! There were two, three, twenties, hundreds ever varying, ever changing, but *never* was she *alone* with the phantom. . . . Tell your thoughts for once, maidens, while one is singing that divine music. . . .

"Alas!" alas, cried poor Nofariari, "how I have struggled against it as a snare! How I have martyred myself, put myself to the torture! <No Trappist ascetic has done so wretched a fast, more in the body than I have done in the soul! Oh! How well I can understand the discipline of the Thebaïd,<sup>140</sup> the lifelong agonies which those strong moral Mohicans put themselves through! How cordially I could do the same if I believed in their effect in order to escape the worse torture of sin. But I know that the laws of God for moral well-being are not to be obeyed thus. How I have fasted mentally, scourged myself morally, used the intellectual hair shirt in order to subdue that perpet-

---

140 The early Christian monastic centre in Upper Egypt.

ual daydreaming which I knew was so dangerous! I have resolved this day month I will be free from it! Twice a day with prayer and written record of the times which I have indulged in it, I have endeavoured to combat it. Never, never, with the slightest success.<sup>141</sup> Then I thought, “through vanity it comes—through vanity it must be conquered.” And I selected a person to whom to make my confession, the confession of my whole life of dreaming. I remember the day. It was like a day of crucifixion to me. It was like death. As each confession came out I feared I should not have strength to make the next confession, to drive the next nail. But I did. I went through the whole. And when it came to piercing the side, I did it too. For a fortnight it delivered me. Then all was as bad as ever.

By mortifying vanity I had done myself no good. I did not see that it was the want of interest in my life which produced it, that, by filling up that want of interest in my life I could alone remedy it. And had I ever seen this, how could I make the difference? How could I obtain the interest which society declared *she* did not want and *I* could not want? . . .

Again she threw herself down in the extremity of her suffering. It seemed a little thing to awaken such anguish. It was the ferment of a life of inaction and solitude. Again she raised herself up and looked abroad. The moon was shining brightly. A heavy shower of rain, which had just fallen (upon her all unconscious head), had moistened the pavement of the noble terrace. The moon was reflected from the moisture below—doubling the light above her head—and beneath her feet there was a flood of radiance. The swollen river at the bottom of the valley rushed and roared from afar. The distant circle of mountains gave liberty to the thought which is fettered by a circumscribed horizon. She fixed her eyes upon the splendid moonlit expanse beneath her, when suddenly there came that darkening of the world, which we have all observed on a night when fleecy clouds veil unexpectedly the face of the moon, and which is like the wings of the Almighty—overshadowing suddenly the world, as in that inspired representation of Him in Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel. She felt the overshadowing wings above her, which had darkened her lower world and she said, <“Is it Thou, Lord?” And He said, “It is I” and her heart was still.

---

141 “Cassandra,” except “we” substituted for “I.” The more personal material following is omitted in the printed text.

Yet I would spare no pang.  
Would wist no torture less.  
The more that anguish racks  
The earlier it will bless.<sup>142</sup>

Nofariari and Fariseo sat talking together in the shadow of the cypress tree by the side of a fountain which shot up its single solitary spire toward heaven. The heat was intense. They had agreed to spend there together the hours when every man is idle. Little fountains played all around them in the beautiful Italian garden. The white blossoms and shining greens of the orange trees glistened among the cypresses. "But why, my sister," said Fariseo, "have you quarrelled with the world? Enjoy it as I do and do not complain of it." Nofariari was speechless. What could she say? A crowd of thoughts rushed into her mind at this moment. "Oh! give me, give me back my suffering," she cried to heaven in her heart, "suffering rather than indifferentism! For out of nothing comes nothing. But out of suffering may come the cure. Better pain than paralysis! a hundred struggles and drown in the breakers. One discovers the new world. But rather ten times rather die in the surf heralding the way to that new world than stand idly on the other shore!"

Fariseo scarcely remarked her silence. "You have everything to make a woman happy," he said, "why are you so cast down?" "I cannot answer the question, it is too long a one. Passion, intellect, moral activity—these three have never been satisfied in me. In this cold and oppressive conventional atmosphere they cannot be. To go farther would be to enter into the whole history of society, of the present state of civilization." "But let us do so. We have nothing else to do this hot noon," said Fariseo. "Only be as short as you can."

This morning Nofariari was so discouraged she did not wish even for the power of expression. <"Look, brother," she said. "At that lizard." "It is not hot," he says. "I like it. The atmosphere which enervates you is life to me. The state of society which I complain of makes you happy. Why should I complain to you? You do not suffer. You would not understand it any more than that lizard would comprehend the sufferings of a Shetland sheep."<sup>143</sup> "Never mind," said Fariseo, "try and I will do my best."

---

142 In "Cassandra" 2:378, source unidentified.

143 "Cassandra" 2:378-79, except that "they" replaces "I" and there is no mention of Fariseo.

It was not pride, unless pride is the fear of not finding sympathy. It was the reluctance of wounded feeling which kept Nofariari silent. "Speak," said Fariseo, "I am ready. With all the gifts which heaven has bestowed on your ingratitude, I cannot understand your suffering. I want to understand it."

"Must I enter into all the history of my life?" said Nofariari. "*Cui bono?*" [*to what good?*] I do not quarrel with you, as you often accuse me of doing. The progressive world is necessarily divided into two classes, those who take the best of what there is and enjoy it [and] those who wish for something better and try to create it. . . .

Nofariari sat alone, in her pale cold arid life. She sat looking at the falling snow, which came down silently, silently, ever slowly and silently falling, till it had covered up all her spring flowers, all her evergreens. And there was nothing but one dreary expanse of untrodden white. The air was full of snow and fog, so that a few yards off even that white sheet was lost in a wall of dirty mist. She thought of the consolations which she had so lately received—the advice to "come to a compromise with society," to "let society have its share and take the other herself," not "to quarrel with the world," to "take things as they were," etc. And she felt that it was like telling the bush "not to quarrel" with the heavy load which overpowered it and crushed it down, that it was like telling the snowdrop to "make a compromise" with the superincumbent weight.

"My life is like that snow-oppressed landscape," she said. "There is nothing to be seen but snow and mist on all sides. They say God intended it. Did God intend that waste of snow to press down all life and green spring beneath it? Yes, I suppose He did, but only for a time. 'You must look at life cheerfully,' they say. Say to a wretch writhing on his bed in horrible spasms, 'God intended it, you must take life cheerfully.'"

"Well, but you are at ease now," they say, "Such and such a grievance is not here." <"I like riding about this beautiful place, why don't you? I like walking about the garden, why don't you?" is the common comfort. As if I were a child, whose spirits rise during a fortnight's holidays, who think that they will last forever and who look neither backwards nor forwards.<sup>144</sup>>

"Oh! pale and cold existence of a broken heart!" I heard her saying. "And why art thou broken?" I asked, "thou that hast everything

---

144 "Cassandra" 2:386, except that "garden" becomes "beautiful place" and "I" is replaced by "we," "child" by "children."

that earth can give?" "I everything!" she said, "I who have now nothing I can desire and nothing I can rejoice in on this earth." "How can that be?" I said. "Do you wish to know? Listen and you will see. Society has triumphed over me. The wish to regenerate the world with my institutions, with my moral philosophy, with my love—now I am satisfied to live from breakfast till dinner, from dinner till tea, with a little worsted work, and to look forward to nothing but my bed."

Oh! when shall I see a life full of steady enthusiasm, walking straight to its aim, flying home as that bird is now, against the wind—with the calmness and the confidence of one who knows the laws of God and can apply them? When shall I see it? <And what *do* I see? I see great and fine organizations deteriorating. I see girls and boys of seventeen before whose noble ambitions, heroic dreams and rich endowments I bow my head, as before *God incarnate in the flesh*. But before they are thirty they are withered, paralyzed, extinguished. "Oh! I have forgotten all my visions," they say themselves. . . .<sup>145</sup>>

Oh love! Oh intellect! Oh activity! ye sun and moon and stars of human existence! Are ye all departed from my sky? . . . For seven years I lived in the light of the moon. She was pale, it is true. The clear, brilliant sharp radiance of intellect's moonlight rising upon the expanse of snow was dreary. But I loved its solemn desolation, its silence, its solitude—if I had been *allowed* to live in it, if I had not perpetually been balked and disappointed. <But a woman cannot live in the light of intellect. Society forbids it. Those conventional frivolities which are called her "duties" forbid it. . . .<sup>146</sup>>

I lived seven years by the wan lights of conventional society, striving to see the moonlight of intellect. She does not warm—she is cold and dreary, with sharp harsh lights and blackest shadows, but oh! she is fair and brilliant compared with the glare of the candles. At the end of that time I gave up the point, or rather the point gave up me. And I began to dream of other lights. . . .

Well, I dreamed an education (it was but a dream) to teach me *to teach*, to teach me the laws of the human mind and how to apply them, and knowing how imperfect in the present state of the world such an education must be. I dreamed of experience, not patchwork experience, but experience followed up and systematized to enable me to

---

145 "Cassandra" 2:387, with "we" replacing "I."

146 "Cassandra" 2:388, again without the personal material before and after.

know what I was about and *where* I was casting my bread<sup>147</sup> and whether it was “*bread*” that I was casting or a stone. But vain, vain were all my dreams, bitter my disappointments, heartsickening my struggle. . . .

Thus I lived for [an]other seven years—dreaming, always—never accomplishing. Thus women live—too much ashamed of my dreams, which I thought were “romantic” to tell them when I knew that they would be laughed at, if not considered wrong. So I lived till my heart was broken. I am now an old woman at thirty.<sup>148</sup>

I do not say that, with greater strength of purpose, I *could* not have accomplished something. If I had been a hero I should not need to tell my story, for then all the world would have read it in the mission I should have fulfilled. It is because I am a commonplace everyday character that I tell my tale, because it is the sample of hundreds of lives (or rather deaths) of persons who cannot fight with society, or who, unsupported by the sympathies about them, give up their own destiny as not worth the fierce and continued struggle necessary to accomplish it. *One* struggle they *could* make and be free (and in the Church of Rome many, many, many unallured by any other motive, make this one struggle and enter a convent). But the perpetual series of petty spars with doubts and discouragements between and doubts as to whether you are right—these wear out the very life necessary to make them.

So I lived then for seven years and at the end of that time I was dead. My pole star was still in the sky for it could not set. But my eyes were too dim to see it. I lost my way and perished. . . . During all these fourteen years, I had been waiting for my sun to rise, the sun of a perfect human sympathy—the sun of passion, as it is called, but consciously looking out for it, our pride and our ignorance are alike too great for that—but unconsciously shadowing it in idea. . . .

I felt that I must choose either to hold myself ready to sacrifice, if called upon, feelings, religion, social, political (but when these were all gone, there would not be that much of me left) or I must sacrifice love and marriage. I preferred the latter. And now I have lost all—the prize and the penalty, the crown I ran for and the wayside happiness I despised. And I am dead.

---

147 An allusion to Eccl 11:1.

148 The two periods of seven years each cover Nightingale's life from 1836 (her conversion and soon after that her call to service) to 1850, when she turned thirty. That birthday occurred on the Nile trip, when she noted that Christ had begun his public ministry by that age.

I dared presumptuously to measure my strength and it has been found wanting. I have fallen so low that I now regret even the conventional importance of marriage. The glory has departed. The life is gone out of me. I now only recognize my existence but by suffering. Otherwise I should believe that I was dead. I cannot even remember the motives which caused me to overstep the easy landing place of marriage. I have lost even the memory of my former self.

Once only did I recover the sentiment of my vocation, the recollection of former springs of action. Those dreams of a human sympathy had pursued me day and night, tortured and driven me to within a hair's breadth of losing all consciousness of actual existence.

I now think that I should have done better to satisfy them at any price, but it was now too late. Then all was lost, I was called for three months (it was the only romantic incident of my life) to see and nurse sickness and crime and poverty in masses, the practical reality of life revived me.<sup>149</sup> I was exhausted like a man who has lived on opium or on novels all his life, exhausted with feelings which lead to no action. Then I came into contact with a continuous line of action, with a full and interesting life, with training constantly kept up to the occupation, occupation constantly testing the training. It is the beau ideal of practical, not theoretical, education. I was retempered, my destiny accomplished: my life is filled, my intellect and acting satisfied. I had found my work and the means to do it.

I remember, when I was young, I used often to think that an actress's life might be a very happy one, not for the sake of the admiration, not for the sake of the fame—I did not think of that—but because in the morning she studies, in the evening she embodies those studies. She has the means of testing them by practice, of correcting them by incarnation and of resuming her studies in the morning to improve the weak parts, remedy the failures and in the evening try the corrections again. In this way, I thought, there was no end to the progress which might be made.

"But why, why," said I at last, "can't you be satisfied with this life, which so many love and enjoy? I never wanted five minutes' solitude, I never wanted a profession, why do you?" (A pause) "and I, to stop this little breath and with it all this load of misery, how often have I been tempted to do it?"

---

149 Presumably a reference to her three months at Kaiserswerth in 1851, in *European Travels*.

"And why don't you? What has held you back?" Many are only deterred from suicide because it is more than anything else saying to God, "I will not, I will not do as Thou wouldst have me," and because it is "no use." "Well, but tell me, tell me the cause of this misery. I can't understand it. You have told me a great deal, and yet I can only say, Is that all?"

To have no food for my head, no food for my heart, no food for my activity. And you call that not enough? Oh! <If we have no food for the body how we do cry out, how all the world hears of it, how all the newspapers talk of it with a paragraph headed in great capital letters, DEATH FROM STARVATION! But suppose I were to put a paragraph in the *Times*, *Death of the Head from Starvation* or *Death of Moral Activity from Starvation*, how people would stare, how they would laugh and wonder!<sup>150</sup>>. . . .

"But cannot you do anything with anybody in the room? If not, the best advice I can give you is to leave as soon as possible. Schoolboys do." "But in social and domestic life everybody reads aloud, not out of their own book or newspaper. One is bound, under pain of being thought sulky, to make a remark and speak every two minutes." "Yes, to be sure, one might as well be alone if one is to sit mute."

"You see, you are on the side of society. You blow hot and cold. You say, 'why can't you employ yourself in society?' and then, 'why don't you talk in society?' I can pursue a connected conversation or I can be silent, but to drop a remark, as it is called, every two minutes, how wearisome it is! It is impossible to pursue the current of one's own thoughts, because one must keep oneself ever on the alert 'to say something,' and it is impossible to say what one is thinking, because the essence of a remark is not to be a thought but an impression. With what labour I have laboured to break down all individual and independent life in order to fit myself for this social and domestic existence, thinking it right, had now that I have killed myself to do it. I have awakened (too late) to think it wrong. <For now I could not make use of leisure and solitude if I had it! Like the Chinese woman who could not make use of her feet if she were brought into European life.<sup>151</sup>>

<I was born with an attention like a battering ram, which, slowly brought to bear, could work upon a subject for any length of time. I could work ten hours just as well as two upon the same thing. But this

150 "Cassandra" 2:394, slightly paraphrased and the "I" replaced by "we."

151 "Cassandra" 2:395, except "women could not make use. . . ."



age is like the musket, which you can load so fast that nothing but its taking fire puts any limit to the number and frequency of times of firing, and at as many different objects as you please.<sup>152</sup>>

Now I cannot use my battering ram. My attention, like society's, goes off in a thousand different directions. I am an hour before I can fix it and by the time it is fixed the leisure is gone. I am become incapable of consecutive or strenuous work. . . . Oh! Call me no more Nofariari, call me Cassandra. For I have preached and prophesied in vain. I have gone about crying all these many years, Woe to the people! and no one has listened or believed. And now I cry, Woe to myself! for upon me the destruction has come."

Oh world! Oh life! Oh time!

On whose last steps I climb

Trembling at that where I had stood before.

When will return the glory of your prime?

No more. Oh never more!<sup>153</sup>

"Yes," she said to me one day, "I feel that my youth is gone. I used to laugh at the poets' sunny description of youth and say that *I* had never felt anything like that. But now I see the great difference between youth and middle age. Before I suffered but I always thought that I *should* carry out my schemes. I lived but for that. I lived upon desire, upon the dream of my hopes fulfilled. Now I see that I never shall fulfill them. I have lost the vigour to hope, the zest to desire, the sap to dream. I have come even to regret the enjoyments which I thought unworthy of me to pick up as I went by. . . .

And I who dreamed of institutions to show women their work and to train them how to do it, to give them an object and to incline their wills to follow it. I, in whom thought of this kind put aside the thought of marriage, who sacrificed my individual future for great hopes, glimpses of great general future, I have fallen so low that I can look back with a sigh even after the conventional dignity of a married woman, the vulgar incident of the pomp and circumstance of marriage and say with a sigh, "Such might have been mine, if I had chosen." Yes, I thought that I could despise passion. I thought.

<The intercourse of man and woman, how frivolous, how unworthy it is! Can you call *that* the true vocation of woman, her high career?<sup>154</sup>>

---

152 "Cassandra" 2:395, paraphrased, "I" replaced by "some."

153 The first stanza of Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Lament."

154 "Cassandra" 2:397, except that "we" replaces "you."

**Editor:** The printed text of “Cassandra” from here on is closer to the draft we have been following, pursuing the themes of the limits of family life and marriage for women and the hypothesis of the female Christ. The one exception is Fariseo’s explanation of the story, immediately below. The reader of the printed *Suggestions for Thought* might reasonably be surprised when the narrator dies so suddenly. It is only with a page to go that one learns that the woman is in fact dying, speaking her last words to her “mourners” (2:410). In the handwritten version the last words are Nofariari’s to her brother and he gives them context.

Before I go on, I had better tell who “I” am. My name is Fariseo. I am one of those who are called the cynics of the age, who openly confess their own selfishness, admit the want of the times, and preach that we should bear with those making this confession, not with sorrow of heart nor well-trained resignation, but without shame and without difficulty as, on the whole, the best state of mind. I am the brother of poor Nofariari and I tell her story as she told it me, one day when I blamed her for not finding her happiness in life as I and her co-temporaries have done, and she answered that I did not know whether her life had been such that she could either find happiness in it or alter it. I made some few notes of our conversation, for it occurred a short time only before her death. My poor sister! She died at thirty, wearied of life, in which she could do nothing, and having ceased to live the intellectual life long before she was deserted by the physical life. I saw her on her deathbed and, giving way to the tears and exclamations natural on such occasions, was answered by her.

<“Oh! If you knew how gladly I leave this life, how much more courage I feel to take the chance of another than of anything I see before me in this, you would put on your wedding clothes instead of mourning for me!” “But,” I said, “so much talent! so many gifts! such good which you might have done!” “The world will be put back some little time by my death,” she said, “you see I estimate my powers at least as highly as you can, but it is by the death which has taken place some years ago in me, not by the death which is about to take place now.” And so is the world put back by the death of everyone who has to sacrifice the development of his or her own peculiar gifts to conventionality! (which were meant, not for selfish gratification, but for the improvement of that world) to conventionality.

My people were like children playing on the shore of the eighteenth century. I was their hobbyhorse, their plaything. And they

drove me to and fro dear souls! never weary of the play themselves, till I, who had grown to woman's estate and to the ideas of the nineteenth century, lay down exhausted, my mind closed to hope, my heart to strength<sup>155</sup>> and all was still and dark and dreary."

She lay for some time silent. Then starting up and standing upright, for the first time for many months, she stretched out her arms and cried: <"Free, free, oh! divine freedom, art thou come at last? Welcome, beautiful death!" She fell forward on her face.<sup>156</sup> She was dead. One of her last requests had been that neither name nor date should be placed on her grave. Still less the expression of regret or of admiration, but simply the words, "I believe in God."> [end]

---

155 2:410-11, except that "I said" in the second sentence becomes "they say."

156 This last section is identical with the printed text except that "she fell forward on her face" is omitted.

# **MIDWIFERY**

---



## MIDWIFERY TRAINING AT KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL

---

Midwifery nurse training at King's College Hospital was the second major undertaking of the "Nightingale Fund," the money raised by public subscription in her honour for her Crimean work—the first was the establishment of the "Nightingale School" at St Thomas' Hospital. The organizational work at King's indeed began before the actual opening of the St Thomas' school.

Midwifery training was altogether new in England when Nightingale started the training school and funded the midwifery ward, named after her, at King's College Hospital, although, as she noted to Harriet Martineau, "in nearly every country but our own there is a government school for midwives." She hoped that their experiment would "lead the way" to supply this want (see p 161 below). Requests for Nightingale to recommend women to take on posts as midwives, especially in country parishes, occur throughout the correspondence. Usually she was unable to do so.

This pioneering work of Nightingale's has received only scant scholarly attention to date. There is a chapter on it in Monica Baly's *Florence Nightingale and the Nursing Legacy* (chap 4) and some attention to it in Jean Donnison's *Midwives and Medical Men: A History of Inter-Professional Rivalries and Women's Rights*, which is also a good source on the state of training at the time. An excellent source on general background on puerperal fever is Irvine Loudon's *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever*.<sup>1</sup> There are numerous case studies and analyses on particular points, to which some reference will be made. But there has never been any thorough study of the King's College Hospital experiment.

As with other Nightingale experiments, the training started small, perhaps thanks to her fear of negative unintended consequences, or

---

1 See also J.M. Munro Kerr et al., eds., *Historical Review of British Obstetrics and Gynaecology 1800-1950*, and Edward Shorter, *Women's Bodies: A Social History of Women's Encounters with Health, Ill-Health and Medicine*.

perhaps simply from the scarcity of midwives and nurses able to instruct nursing students. Even Nightingale's chosen leader, Mary Jones,<sup>2</sup> had had no experience in midwifery, although she was a highly experienced administrator and trainer of nurses.

Certainly the practice of starting with a small experiment and ensuring that the results were favourable was a basic part of Nightingale's philosophy of social science, a lesson she learned from the Belgian statistician L.A.J. Quetelet (1796-1874).<sup>3</sup> Yet nowhere is there any indication of fear of untoward results. More than half a million births took place a year in Britain at that time, overwhelmingly at the woman's home and attended by untrained or little trained midwives. Obstetrics was itself a new specialization within medicine (the London Obstetrical Society held its first meeting only in 1859). The need for training was obvious and there were the Continental examples of midwifery schools, even on a large scale.

The issue of training "monthly nurses," those who nursed the mother and infant the first month after birth, emerges from time to time. Sometimes Nightingale was concerned with confusion between midwifery proper and monthly nursing, which required quite different types of training. Later we will see Nightingale complaining that an institution was more interested in training monthly nurses "for the rich" than midwives for the poor. The need for monthly nurses for the poor also, later, became an issue (see p 399 below).

The subject of maternal mortality in childbirth is, even now with the benefit of hindsight, a complicated one. Childbirth itself had risks, especially from breech births. In Britain and in Europe death rates of five per thousand births were standard, a figure Nightingale quoted from William Farr's report to the Registrar-General early in *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*. Maternal deaths from childbirth from those same, and other industrial countries, are now counted per million births.

Deaths included both "accidents of childbirth," the greater number, and deaths of mothers up to roughly a month after delivery from what was most frequently called "puerperal fever," from the Latin term for "around childbirth." It is the term we will use here; "puerperal sepsis" and "septicemia" also appear in the literature. It was sometimes seen as a type of "blood poisoning" (see p 146 below). At

---

2 See *Theology*, Appendix A (3:649-50), for a biographical sketch.

3 See *Society and Politics* (5:41) for examples of benevolent projects with harmful results.

the time Nightingale undertook the midwifery training program, deaths from "accidents" of childbirth in Britain exceeded those from puerperal fever. Hence one might reasonably surmise that improvements in midwifery training would reduce the maternal mortality rate.

The disease was known in antiquity and a medical literature on it developed in the eighteenth century, which will not be discussed here. It was so widespread in hospitals in the eighteenth century in England that the new charity hospitals often refused to have maternity wards.<sup>4</sup> The disease itself was painful, entailing thirst, nausea, stomach pains, bowel movements scant or very copious, acute fever, cold sweats, coma and vomiting bilious material. The victim could die in a day or last several weeks. Many infants died from the disease, although this was not a problem at King's College Hospital and not discussed by Nightingale.

The dimensions of the mortality caused by puerperal fever were then little known everywhere. Epidemics or upsurges of deaths at the time occasioned studies of a sort, usually the compilation of case notes, with no material that would lead to any change of procedures.<sup>5</sup> The first data Nightingale's colleague William Farr published on the subject, 1855, from the 17th annual report, have already been cited, but his more extensive work, in the 33rd annual report, 1873, obviously postdate the King's College experiment and indeed Farr referred to Nightingale's book in his analysis. The highly trained French midwives Nightingale praised published on technical aspects of midwifery practice, but not a word on puerperal fever as a disease, let alone mortality from it.

At the time Nightingale was working to establish the midwifery training program virtually nothing was known about the cause of puerperal fever, not identified until 1902 as a form of streptococcus pyogenes (group A), which exists in many serotypes, long after all of Nightingale's work on midwifery was over. Streptococcus A is not the only micro-organism capable of producing puerperal fever but has been identified as the cause of epidemics.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, twentieth-

---

4 Monica E. Baly, *Florence Nightingale and the Nursing Legacy* 66.

5 See Amédée Charrier, *Mémoire présenté en 1855 à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris* (Concours pour le Prix Monthyon); Claude-Stéphane Tarnier, *De la fièvre puerérale observée à l'hospice de la Maternité*, 1858; Charles Lepetit, *De la fièvre puerérale: épidémie observée en 1856 à l'hôpital des clinique et à l'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris* (Concours pour le Prix Monthyon).

6 Loudon, *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever* 195; see Loudon also on the twentieth-century research on puerperal fever, statistics on ongoing epidemics and the slow progress in bringing down mortality rates.



century research helps to explain what was called “spontaneous generation” of the disease, for the woman herself could be a carrier, although “a high streptococcal carrier rate amongst doctors and midwives may well have been the most important factor” (203).

Edward Rigby (1804-60) had warned of puerperal fever being spread by doctors as early as his *System of Midwifery*, 1841, a book to which Nightingale never referred, although she did know the main themes of his arguments, presumably from meeting with him. Dr Rigby was lecturer in midwifery at St Thomas’ and St Bartholomew’s, examiner in midwifery for the University of London and the first president of the London Obstetrical Society. He and Nightingale had discussed midwifery training prior to its establishment at King’s College Hospital, but his death in 1860 precluded his involvement. Rigby’s warnings were clear: “Where a practitioner has been engaged in the post-mortem examination of a case of puerperal fever, we do not hesitate to declare it highly unsafe for him to attend a case of labour for some days afterwards.” In 1858 he resigned from his position of physician-accoucheur at the General Lying-in Hospital when it refused to accept his recommendations for better ventilation to try to deal with outbreaks of puerperal fever.<sup>7</sup>

The Boston doctor, Oliver Wendell Holmes, published warnings about puerperal fever in 1843 in the *New England Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery* and in book form in 1855, *Puerperal Fever as a Private Pestilence*. The material is strong (Rigby notably is cited), with numerous cases of doctors transferring puerperal fever to mothers. The book ends with eight concise recommendations for avoiding the transmission of the disease, the last arguing negligence should be considered a “crime,” not a “misfortune.” Again Nightingale seems not to have known of this work.

But the worst gap in Nightingale’s (and others’) knowledge was the experience gained by Dr Ignaz Semmelweis in 1847-48 at the Vienna General Hospital, for these lessons were not merely anecdotal, as were Rigby’s and Holmes’s. Rather Semmelweis reported firm, quantitative data,<sup>8</sup> which Nightingale was fully able to understand. Ironically, Nightin-

---

7 He made public his reasons for resigning in a letter to the *Times* 14 January 1858:9d.

8 Ignaz Philip Semmelweis (1818-65), Hungarian doctor in charge of midwifery at the Vienna General Hospital; on him see Sherwin B. Nuland, *The Doctors’ Plague: Germs, Childbed Fever, and the Strange Story of Ignác Semmelweis*; K. Codell Carter and Barbara Carter, *Childbed Fever: A Scientific Biography of*

gale had even visited Vienna in 1850, when Semmelweis was still there but about to decamp for his native Hungary, having been humiliated for his pioneering discovery about an important cause of puerperal fever (doctors and medical students bringing infected material into the ward) and means to prevent it (by hand washing in a disinfectant solution). But Nightingale spent little time in Vienna, loathed it for unrelated reasons (the harshness of Austria's treatment of Italian independence leaders) and, though she routinely visited hospitals on her European travels, possibly did not even visit the Vienna General Hospital. She later made negative remarks about it, but it is not clear on what basis.

Semmelweis's missed data are so important for understanding the problem of puerperal fever that a brief overview is given here, although his name appears nowhere in Nightingale's writing and she presumably knew nothing of him. He started work as an assistant in obstetrics at the Vienna General Hospital (1 July 1846), in the first division, the ward staffed by physicians and medical students. The second division of the hospital was staffed by midwives and midwifery students (all women and all non-doctors). Admittance to one or the other division was effectively random: for four days in the week all women entering the hospital were sent to the (slightly larger) doctors' clinic, for three days to the midwives', regardless of their desire or condition. The higher rate of mortality in the first division was popularly known and women rightly dreaded it.

The death rate from puerperal fever was lower in the second division, which statistics Semmelweis found in the hospital and (eventually) published in detail. The practice in that hospital (and indeed generally throughout Europe, but not Britain) was to autopsy all patients who died in hospital. Semmelweis performed many autopsies himself and later sadly recognized that he had caused needless deaths from going from the autopsy room to the midwifery ward without (adequately) washing. The crucial clue came to him on attending the autopsy of a senior colleague, who had been cut by a knife from a student at an autopsy, and whose tissue and organs showed the same pus and abnormalities as those of women with puerperal fever. Semmelweis drew the obvious conclusion that the diseases were the same, and that, therefore, the causes must be (53-54). Puerperal fever was nothing more or less

---

*Ignaz Semmelweis*, Irvine Loudon, *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever*, Alan F. Gottmacher, "Introduction," in Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis, *Die Aetiologie, der Begriff und die Prophylaxis des Kindbettfiebers*, 1966 reprint ix-xxxii.

than cadaveric blood poisoning. Women and their infants were dying from particles from cadavers from the hands of medical students and attending physicians. He learned soon after that birthing mothers could also get puerperal fever from an infectious patient in the ward.

In mid-May 1847 Semmelweis ordered a bowl of *chlorina liquida*, a dilute concentration of a disinfectant (later chloride of lime was used), to be placed at the entrance of the first division and that every student entering wash in it before touching a woman in labour (55); small stiff brushes were used for cleaning under the fingernails. Semmelweis's colleagues quickly divided into supporters and opponents. Supporters tried to circulate information about the important reductions in mortality achieved with his disinfectant method. Semmelweis gave a paper in Vienna (December 1847), which was published by colleagues in April 1848 (in German) in the *Journal of the Medical Society of Vienna*.<sup>9</sup> The brief paper, a (not totally correct) summary of Semmelweis's findings, ended with a plea for other hospitals to report similar or the "reverse" of these findings.

Semmelweis was offered another position after his two-year contract finished, but with the condition that he not perform autopsies—he, the first doctor to have instituted proper disinfectant care after performing them! He left precipitously and was succeeded by a physician hostile to his views.

Back in Hungary he again succeeded in reducing the mortality of midwifery wards. He gave public lectures on those findings (in Hungarian) to the Medical Society of Budapest in 1858, which were published finally in 1861. A German translation, *Die Aetiologie, der Begriff und die Prophylaxis des Kindbettfiebers* [*The Etiology, Concept and Prevention of Childbed Fever*], made the material available, for the first time fully, to the wider scholarly medical world. This 543-page book gives a thorough treatment of the subject, with excellent tables, notably comparing the death rates between the first and second divisions in the Vienna General Hospital, and, over time, before and after the disinfectant procedures were instituted.

Yet it seems that Nightingale never (not even later) saw Semmelweis's book. She learned of the crucial comparisons only through a

---

9 "Hochst wichtige Erfahrungen über in Gebäranstalten epidemischen Puerperalfieber"; with a typescript in English "Very Important Findings on the Etiology of Epidemic Puerperal Fevers in Maternity Hospitals" 1847-48: 242-44; and "Fortsetzung der Erfahrungen über die Ätiologie der in Gebäranstalten epidemischen Puerperalfieber" [Continued Findings . . . ] 64-65.

546-page work of a French doctor, Léon Le Fort (1829-93): *Des maternités: études sur les maternités et les institutions charitables d'accouchement à domicile dans les principaux états d'Europe* [*On Maternity Hospitals: Studies on Maternity Hospitals and Charitable Institutions for Home Births in the Principal States of Europe*], 1866. There the crucial data appear in translation as the first and second "cliniques" (and are so termed in Nightingale's *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*).

Le Fort's book was obviously published too late to have given any guidance to the King's College Hospital work when it started.<sup>10</sup> But we know that Nightingale was at least aware of the high rates of death in lying-in hospitals in 1860, when a letter to Sidney Herbert about "female hospitals," that is, hospitals for soldiers' wives, added:

N.B. Gentlemen of the Treasury don't seem to know that, although you may take a bed in a civil hospital by the year (vide papers) you must not send "lying-in" cases to it ("*promiscuous*"), which constitute half the whole of the cases, at least, in soldiers' wives hospitals. And there are very few of those murderous institutions, called "lying-in hospitals," in England, thank God!<sup>11</sup>

Presumably she thought that her much smaller ward would not have the same risks as a full-scale "lying-in hospital."

Le Fort gives extensive tables of mortality rates (total, not specifying cause) from a large number of maternity institutions across Europe. For England, however, detailed information was provided for only one institution, the General Lying-in Hospital, although he made several trips to England to collect data and Semmelweis had more specifics in his tables. For the others the data were spottier or grouped.

Ironically *Des maternités* was dedicated to the Grand Duchess Helen, who had led the Russian team of nurses in the Crimean War and who is described as the "digne émule" [worthy emulator] of Miss Nightingale. The grand duchess's post-Crimea sponsorship of midwifery training in St Petersburg was praised; evidently Le Fort knew nothing of Nightingale's work in London, which had only just begun when he visited that city in 1862. But the grand duchess benefited from a doc-

10 He had earlier published a 48-page *Notes sur quelques points de l'hygiène* (Paris: Masson 1862), which included several pages on maternal mortality, however not realizing that deliveries by Guy's Hospital were all out-patient, hence giving exaggerated comparison between mortality rates between Paris and London hospitals. It does not seem that Nightingale knew this work either.

11 Letter 10 November 1860, Wiltshire County Record Office 2057/F4/68.

tor from Vienna, F.H. von Arneth, bringing the Semmelweis findings to St Petersburg.

Perhaps the most sobering material in *Des maternités* is that on Paris hospitals, especially La Maternité, whose midwifery training Nightingale praised. In the years 1863-65 it had a death rate of 1/7, while the King's College ward was closed with a death rate of 1/28. Presumably these revealing facts were the reason the director of Assistance Publique, Armand Husson,<sup>12</sup> who had commissioned the research, refused to publish it. Le Fort explains in the preface that he submitted a preliminary report in April 1865 to the director, who advised him (25 June 1865) of his decision. Le Fort then decided on private publication, which gave him the freedom to be more critical of hospital administration (vii). He made one last research trip to England before publishing in 1866.

Promptly after turning down Le Fort, Husson contacted Nightingale about a visit to England although it is not clear if maternal mortality was the issue. A letter to Mary Clare Moore complained that Husson had telegraphed her for introductions to all the workhouses for the next day, giving no reason for the hurry.<sup>13</sup> She made what arrangements she could for him, but did not meet him herself and evidently never heard anything about Le Fort's findings. The next year there was another visit of the "dreadful" M Husson, this time "to see *all* the workhouses and hospitals in London and England in five days. (He really terrifies me like a whirlwind or cyclone.)"<sup>14</sup> Comments on the visit to William Farr show that maternal mortality was the focus: he was "to publish these statistics for all Europe" (see p 172 below), precisely what Le Fort had just done. Husson often provided Nightingale with material but it seems never that on maternal mortality.

The sparse Vienna data from Le Fort's *Des maternités* that Nightingale later included in her book feature mislabelled columns, "Students" and "Midwives" for the first and second clinics respectively, ignoring the fact that medical doctors as well attended in the first. None of Semmelweis's most telling tables were included, neither those comparing the two clinics at the same time, and showing clear differences in mortality rates, nor those over time, showing the decline in

---

12 Armand Husson (1809-74), director of Hospitals, Assistance Publique, Paris.

13 Letter 22 July 1865, Convent of Mercy, Bermondsey. Nightingale wrote him in French 23 July [1865], Boston University 2/20/13.

14 Letter to Douglas Galton 27 June 1866, ADD Mss 45763 f199.

mortality when disinfectant hand washing began.<sup>15</sup> Le Fort in fact gave no credit to Semmelweis in his massive study of maternal mortality, although he gave several pages to his findings (114-18). As well, he cited with approval critical remarks about the Vienna findings from a Semmelweis opponent, Josef Späth (134), and listed Semmelweis's book after Arneth's, as one of "two works" on the subject (115). Yet Arneth was Semmelweis's pupil on this matter and actively sought to circulate his findings. Arneth indeed, Le Fort helpfully tells us, gave a communication to the Academy of Medicine in Paris (7 June 1851) on the Vienna experience, but it was paid no attention (115). Arneth also gave a paper to the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society April 1851.<sup>16</sup>

Nightingale, using an excerpt on Vienna from Le Fort, suggested that "some bad influence was at work . . . on the students' side which was not in force on the pupil midwives' side. . . . We may assume the fact without attempting to explain it, as a proof of the necessity of separating midwifery instruction altogether from ordinary hospital clinical instruction." If she had seen the full analysis, however, there would have been no need for the circumspection. She then asked: "Does not this Vienna history throw fresh light on the experience already alluded to of our midwives' school in King's College Hospital?" (see p 289 below). Le Fort later proposed that there be national laws forbidding those engaged in maternity hospitals "from activities likely to contaminate their hands." This, however, is to get ahead of the story.

Nightingale, we shall see, cited Le Fort's analysis on the etiology of puerperal fever and the role of contagion. He had referred to "Rokitansky and Skoda of Vienna" and experts from other places on this point, but not Semmelweis: "Generally they testify to the propagation of puerperal fever by contagion, but they also state that it is a blood disease—a product of foul air, putrid miasms and predisposition to malignant inflammatory action" (see p 272 below). Note how transmission by the hands of doctors and medical students, either from autopsies or attending ill women is here omitted.

Like medical experts for years before and after him, Le Fort was eclectic in his summary of possible causes for puerperal fever. It

---

15 Tables 1, 14, 20, 22-25 and 56 in the original German edition; Tables 1, 4-6 and 10-13 in the abridged English edition by Carter.

16 Loudon, *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever* 110.

could, he said, arise “spontaneously” in a birthing mother at a maternity hospital, “propagating itself by contagion,” which could occur in very different ways, “firstly, directly from a sick woman to another, secondly by the intermediary of students and doctors during or after birth, thirdly by contagious miasma conserved in the rooms of birthing women in the walls, mattresses, beds, curtains, objects of pansement [dressings], etc.” (102). Medical works on puerperal fever indeed for decades continued to specify factors within the woman herself as a cause of puerperal fever, arising “spontaneously” or “de novo” from the woman. Le Fort examined the bed numbers of the women, in which discussion it is clear that bed sharing was common.

Le Fort described the introduction of disinfectant washing but never made out the strong case obvious in Semmelweis’s own tables. Thus Semmelweis gave the 1846 death rate (the last full year before the introduction of disinfectant use) as 11.04 percent, which declined to 5.0 percent in 1847 (disinfectant use began in May) and declined further to 1.27 percent in 1848 (the first full year of disinfectant use).<sup>17</sup> Instead Le Fort took a longer series which obscures the improvements made, but whether the death rates increased again because Semmelweis was no longer in Vienna to enforce hand washing or for other reasons we do not know.<sup>18</sup> Le Fort gave further material from Semmelweis (116-17) but took issue with on its interpretation.

Semmelweis was no microscopist and had no idea what precisely caused the infection. He referred to “decomposed organic matter” or “decaying animal-organic matter” (60). He always resisted the designation of “contagion,” which implied a precise “germ” causing a precise disease. Nightingale herself disliked “contagion theory” except for a small number of diseases, such as smallpox. Said Semmelweis: “Puerperal fever is a transmissible, but not a contagious disease (only smallpox can produce smallpox, what is meant by contagion), but pus from abscessed tooth or cancer can cause puerperal fever.” With the benefit of later knowledge, of course, we would not now consider cancer or an abscessed tooth as a cause of puerperal fever, but the open sores entailed in either could carry the micro-organism that causes it. He, like Nightingale, could read data and draw the appropriate conclusions for practice, without understanding the theory.

---

17 Table 23; in Carter English edition table 31.

18 His table on p 98 gives odd months between 1840 and 1862, while that on p 67 runs from 1850 to 1862, omitting the earlier period where the dramatic improvements were made.

Eclectic lists of causes continued to appear in the literature for decades. For example, William Playfair (1835-1903), professor of midwifery at King's, in an 1887 paper on the prevention of puerperal fever, stated that medical opinion to be "almost universally admitted" to be

Practically the same thing as surgical septicemia, a disease caused by poison absorbed through the genital tract into the system of the patient, which poison may either originate in her *de novo* from the decomposition of some of the organic matters resulting from childbirth, such as coagula, lochial discharge, and the like, or which may be conveyed to the patient from without by septic channels as foul sponges, infected hands of practitioners or nurses, or suspended in the atmosphere, as in rooms into which sewer gas finds its way.<sup>19</sup>

Note how the notion of the disease springing "de novo" from the woman herself continues, indeed heads the list decades later, with several other sources, including infected hands, foul sponges and sewer gas.

Semmelweis's views were not well received in Britain generally. Admittedly the problems of midwifery practice in Britain were not as severe as on the Continent; mortality rates were lower, perhaps because of the lesser use of autopsies or simply the lesser use of hospitals for deliveries. Mortality rates were highest in Paris, which got the worst of both worlds: high mortality rates from physician-attended deliveries (men) and those by midwives (women), for Paris midwives both attended and conducted autopsies.

Nightingale may have known of the views of the role of doctors in spreading puerperal fever of Sir James Y. Simpson, professor of midwifery at Edinburgh University, for she corresponded with him on a related matter, mortality from limb amputations (see p 219 below). Simpson, physician to Queen Victoria (1819-1901) and the person who first used chloroform as an anaesthetic in childbirth, published a paper, "Some Notes on the Analogy between Puerperal Fever and Surgical Fever," in 1851, which pointed to the "fingers of the attendant" as crucial for spreading puerperal fever. Simpson's measures to deal with puerperal fever were not far off Semmelweis's, developed independently, but did not have the merit of being based on rigorous data. Simpson even condemned Semmelweis's work. He later informed Nightingale about Le Fort's *Des maternités*, but never mentioned Semmelweis.

---

19 William Playfair, "Introduction to a Discussion on the Prevention of Puerperal Fever," *British Medical Journal* (1887) 2:1034-36.



Simpson as well had views on the problems of hospitals generally similar to Nightingale's. As early as 1848 he urged the abolition of "medical, surgical and obstetric palaces," to be replaced by lying-in hospitals in separate buildings, constructed of iron, which would be easier to wash.<sup>20</sup> In an 1869 article he used the term "hospitalism" in his condemnation of hospital-originated diseases, "Hospitalism: Its Effects on the Results of Surgical Operations."

As the unhappy story unfolds we may surmise that the doctors and officials of King's College Hospital had no more knowledge of the findings, recommendations and even urgent warnings of Semmelweis, Rigby, Simpson and others than did Nightingale. Certainly we see no efforts to insist on disinfectant hand washing. Sanitary standards at King's College Hospital, however, were generally better than at the worst of the European institutions—at least there was adequate linen and no bed sharing. It is perhaps worth noting that St Thomas' Hospital had no midwifery ward but, like Guy's, provided attendance at home deliveries.

Both Rigby's and Semmelweis's work predate Joseph Lister's<sup>21</sup> pioneering use of antiseptic techniques in surgery, begun in Edinburgh in 1865. Antiseptic or aseptic measures (terms used roughly interchangeably) in maternity only came into use in the 1870s, where they helped to reduce mortality rates considerably. See notably Robert Boxall, *The Use of Antiseptics in Midwifery: Their Value and Practical Application*, 1894. Boxall noted that the General Lying-in Institution began using aseptic techniques when it reopened in 1879, after a three-year closing on account of puerperal fever, and that it was "mainly by the elimination of septic cases" that improvement was effected (5).

All of this introductory material, of course, has been prepared with the benefit of 140 years of subsequent research in midwifery. It will be quite clear as the story here unfolds about the lying-in ward at King's College Hospital that neither Nightingale nor her colleagues had any understanding of what they were dealing with, and how readily some of the unfortunate deaths might have been avoided. Puerperal fever would continue to kill many women for many decades even after the introduction of aseptic measures and even after identification of the cause. Not until the 1930s would mortality rates be brought down to near elimination; deaths now are recorded per million births.

---

20 James Y. Simpson, "Report of the Edinburgh Maternity Hospital," *Monthly Journal of Medical Science* (1848-49):329-38.

21 Joseph Lister (1827-1912), later Sir, Lord; he later practised at King's College Hospital.

## **Establishment of the Training School for Midwifery Nurses at King's College Hospital**

The idea of establishing a midwifery ward for training midwives at King's College Hospital initially came from Mary Jones, the nurse Nightingale most admired and from whom she had learned the most about regular nursing practice. Nightingale had consulted her extensively in the early years of the Nightingale training school. She considered Jones an excellent teacher and a model of "moral goodness." To Galton she credited her with having done "(quietly and sensibly) the greatest work in hospital nursing which has been done."<sup>22</sup> In 1862 she called her "quite the most valuable woman I know now existing" (see p 168 below).

Jones's proposal was for a class of "midwives," a term Nightingale also used, but quickly came to calling them instead "midwifery nurses." Since King's College Hospital did not have a midwifery ward, one had to be set up from the start. With typical Nightingale caution the initial proposal to Sir Joshua Jebb<sup>23</sup> was for a two years' experiment, with only six women to be trained at a time, the training period to be only six months. It would be expensive, for cleanliness was costly. The practice in military hospitals of putting a patient who came in the afternoon into a vacated bed with the same sheets as the morning patient would not do (see p 164 below).

Right from 1860 Nightingale insisted that the lying-in ward exclude medical students (see p 155 below), but this was probably at least in part for reasons of propriety. The Maternité in Paris was "a most immoral place" and Nightingale feared that mothers in England, poor as much as rich, would not let their daughters take the course (see p 161 below). Medical doctors, however, would be allowed into the midwifery ward. The lesson of the Vienna General Hospital was that puerperal fever was reduced by requiring both doctors and medical students entering the ward to wash in a disinfectant. The exclusion of medical students would affect mortality rates by reducing the number of examinations of the women, hence the risk of infection. But neither Nightingale nor Jones knew anything of this.

Here we set out the correspondence and memoranda on the establishment of the training program and the ward, recruitment of stu-

<sup>22</sup> Letter 17 December 1860, Add Mss 45759 f120.

<sup>23</sup> Sir Joshua Jebb (1793-1863), surveyor general of prisons, chair of the Nightingale Fund Council.

dents, ecclesiastical interference from St John's House and finally the rise of puerperal fever and the decision to close the ward, which for Nightingale entailed the closing of the school. Interspersed are letters dealing with requests for midwives and midwife nurses, which show how much demand there was for trained women.

The sequence begins with Nightingale approaching William Bowman<sup>24</sup> with the proposal, 31 May 1860. There are then numerous letters from him to Nightingale, from Jones to Nightingale and among the various actors, not included here. Evidently Jones and Nightingale met over the course of the intervening year for discussions.<sup>25</sup> The next letter published here is dated more than a year after the first, from Nightingale to Sir Joshua Jebb, chair of the Nightingale Fund Council, and reflects these developments. It must be remembered that the establishment of the regular nursing training program at St Thomas' Hospital was still in its early stages while all this organizational work was under way; it opened in September 1861.

Once the ward at King's was established, it seemed to run well (there were no deaths the first year and none ever by a childbirth "accident"). The demand for trained midwives continued, so that even while Nightingale and Jones were coping with the threat of the closing of the school and ward they were being pressed to find midwives or train candidates quickly.

The closing of the King's College Hospital ward due to excessive mortality from puerperal fever occurs with little warning. Indeed the hints at it seem to suggest unrelated medical manoeuvring (doctors wanting the space for medical students). Certainly "spikes" or epidemics of puerperal fever occurred in many places and for decades yet to come, and the mortality rate at the King's College Hospital ward was not excessive compared with that at other institutions in England and the Continent. But it was higher than for home births.

Substantial editorial comments accompany the different stages of the school's establishment, operation, closing and the preparation of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, which began only well after the closing. Comparative material from other countries is brought in, notably of Semmelweis's work in Vienna.

---

24 William Bowman (1816-92), later Sir, ophthalmic surgeon, previously attending physician at Harley St., member of the Nightingale Fund Council.

25 See ADD Mss 47743 for Jones's letters to Nightingale.

Source: Letter, Private Collection of Rachel Clarkson

30 Old Burlington St.

31 May 1860

Dear Mr Bowman

I have always been intending to tell you the result of my conversation with Miss Jones, because I believe that it was you who originated the idea that some connection might be established between us.

Miss Jones thinks (and I must say I entirely agree with her) that it would be impossible in a society like St John's House, or under her or in any way connected with her, to have nurses not necessarily of the Church of England and not under her rules. But she started a new idea: she wishes to have a class of midwives and she consulted me as to whether they could be trained side by side with nurses.

Of all the numberless applications which have been made to me to recommend nurses since I returned to England, by far the most numerous have been for parish nurses in the country, with a midwife's education, to be paid and supported by the lady or ladies of the country parish. I therefore know how immensely this class of nurse would be valued in England.

Do you think that six lying-in beds would be set apart by King's College Hospital under Dr Arthur Farre<sup>26</sup> for the training of midwives alone? if the "Nightingale Fund" Council would pay for a class of (say) six midwife nurses, to be in all respects under the rules and belonging to the Society of St John's House?

Unless (1) the beds were *in* the hospital, nursed by St John's House, and unless (I am afraid), (2) students were excluded, I do not think the thing would answer, any more than any of the nurses' institution has answered which has not nursed a hospital of its own, midwives being in this respect somewhat different from ordinary nurses.

Perhaps King's College Hospital would not think of setting apart in its very limited space six beds, *unless* for its midwifery school. Yet there would be no difference, as far as that is concerned, from what is now. Would you think of this in your triple capacity<sup>27</sup> with regard to us all?

ever yours sincerely

Florence Nightingale

---

26 Dr Farre had been a physician at the Harley St. institution.

27 Bowman was a doctor, a member of the Council of St John's and of the Nightingale Fund Council.

I have had a correspondence and another conversation with Mrs War-droper of St Thomas' Hospital, but I have transmitted it all to Mr Clough<sup>28</sup> for you. He has had an accident but comes back today.

Source: Letter to Sir Joshua Jebb, Hampshire Record Office F584

Hampstead, N.W.

15 August 1861

*Private*

My dear Sir Joshua Jebb

You know that my dear master [Sidney Herbert] is dead—an irreparable loss to the nation but oh! how much more so to the troops and to me—and that Mr Clough is banished abroad for *the winter by his health*. I am obliged therefore to trouble you to lay before the committee of the N. Fund a scheme for utilizing the remainder of its income, supposing, that is, that it meets with your own approval and that you will urge it as from yourself. Otherwise it will appear, as all experiments must do, so unformed that I doubt its recommending itself to them. It is not however really unformed. It has been a matter of anxious consideration and consultation between me and the lady superintendent of King's College Hospital for months. And I once mentioned it to you before: it is that of training midwife nurses for the country. It was necessary to find for this purpose, not only midwifery wards in a great London hospital, but eminent practitioners who would be willing to take the trouble of instruction—and also, which could not be found in any of the lying-in hospitals in London, a tried and religious superintendent who would undertake the labour of training for the love of her fellow creatures.

I believe that I have found all this at King's College Hospital. It is true that the hospital is so poor that it would not even entertain the proposition of having midwifery wards at all—unless freed from expense for itself. The N. Fund will therefore apparently pay for the patients instead of for the nurses, which I am afraid the committee will not like. But, on the other hand, it pays at St Thomas' for that which it will not have to pay for here. The real expense will be pretty much the same in both cases.

The great point of difference will be that the probationers in the present case will, at least for the first year of the experiment, have to pay for their own board. (I believe that there are many country ladies

---

28 Arthur Hugh Clough, secretary of the Nightingale Fund Council; for a biographical sketch see *Life and Family*, Appendix A (1:841-42).

and clergymen who will be glad to send up a woman of their own parish and pay for her to be trained and sent back. For it is not proposed that these probationers should enter afterwards the Society of St John's House but should be set entirely free, as in the case of St Thomas' probationers, only, as in their case, they are supposed to follow up the service for which they are trained.)

I myself have advised Miss Jones, the superintendent of St John's House and King's College Hospital, who is kindly anxious to undertake this, not to do so unless (1) the N. Committee will guarantee to her £500 per ann. for two years; (2) that it will not require a more exact scheme than this for two years, *because* it is an experiment—much more so than in the case of St Thomas', for here the *wards* have to be formed.

I have however been, of course, anxiously considering and inquiring all this time how to make the best (national) use of the remainder of the N. Fund income. And believe me when I say that, after inquiry everywhere, I cannot find any hospital or any scheme which *promises* (it can be but a promise) nearly the same amount of good for the same amount of money. You must remember that Miss Jones and I have both won our spurs for economical management in large and important concerns and therefore that we must be somewhat trusted when we humbly say that we believe this experiment promises good. The way I propose to lay out the £500 per annum is:

£100 furnishing 10 beds;

£350 annual maintenance at £35 per bed;

£50 midwife as chief nurse.

The second year, the first £100 would be available toward the board of some of the probationers. After two years, the experiment may either be given up—or, if it has somewhat succeeded, a more exact prospectus be given to the committee, I am aware that the surplus income of the N. Fund does not amount to £500 per ann. I do not know whether Mr Marjoribanks<sup>29</sup> would consider it sound (financially) to make it up to £500 per ann. for two years by means of the (unspent) surplus income of this last year. If not, I should like to make it up myself (privately without saying anything to Miss Jones) for two years to the required £500 per ann.

I can assert, without any doubt, that I know nowhere where the probationers will receive such Christian and motherly training as from the superintendent of St John's House in England.

---

29 Edward Marjoribanks (1776-1868), previously a trustee at Harley St.

I think I had better send you Miss Jones's own statement—only adding that both this letter and the enclosed are “private” and for you alone and that, till I know your own opinion, I would rather they should not be copied or handed about among my committee, but that the enclosed should be returned to me and farther worked out. For many reasons, I should be glad that the experiment, if sanctioned by my committee, should begin at the next medical term (October).

ever, dear Sir Joshua

yours sincerely and gratefully

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F582/1

Hampstead, N.W.

17 August 1861

In A.H. Clough's absence, I am obliged to trouble you with everything concerning the N. Fund.

The enclosed relates to my scheme for utilizing the remainder of its income for training midwife nurses at King's College Hospital, which I was anxious should begin in October. The K.C.H. is willing. I wrote all the particulars to Colonel Jebb, my chairman, and enclose his answer. Please return it to me and tell me what you think.

ever yours gratefully

F.N.

I have also written to Mr Marjoribanks about it, but have no answer.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F582/2

Hampstead, N.W.

14 September 1861

I am anxious to save you what trouble I can about the King's College scheme. Accordingly I enclose a letter from Mr Marjoribanks about the funds, in answer to one of mine, saying that I had made the money calculations with Miss Jones, the superintendent, and had advised her to begin nothing without a guarantee of £500 per annum for two years and that, if there were any difficulty, I should wish (privately) to make up that sum. But, as you see, he will make none.

I also enclose a memorandum of Miss Jones (she is superintendent of St John's House and of the nursing of King's College Hospital, which is what she refers to when she speaks of the different committees). This was the memo I sent to Sir J. Jebb and he returned to me. I shall see Miss Jones on Wednesday and, if anything new arises, will report it.

It is important to begin on 1 October, the beginning of the medical year, so I told Miss Jones to lay in the requisite furniture, etc., and I would pay the bills. The worst that could happen would be that I should be minus £100 and the hospital plus some furniture, and that both of us should have wasted some precious time.

I am afraid that what the committee will say will be: (1) that the money goes to the beds and patients and not to the nurses or their training—minus the salary for a training midwife; (2) that the probationers will with difficulty be found who will pay for themselves during training or be paid for.

I think the second objection has more weight in it than the first. At St Thomas' we found a hospital and beds ready. But we pay the matron and officers. And we pay (enormously) for the board of probationers. The hospital must be making a profit of us, by my own housekeeping experience, [a] large one. We also pay interest on furniture. At King's College Hospital we find superintendent and officers willing to give training for love—besides other advantages. Miss Jones and I both think that, after the second year, a training midwife may have been educated to be one of St John's House own nurses, in which case the N. Fund would not have to pay her salary.

The second objection I think is just what will be felt most during the first two years—and *not* afterwards. In almost all countries but England there is a government school for educating midwife nurses for country parishes. That of Paris is the most famous. The want is immensely felt in England. And I have not the least doubt that, if any private institution were to turn out for a few years women properly trained for this profession, country parishes, whether led by clergymen, ladies bountiful or boards of guardians would be found in plenty who would send up candidates from their own parishes (paying for them) to be trained and sent back.

But then in this country the experiment must be tried and succeed *first*. And then the candidates will come. But for *any* experiment my committee must more or less take my word. And I can only give them my word that, though there has been no lack of negotiations between me and hospitals, this is the only experiment I can recommend to them. And not only is it the only one, but I have strong hopes that it may become a boon to the whole country.

Miss Jones herself is not an experiment. On the contrary she has been the most successful trainer of Christian nurses we have. And Dr A. Farre's reputation stands with his profession nearly the highest in England for his particular subject.



I can find nothing that we could do so hopefully or so cheaply with the remainder of the Fund. But then I think the committee must be prepared to see hardly any result at all for some years, and *not* be disappointed.

I earnestly wish that something could be done in the first two years to pay for some of the probationers and I hope that, at all events, the committee will consent to let the spare £100 (the second year) go for this purpose. The cost charged them for their board will be the lowest possible. Indeed, both Miss Jones and I made it for board, including tea, sugar, beer, washing, etc., only 8/ per week. But St John's House must be farther consulted about this.

If the committee say, why should you not try this experiment at a lying-in hospital, where all the materials are already and where a few midwives or monthly nurses are already taught? I answer I am absolutely incapable of recommending any for the purpose. And Dr Rigby's death (he was well inclined to the matter though we never entered into it far enough to come to any practical negotiation) puts an end to any idea I may ever have had of the kind. But I had not practically.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff131-32

Hampstead, N.W.  
24 September 1861

I think you will be glad to hear that we are about to open (in October) a training school for midwife nurses at King's College Hospital, London. They are to be persons selected by country parishes (whether personated by clergy, ladies or committees or boards) between twenty-six and thirty-five years of age, of good health and good character, to follow a course of *not less* than six months' practical training, and to conform to all the rules of St John's House (which nurses at King's College Hospital) while there. No farther obligation is imposed upon them by us. They are supposed to return to their parishes and continue their avocation there. I am sorry that we shall be obliged to require a weekly sum for their board—but which will be merely the cost price—not less than eight shillings or more than nine shillings a week. Our funds do not permit us, at least at first, to do this cost free, for (the hospital being very poor) we have had to furnish the maternity ward and are to maintain the lying-in beds. In fact, we establish this branch of the hospital, which did not exist before.

The women will be taught their business by the physician accoucheurs themselves—who have most generously entered, heart and

soul, into the plan—at the bedside of the lying-in patients in this ward, the entrance to which is forbidden to the men students. They will also deliver poor women at their own homes, out-patients of the hospital. The head nurse of the ward, who is paid by us, will be an experienced midwife, so that the pupil nurses will never be left to their own devices. They will be entirely under the lady superintendent of the hospital, certainly the best moral trainer of women I know. They will be lodged *in* the hospital close to her.

If I had a sister of eighteen I should gladly send her to this school, so sure am I of its moral goodness, which I mention because I know poor mothers are quite as particular as rich ones, not merely as to the morality but as to the propriety of their daughters. In nearly every country but our own, there is a government school for midwives. I trust that our school may lead the way toward supplying a want long felt in England. Here we experiment and if we succeed, we are sure of getting candidates. I am not sure this is not the best way. I hope we shall begin very quietly. If we turn out a few good country midwife nurses, we shall be sure of having more candidates than we can accommodate. Our first expenses have been heavy. I hope another year we shall be able to give board free to a certain number from poor parishes.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F582/3

Hampstead, N.W.  
26 September 1861

I think this is very good. Perhaps it would be safer to put not less than 8/ or more than 9/ a week—as Miss Jones told me she had not yet asked St John's House about this. (She herself is perfectly satisfied that the 8/ will do.) Would you put in after: Candidates are to be trained for a period of *not less than six months*? Or do you think it not necessary here? I think it a very clever “dodge” of yours to take the £100 for board at once.

Have you this on my authority? Guy's has (or had) lying-in beds—the only London hospital I know that had. But if you have it on Miss Jones's authority, you are quite safe. And the general assertion is quite true, viz., that the London hospitals won't take in these cases and that it was entirely Miss Jones's doing that this was negotiated here.

Miss Jones told me of your visit to her. Thank you very much for the trouble you are taking.

ever affectionately yours

F. Nightingale

I kept this paper back to show to Mrs Bracebridge—who will probably be the lady visitor on our part, consented to by Miss Jones. But she sees no fault in it.

Source: Draft Regulations, Hampshire Record Office F582/4

1 October 1861

REGULATIONS as to the Training of Midwifery Nurses under the Nightingale Fund

1. The Committee of the “Nightingale Fund” have made arrangements with the Council of St John’s House for training annually in King’s College Hospital a limited number of women in the duties of midwifery nurses, with a view to the employment of the so trained nurses in country parishes or districts (*for the benefit of the poor*) under the direction of the clergy and medical men.

2. The instruction will be gratuitous, the Nightingale Fund engaging to provide for the maintenance of a certain number of beds for the reception of poor married women during their confinement, in wards set apart by the authorities of King’s College Hospital for this special purpose of instruction, St John’s House undertaking the conduct of the requisite training under the direction of the physician accoucheur of the hospital (Dr Arthur Farre) and his assistants, who kindly give their aid to educate the probationers, by lectures and practical instruction, for this peculiar vocation.

An experienced midwife will be always in attendance. They will, while under instruction, be allowed also to attend certain cases of lying-in women at their own homes.

3. Probationers will be received for a period of not less than six months, and on the distinct understanding that they remain for at least that time.

4. The cost of board, lodging and washing to each probationer during the six months’ training will be £10, paid in advance.

5. The age considered desirable for these pupil nurses is from twenty-six to thirty-four. A certificate of health, with name and address of medical attendant and testimonial of character, will be required.

6. Probationers will be received on 31 October and 30 April in each year. Application should be made, a fortnight before each term, to the lady superintendent of St John’s House, *King’s College Hospital, London*.

7. A record will be kept of the conduct and qualifications of each pupil nurse. Those who have passed satisfactorily through the course

of instruction will be entered in the register as certificated midwifery nurses and a copy of such entry will be sent to those who have selected the nurse for the required training.

8. The pupil nurses will be under the authority of the lady superintendent and in all respects subject to the same rules as other and permanent inmates of the institution. They will be liable to dismissal in case of misconduct or negligence of duties; if anyone is considered inefficient, notice, in order to removal, will be at once sent to those who recommended her.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office, F582/5

Hampstead, N.W.

2 October 1861

Would you be so good as to look over the enclosed, drawn up by Miss Jones and me, shorten it if you can, correct it and have it printed. Will it require a signature?

I send you the St Thomas' paper, as a specimen: Harrisons', 45 St. Martin's Lane, I believe, did this. Perhaps 500 had better be printed. Miss Jones will want 100. I shall want 100. And, as she says she cannot receive applications after the middle of this month, the sooner they are done, the better, as we want to send them out, by way of advertisement. If you like to send Bratby on with it to the printers, do.

ever yours truly and gratefully

F. Nightingale

Should the heading be "at King's College Hospital" or similar to the printed one I enclose?

Source: From a letter to William Rathbone, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/61/8

5 October 1861

In a few days, I hope to send you the Regulations of a joint plan,<sup>30</sup> by Miss Jones and myself, for training country midwifery nurses *under her* (at King's College Hospital) which begins this month.

---

30 Letter to William Rathbone 19 October 1861, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/61/9.

Source: From a copy of a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, British Library RP 4766 (ii)

Hampstead, N.W.

10 October 1861

Miss [Mary] Jones brought me your draft of the agreement and we went over it together two days running. We also took the opinion of the treasurer of St John's House and of Mr Bowman upon it. I enclose the result. I earnestly hope that our committee may approve it. With regard to:

1. As the whole of the cost of providing beds and furniture for our probationers will fall upon St John's House, I have told Miss Jones that, should there be any part over of the £100 after providing the ward beds, it may be devoted to providing the probationers' beds.

With regard to 2, it was my own doing, taking out the clause "constantly occupied" for indeed it is impossible to rate the maintenance of a hospital bed in that way; one has to keep up one's staff, one's contracts and all one's current expenditure, nearly or exactly the same, whether the beds are constantly occupied or not. There must always be, under the best management, great waste in hospital expenditure. Because a patient comes in on Tuesday or on Thursday who is expected on Wednesday, you cannot make a plus or a minus in your expenditure.

2. I am anxious to say that I do not think £35 per annum at all much for this kind of bed, although St Thomas does his at £25. St Thomas' average term of days for each patient is thirty-eight days, that of all lying-in hospitals is twenty-five. It is always much less expensive to have standing patients than a rapid change of patients, unless you do as we do in the military hospitals, make the patient who comes in the afternoon finish up all the leavings, including sheets, of the patient who left in the morning. Besides this, lying-in cases are almost the most expensive cases I know, excepting a few surgical cases. St Thomas' is proverbially well known to be an uncommonly cheap hospital, because it has a great proportion of constantly occupied beds, than almost any other. To give you an instance: the expense of nursing each patient in it is exactly two thirds of what it is in the London,<sup>31</sup> the average number of constantly occupied beds in each being in the opposite ratio. This I got from figures furnished me by the hospitals themselves.

---

31 The London (later Royal) Hospital, on which Nightingale was elected life governor in 1855.

3. I am afraid that you will object to the condition of paying the £400 at the beginning of each year, as being different from the practice with St Thomas', but I do earnestly hope that, if possible, this condition may be agreed to—because I feel that we have made a good thing out of St John's House, as St Thomas' made a good thing out of us. For we do not give a farthing to one of their officers, and the eight shillings a week can hardly cover the board and washing and not at all the lodging. (Could you calculate for me, without much trouble, the weekly cost of the probationers at St Thomas', exclusive of dress and wages?)

You will see that we have altered the number of probationers at one time from ten to six, but Miss Jones tells me that she apprized you of this. It was thought that more than six could not be efficiently trained at one time as long as the period is limited to six months. I hope that if the experiment continues, both period and number will be extended; the other alterations speak for themselves. Miss Jones herself would be glad if the last clause between brackets of (11) (in her own copy) could be put more civilly. She has written in pencil, as you will see, "or some clause to this effect." 14 (in your copy) they earnestly wish to be expunged. I don't see the objection to it as they do, because it is highly improbable it would ever come into force. But as it hurts their feelings and looks ugly I do think it would be right to expunge it. We must remember that we are taking up one of the best wards and other accommodation, in a hospital of only 142 beds, also the gratuitous services of three of their medical officers—without any benefit accruing to the hospital—in its own estimation—as there would be if such beds went used for the instruction of the medical school.

I feel exceedingly sanguine as to the success of the experiment. Also the fifty pounds a year will cover the board of nearly half the probationers each year, if we have only twelve a year. This is wonderfully cheap. I am only afraid that Mr Marjoribanks may consider that the payment of the £400 at the beginning of each year does not tally with the half-yearly incoming of his dividends, but I hope he will sanction it. I write this for Sir Joshua Jebb as well as for yourself and am,

sincerely and gratefully  
yours and his  
Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office, F582/6

Hampstead, N.W.  
2 November [1861]

I have looked over the agreement which you kindly sent me yesterday with Miss Jones, and we are quite satisfied with it, always excepting clause 14. Their feelings are evidently excessively hurt by this. If it is to stand, I think it had better stand as it is, and I confess I should not have minded it, because it is so certain never to come into action. But I do wish it could be dropped altogether for this reason.

To say that “the maintenance covers repairs,” vide opposite note, is to add insult to injury, as the parrot said when he was made to learn English. For the hospital has already laid in linen and hair mattresses, which it would not have done if it had not been for this ward.

Our £100 will nothing like cover the furniture of the ward: e.g., we supply one iron bedstead and one hair mattress to each bed—the hospital supplies three other hair mattresses, so that there may be, say, four to each bed. Again, the “maintenance” does not cover the backing and recovering of these hair mattresses, nor the renewal of the linen, of which there requires a much larger quantity for this ward than for any other; of *our* linen, there will be nothing left at the end of the two years.

Indeed, taking example by the Ehrenbeistein rats, I am quite sure that the tails left to us—at the end of the two years will be only the ten iron bedsteads—cost 15 s each. It is not worthwhile to anger the other contracting parties who have behaved so liberally to us for this, for King’s College Hospital will certainly be put to a great expense for our ward and our £100 was only in order to save Miss Jones from having to go to the hospital for “a lot of things more” than were wanted for any other ward.

At the same time I must say that to me the clause seems very innocuous but, as it does not amuse them—and does us no good—contrariwise to the man who let his wife beat him—I wish it could be dropped. You must observe that King’s College Hospital has shown great condescension in setting aside the whole of that floor for us for two years.

**Editor:** A letter by Nightingale to C.P. Shepherd thanked him for the copy of the resolution of St John’s House Council, and stated that she had forwarded it to her committee. She further expressed her “deep” conviction that the obligation was all on her side, that they were

increasing the labour, anxiety and fatigue of the officers of St John's House and were returning to them only the knowledge of the greater good they were doing.<sup>32</sup> A letter by Henry Bonham Carter to the bishop of London acknowledged, on Nightingale's behalf, the copy of the resolution approved by the Council of St John's for the training scheme.<sup>33</sup>

Source: From an incomplete letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/162

[ca. January 1862]

You must take the Maternité story with a grain of salt.<sup>34</sup> In all hospitals (but much more in those tended only by religious orders, *without* the check of the great publicity of a school, etc.) things are done which would make your flesh creep. But it remains that the Maternité is, upon better authorities than this woman's, the best school yet existing (oh if she were to see Würzburg) and that it has brought up women who rank with physician accoucheurs. The mortality and non-recoveries of the Maternité (too true alas!) are caused by its bad sanitary state, not, as she supposes, by the bungling women. As far as this is concerned, there is perhaps not one practising midwife in England who is to be named in the same day for skill with the first year's élèves of the Maternité. There is a woman quack now practising at Paris under the name of the famous Mme Deschappelles of the Maternité (I should not much wonder if this woman belonged to her).

Source: From two letters to Sir John McNeill,<sup>35</sup> Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU145 and SU146

15 April 1862

I send you papers of the two training schools for nurses to which the whole income of the N. Fund is now devoted. I wish they were more widely known *out of* London—especially the one for training midwifery nurses.

32 Letter 2 November 1861, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU51.

33 Letter 14 November 1861, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU52.

34 What the story was is not clear. This letter is the first to show Nightingale's awareness of the high mortality at the Paris Maternité, but still with her commendation of the institution as the "best school yet existing."

35 Sir John McNeill (1795-1883), close colleague from the Crimean War.



22 April 1862

I shall be very much obliged to you if you will kindly, as you propose, send the papers (about the two training schools for nurses) to your various parishes. I send copies by this day's post of each.

With regard to the midwifery nurses, we have a small fund, which could easily be enlarged, for paying the £10 (asked for board and lodging for six months) for those parishes which are really too poor to pay.

We also give a general nurse training, besides the midwifery training, to those for whom it is desired (who must be willing to stay longer than the six months) in the general wards of the hospital, and also among the out-patients visited at home.

King's College Hospital is so poor that, although it generously gave us the services of its officers gratuitously (excepting the midwife, who is ours), it was unable to pay anything toward the beds. And we therefore are unable to board the probationers quite gratuitously, as we do at St Thomas'.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/39

14 May 1862

I was so shocked with Miss Jones's, of King's College Hospital, worn-out appearance on Monday (I have seen such terrible catastrophes of men failing, failing, unobserved even by their own families and then dying in the prime of their usefulness, worn-out and old men at forty and fifty). She seemed to me so worn-out, body and mind, that I told her she *must* go somewhere for absolute rest and that soon. And I wrote without her knowledge to her doctor and told him that God would take her into His own hands if he did not.

She is quite the most valuable woman I know now existing. Would it be possible for her to go in a week or ten days to Lea Hurst for a month? And could she be "done for" by the woman there? I would gladly pay for a woman, if this could not be, and pay for Miss Jones's board down there. I believe it would save her life, meaning Miss Jones'. Entire solitude and the beauty of the place is what she longs for.

Source: From a letter to W.E. Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/68

Hampstead, N.W.

18 October 1862

In the order of my gratitude the game should go: Miss Jones, lady superintendent, King's College Hospital, W.C., 1 brace pheasants, 1 brace

partridges (because she gives some to the assistant physician who teaches our probationers for nothing) and I will write to her to say so.

**Editor:** Nightingale wrote her mother early in 1863 that she was sorry she could not have Mary Jones for a visit.<sup>36</sup> Another letter to her mother said that her “yesterday box went to cheer poor Miss Jones, flowers and all.”<sup>37</sup> An undated letter states that Jones was going to a friend’s at Cuckfield, but “I am afraid she means to return to work. Could not you put in your word now that, after Cuckfield, she should come to Embley without returning to town? I am afraid she would otherwise make her holiday only *days*. It ought to be *months*.”<sup>38</sup>

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) HI/ST/NC1/63/7

26 July 1863

I cannot remember ever in all my life having been so driven as in the last three months. I have never been up since I saw you except to see one of my masters and to go to Hampstead. Since Wednesday fortnight, when the India Sanitary Report’s first copy saw the light, I have had every moment taken up with pressing it and distributing it, for the sake of getting our Home and Presidency Commissions appointed before the session is over.

I have had the most discouraging contradictions and disappointments as one must expect, working as I do, without a chairman and without a secretary—sometimes I think I must be mad to attempt such a work as this alone from my bed. But they say I am not.

After the first week in August this great press will be over and I hope we shall then see each other very often at Hampstead and talk over many things.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45763 f8

16 January 1865

The papers on Female Hospitals just returned to Mr Cooper. I should have made very short work of answering those papers, but Dr Sutherland would keep them, till he could go down and inspect the Chatham Hospital. The questions in them were two:

36 Letter 13 March 1863, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/92.

37 Letter 15 May 1863, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/102.

38 Letter, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/156.

1. Should erysipelas and such like cases be received into the general ward of a lying-in hospital? Answer (by F.N.) No, in the best civil hospitals, all erysipelas, gangrene and generally what are called “offensive” cases (*which does not mean the superintendent of nurses*) are always placed under complete segregation (or removed when, unfortunately, they arise within the hospital) to complete segregation in a separate set of wards under a separate head nurse and nurses.

The reason is that no ventilation or construction will make these cases (or anywhere there is offensive discharge) non-infectious, as scarlet fever, etc., may be made. Because good-natured patients will lend their things, whatever you do to prevent it. Now the very mug of a case, like the above, ought to be washed separately. Such cases ought therefore to be always in a ward *entirely* detached.

2. Would not the appointment of separate medical officers, one for the lying-in ward, one for the general ward (including fever, bronchitis and such like, but *not* erysipelas and such like) obviate all danger of “carrying” infection? Answer (F.N.) If a medical officer is such a fool that, either by dirty hands or any such neglect, he can “carry” ANYTHING from the general to the lying-in ward, he will do as much harm to the lying-in cases, *with* OR WITHOUT the general ward under him. There is no such thing as “carrying” *infection*.

Please however to return us those papers, in order that Dr Sutherland may inspect the Chatham Female Hospital and we will then give you a splendid answer.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/65/25

12 December 1865

I was so glad to hear from you. But I am afraid you are very weary. I write, as usual, because I want something of you.

Dr Farr is writing a paper on the mortality of children? He wants some of your teachers or nurses to give him a short description of treatment of children in England (by “treatment” he means feeding, rearing, clothing, warming, nursing—or the absence of all these) at the ages of under one, from one to three, from three to five—in the lower, middle, upper classes—for publication.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps one of your sisters could kindly write it down from the lips of the nurses?

---

39 William Farr, “Mortality of Children in the Principal States of Europe,” *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 29, 1 (March 1866):1-12.

Dr Farr has been collecting very valuable tables from all over Europe as to child's death rates. The thing is now to ascertain why these death rates are so high. He has got information from Vienna similar to what he now asks from you—which I have seen—as well as his tables. He extends his paper simply to telling what Europe actually does with its children: under one, from one to three, from three to five, *not* to giving advice as to what they should do.

God bless you. I can only just get on with my life. We have never been so busy—St Thomas', London poor rate, India and War Office all at once. My nights are torture. And I often wonder how long my mind will last.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/66/7

21 May 1866

I hope you will have had a note from Embley this morning telling you all about trains, station and fly. Embley housekeeper says: there is no tea out at Lea Hurst and the tea is not good at the surrounding shops. I venture to send you some tea of my own, not to be bought in shops, but straight from China. I hope you will *outstay* this tea, and desire me to send you more.

I have a terrible little Swedish lady here, formidable in her timidity, youth and lack of English, come to be trained for a matron at St Thomas'. I promised her an introduction to you (Miss Emmy Rappe<sup>40</sup>). (She does not enter St T.'s till 1 July for she really does not understand even the word "patient.") Could you tell me to what lady I could give her a letter in your absence at King's College Hospital? just to see the arrangements.

I hope this is the only trouble I shall give you now. But afterwards I am sure this innocent maiden ought to have a training under you. If you will just ask one of the "sisters" to write to me, that is all that is needed now. God bless you and restore you to us well and strong.

Source: From an incomplete letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/101

19 June 1866

I never seem to write to you unless I want something. M Husson, director of the Assistance Publique at Paris, and one of the best administrators in Europe, is coming over (from Paris) from 1 July to

---

40 Emmy Caroline Rappe (1835-1896), Swedish nurse.

6 July to study the Poor Law system in London. Among other things, he asks me to apply to Mr Villiers<sup>41</sup> (I have done so but am referred to you, as they have not what M Husson wants) for the statistics of *mortality of lying-in women in the London workhouses* and, if possible, in those of the great towns in England. (M Husson is going to publish these statistics for all Europe.)

I have never told you how valuable we thought your paper on infant mortality. Nor have I ever thanked you for all your kindnesses in sending me interesting papers. Nor have I ever thanked Mr Clode for his cattle plague mortality returns. Please do so. You will be the saving of the nation in that matter. But you know what I think as to the cattle plague commissioners, let them rest *not* in peace. England will be ashamed of herself some day about that.

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/102

25 June 1866

Many thanks for your note of 23 June. I communicated your kind offer of assistance to M Husson, and he writes a very grateful note in return. He would like very much to have, if it were possible, for every lying-in hospital and for every dispensary which attends lyings-in at the women's own homes (including, I suppose, of course, workhouses), in "lying-in hospitals" tables filled up something like what I enclose. But if there were no distinction of cause of death, the column "total" would suffice. Have you any means whereby tables such as this could be filled up?

Or could you kindly procure for M Husson copies of the reports of lying-in institutions in order to have the proportion of deaths to cases as he desires. I know how much this is to ask. (Frenchmen don't distinguish lying-in institutions from lying-in wards of workhouses.)

M Husson alludes very feelingly to his desire that you should obtain the place of correspondent to the "Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques," of which he is a member. And he hopes that your assistance (of this kind) may be a step to it. These Frenchmen don't all well know how great your labours and how great their results have been. In haste.

---

41 Charles Pelham Villiers (1802-98), president of the Poor Law Board when Nightingale began her work on bringing nurses into the workhouse infirmaries. There is extensive coverage of her work with him in *Public Health Care*.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/66/14

17 August 1866

I send you a brace of grouse in their mountain heather—the only ones I have had this year. I have stayed on in London—partly because I could not get through my work—partly because I could not bear to go while the cholera was so bad—though I could do no good. But I feel, IF I did not go tomorrow, I should probably never leave London again. And my mother we think failing.

I cannot tell you how I grieve at leaving London without seeing you, my dearest friend. But if it makes you come to Embley to see me, I shall not grieve. God bless you.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/61

25 September 1866

About Aldershot Female Hospital and Mrs Daniell, I am so very sorry that we can't help from King's College Hospital with a midwife or matron midwife, *unless* they will send a woman to be trained by us. "All trained in our ward are under definite engagements before coming to us for instruction. As yet we have trained none to be in readiness for a vacant post." But Mr H. Bonham Carter thinks we may so take one or two, if *very promising* women apply.

Miss Jones writes this morning: "I do not know of anyone outside our hospital who would be suitable. I did recommend one to Mrs Edwards, when she had the Women's Hospital at Portsmouth, as a temporary help and to teach one of her own people; then she had a guinea a week. I find this woman is now engaged." I have kept Mrs Daniell's and Colonel Arthur Herbert's letters because I am going to ask in another quarter. But I have very little hope. We require six or twelve months' notice to find and train such a woman.

Ladies are so very thoughtless—they always think there are large numbers of such women *on hand*. Women fit to be engaged always *are* engaged. Ladies don't act in that way for themselves. For their own confinements they engage a nurse months beforehand and *don't* engage a nurse without training. But I write now, in case Mrs Daniell and the Aldershot people should make up their minds to *choose* and have a woman trained by us at King's College Hospital for Aldershot Female Hospital.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/62

Embley

Romsey

29 September 1866

I am so very sorry (more than disappointed) that we cannot help the Aldershot Female Hospital to a matron midwife or even a midwife, at present. All my inquiries have led to nothing but "No person at present to recommend." I am more sorry than surprised. It can be only by accident that you can find a matron, midwife or head nurse competent to undertake such duties at liberty at a week's or month's notice. People are beginning to find this out and write to us a year beforehand for a trained matron or trained nurses, which is none too soon. (The government of New South Wales has just written to me for four trained head nurses to found a school for hospital nurses, for the colony at Sydney, in the infirmary. We have been obliged to answer: give us time. We have not one who is not engaged at the end of her training.)

I most earnestly wish that the Aldershot people would select a woman and send her to us to train at King's College Hospital for them as midwife or as midwife matron. (N.B. I do not myself like the plan of making the midwife the matron. The very essence of a matron's employment is that she ought to be *in all places at once*, whereas the midwife is, or ought to be, chained to the bedside of a patient, sometimes for hours. If during the day, how can she give the due supervision to the other patients, especially where, besides the lying-in ward, there is a ward of general cases? If, during the night, how can she be fit for her general duties the next day? A matron *must* have *some* sleep or she will take to drink, as this woman appears to have done.) However that may be, I wish Aldershot would send us a woman to train for them. I would gladly pay the money for her. (You know we pay King's College Hospital for the board of the women under training. This is generally defrayed by the persons sending the woman to be trained, as the "N. Fund" pays for the lying-in beds and the training midwife.)

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I can scarcely speak too highly of the moral training given us, in this our midwifery school, by the lady superintendent, whom you know (Miss Jones), or of the medical training, given by the physician accoucheurs.

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/70 and 71

Embley

Romsey

6 November 1866

PRIVATE. I will return to you Colonel Arthur Herbert's letter. I am extremely relieved to find that they have obtained two sisters from Wymering, one as matron, the other as midwife, for the Aldershot Hospital (female). I find however from Colonel Herbert's letter that the latter is to be trained by the medical officer. May I say, which I do with great reluctance (for I am sure I have enough of my own business to do, without meddling with that of others) that this is never found to answer—not in Paris, where they have one hundredfold the experience we have—nor anywhere.

A midwife must be trained by a head midwife, with, of course, physician's supervision, and in an institution where the object of her training is the sole or main object. For either the medical officer delivers himself, in which case how can the midwife learn to deliver? or she is left to exercise her imperfect knowledge. For how can the medical officer give the time to her instruction, which it is the sole business of the head midwife to give? (*Six months is the shortest term for such instruction, in Paris two years.*) The instruction of our probationers at St Thomas' might just as well be left to the physicians and surgeons of that institution. The superintendent of St John's House (King's College Hospital) has had, I believe, some dealings of this kind before with Wymering.

I write in haste and have no time to put my words in proper language. I should not like this to reach the eyes of any medical officer.

11 November 1866

Though much pressed for time, I can hardly feel satisfied to return Colonel Herbert's letter without telling you the result of my experience, both abroad and at home. (As you are perhaps aware, they manage these things much better on the Continent than we do) as to training midwives for the poor. I have asked, since I had Colonel Herbert's letter, the opinion of a person far more experienced than I, on the experiment he proposes to try. We are both, and very strongly, of opinion that quite independently of any motives of prudery, the course proposed for teaching the sister at Aldershot is only allowable, if no other mode of instruction be open.

As Colonel Herbert has "not much faith in paid nurses, unless they are under some person who works from high motives," why did not



they have Mrs Ogden, or some other midwife, *temporarily* with the other sister as matron whilst the one to be midwife was sent to King's College Hospital to be trained in the lying-in ward and midwives' school there? It is most desirable too that the sister be trained *away from* the hospital where she is to act as midwife. Lastly, it is so desirable that "sisters" ("persons who act from higher motives") should enter this most unpleasant branch of nursing that when Colonel Herbert *has* found just the person he wants, it does seem 1000 pities that she should not be properly trained, when there *is* training to be had under such a person as the lady superintendent of St John's House. (I would gladly pay for her.)

Source: From a letter probably to Henry Acland and Douglas Galton, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/66/18

19 November 1866

Dr Watson's paper<sup>42</sup> is founded on assumptions and opinions. Deal with it in the same way. E.g., he says there have been remarkably few deaths from puerperal fever in Marylebone Workhouse—inquire why there have been *any*. This infirmary has been compared with Queen Charlotte's Hospital. At Marylebone there are about twelve lying-in beds. At Queen Charlotte's there are how many? fifty or sixty? Q. Charlotte's is a special hospital and everybody knows (except hospital physicians) that the danger to lying-in women increases directly with the number of occupied beds—also with the badness of construction and ventilation, quite apart from cubic space. At Q. Charlotte's, 2000 cub. ft. per bed is a necessity. But, if you inquire you will find other causes of mortality, and you will do good by getting them removed.

The present facts do not prove Marylebone to be healthy. They prove the great preventible mortality at Q. Charlotte's.

Source: From a note to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45752 f175

[ca. 22 April 1867]

This is a question constantly arising. Our midwives trained at King's College are, on the one hand, *not* employed in the country because the guardians have no power to allow them the parish fee.

On the other hand, we are besieged with applications to give paid workhouse nurses *one* month's instruction in midwifery to be employed

---

42 Thomas Watson (1792-1882), later Sir, a physician at Guy's Hospital, headed the committee investigating cubic space in workhouse infirmaries; Nightingale's paper for it is published in *Public Health Care* (6:367-90).

*not* certified as *accoucheurs* in workhouses. This I flatly refuse. And I think there should be a regulation of the Poor Law Board to prevent guardians from employing uncertified midwives any more than unqualified medical officers. . . .

Yesterday the Winchfield Board of Guardians, a powerful union of thirty-eight parishes, appoint for the first time a paid nurse to their workhouse. And they ask us to give her *one* month to qualify her as *accoucheur*, adding “*of course* we require *no certificate*.” Paris gives two years. I did so and they immediately reply, we don’t want you, we can get it elsewhere and they have done so.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/148, and a draft in Dr Sutherland’s hand, ADD Mss 45787 ff145-46

1 May [1867]

I send you the bare facts of the case for Mr Hardy,<sup>43</sup> to be put in your own way, of course—I have not the least faith in that gentleman.

F.N.

*Mr Hardy.* It has recently come to my knowledge that a board of guardians has sent a woman, whom they were desirous of appointing “as *accoucheur*” (sic) to a workhouse, for *one month*’s training in her office, after the “Nightingale Fund” had declined to receive her for a less period than *six months*, which we know from experience to be the minimum essential for training.

Looking at the amount of suffering and probable loss of life which might be entailed if this precedent were adopted elsewhere, I would beg to suggest whether the Poor Law Board might not prevent much mischief by requiring that *no midwife be employed by any board of guardians, unless her qualifications and certificates have been previously approved by the Poor Law Board.*

I should feel disposed to apply this rule to all cases and its practical operation would be that a better-instructed class of woman would gradually be available for the purpose.

**JS:** It has recently come to my knowledge that a board of guardians has attempted to obtain the services of an imperfectly trained woman to act as midwife in their workhouse. They wished that we should take her for one month’s training, which we declined to do and they sent her elsewhere.

---

<sup>43</sup> Gathorne Hardy (1814-1906), Conservative president of the Poor Law Board, successor to the Liberal Villiers.

It has occurred to me to address you on the subject lest a precedent be established which in the end might lead to such suffering and to loss of life among the poor. Apart from this danger I can see no objection to the employment of fully [?] qualified midwives in workhouses or in parishes. We train women for such purposes under the Fund, but practically we find that it requires six months' careful training to qualify a woman merely for the nursing responsibilities of such a profession.

Until a sufficient number of trained midwives can be provided it would certainly be better to continue the present system of requiring the medical officer of the workhouse to take the lying-in cases. In the meantime it has occurred to me to suggest whether the Poor Law Board might not caution boards of guardians against employing women until their recommendations and qualifications have been submitted to the board. It appears to me that the medical inspectors of the board would easily decide as to the competency of any woman offering herself for such an office and that it would be highly desirable that such applications should be referred to their opinion.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/67/7

14 October 1867

I should not have troubled you by writing but that I have a message to you from Dr Shrimpton,<sup>44</sup> of Paris. (I should tell you that I know nothing of Dr Shrimpton—never saw him—but have by his desire corresponded with him occasionally for some years on “professional” matters. In a letter, received this morning, on such matters he asks me to “plead his cause” with you. Now I cannot do this—I am quite sure that I could bring nothing before you which you have not already maturely weighed and that I could not suggest any reasons which would influence you. Therefore, I will only transcribe what he says on your subject:

Our little hospital here stands at this moment in great peril. (I had not hitherto known that he had anything to do with it.) Hitherto it has been most admirably managed and administered by Sister Frances, Miss Wylde, of St John's. The council, under the pressure of Miss Jones, I am persuaded, has decided on withdrawing their sis-

---

44 Dr Charles Shrimpton (1815?-?), physician at the hospital for British residents at Neuilly, later the American Hospital.

ters and nurses from the hospital. Miss Jones has undoubtedly very good reasons for being dissatisfied. The hospital still remains in the hands of Messrs Galignani and, as long as this continues, we must have the same difficulties to encounter. If Miss Jones should however persist in her determination, the hospital must be closed. This would be a very great misfortune. I saw Miss Jones a few weeks ago, soon after the decision of the council. I called twice after this at St John's, when unfortunately Miss Jones was out of town. I can't think any establishment in Europe can be more needed than our little hospital in Paris. The good it has done already is incalculable—I do not allude so much to the treatment of patients as to the moral influence it produces on the English population in Paris. If you would plead our cause with Miss Jones, I think she might be induced to take us again under her protection.

[FN:] I will not add another word, except to say that I entirely believe what he says above is true.

### **Ecclesiastical Interference at King's College Hospital**

**Editor:** Nightingale's and Mary Jones's attention focused for some months on the interference of the (male) chaplain and (male) council, supported by the (male) bishop of London, in the internal affairs of the St John's (women's) community. Much correspondence on this has already been reported in *Theology* (3:449-79). Hence at the same time as mortality from puerperal fever in the midwifery ward was rising Nightingale and Jones were preoccupied with another, extremely vexing, matter. Jones in fact left her order over the interference of male clerics, not the puerperal fever and the closing of the ward.<sup>45</sup>

Nightingale was interested in the issue as a women's rights matter. From her European experience she also knew that such interference did not occur in Roman Catholic orders, where the lines were carefully drawn between clerical authorities (bishops) and the provision of religious services (priests/confessors), all male, and the community's hierarchy (mother superior, etc.), all female.<sup>46</sup>

This interference prompted some of the strongest and most sarcastic statements Nightingale ever made about male incompetence. She jokingly demanded "an act of Parliament . . . this session, to prevent

---

45 On the conflict see Carol Helmstadter, "Robert Bentley Todd, Saint John's House and the Origins of the Modern Trained Nurse" 302-10.

46 See *Theology* (3:301, 308).

all clerical gentlemen from interfering at all in administration” in the letter immediately below, and even “How I wish there were no men” (see p 182 below) and “I never would have created men.” The bishop of London was grossly uninformed about the situation and wrote a bad letter on it, although he was the community’s “visitor.” He misunderstood completely the issue about oaths—the bishop was a “drole” (see p 183 below). Yet Nightingale was also disappointed with Mary Jones’s conduct and tried very hard to effect a reconciliation. How different the two women were in approach and tactics is very apparent.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/153

15 May 1867

Could you lay your hand, without any trouble, upon that letter of mine to you *for the bishop of London?*<sup>47</sup> and return it to me? After all, I think I shall have to write to him (through you). (If I can’t get my act of Parliament through this session to prevent all clerical gentlemen from interfering at all in administration, *I must.*)

I suppose you have not seen Mr Bowman yet. It may be that the obnoxious clause (about the triple pope) is not passed. It is, of course, *the committee’s report* (not any private “views” of Mr Bowman’s) that I want to see, if I am to do any good by suggesting. It is as useless for me to suggest my own views as to ask for Mr Bowman’s. Mr Bowman’s letter to you seems to me such a mistake altogether. If one of the sisterhood had asked me for a “scheme,” it would have been very absurd of me to have given it. So it seems to me very absurd of Mr Bowman, as one of the council, to ask me for a scheme. I have nothing to do except with the *head* of the sisterhood, on the one hand, and the *committee’s* report on the other.

Source: Note for Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45752 ff252-58

[ca. 12 November 1867]

My cares are more in number than the hairs of my head, even though I’ve torn out half of them. Bowman has got himself into an impossible position—Miss Jones ditto. And both come to us to ask what they are to do. The thing is this: Miss Jones, without going to Bowman, who

---

47 Archibald Campbell Tait (1811-82), later archbishop of Canterbury; Nightingale found fault with him earlier for bad sanitary policies that led to unnecessary deaths, in *Life and Family* (1:323), and for his position on a theological dispute, in *Theology* (3:617).

has done all the council work for fifteen years, writes to the secretary of the council to resign, giving these two reasons: that the report was not honest or straightforward, that the bishop would not let them have the chaplain they were to pay themselves without interfering with him. Miss Jones also writes, without waiting for any farther communication, *both* to King's College and to Charing Cross, saying that she has renounced her connection with St John's. Bowman was so exceedingly overcome and depressed in telling me this and at the prospect of having the whole arrangements of nursing the two hospitals thrown on his overworked hands that I really hardly knew what to say.

In the meantime, the bishop of London writes a *private* note to Bowman (and this is absolutely all that is known) saying that Miss Jones has sent him in her resignation to St John's and *asking* Bowman *what is Miss Jones's connection with St John's?* Note well how much this bishop, who is *both* visitor and chairman, knows about the matter he undertakes!!!

Only Miss Jones has stated, alas! but too explicitly and too, far too, imprudently, that she *and all the sisters* resign. Next, *in the same letter*, the bishop writes to Bowman that he has had several "unsatisfactory" letters from Miss Jones and that he has "vetoed" the appointment of the chaplain because the sisterhood wished the chaplain to "administer vows." Bowman says this is *all* he knows about it, that Miss Jones may probably or possibly be able to explain this, but that he (Bowman) is so hurt by Miss Jones taking such a step without even giving him notice as writing her resignation officially to St John's, to King's and to Charing Cross that he can't send for her.

He is at his wits' end and he went away from me more at his wits' ends than ever because he did not seem to see the difficulty *before* of replacing Miss Jones. He said he was going to Miss Twining<sup>48</sup> and also to the Clewer [Anglican] sisterhood to see if they would undertake the hospitals. He did not seem to anticipate (what I told him quite plainly) that I should never dream of leaving the midwifery ward under either the University sisterhood or the Clewer or Miss Twining. I told him that I should think it my duty immediately to lay a plan before him as my council as to *what* we should do, but that I should not remain at King's.

Bowman asks me to write to her certain questions upon the letters, which he knows I have had from her, but which I neither showed him

---

48 Louisa Twining (1820-1912), philanthropist and workhouse reformer.

nor told him about, and to try to make out from her something. He would prefer that I should not tell her what he told me, not even that he had been to me. But he would rather that I should tell her all than that I should not learn from her *something* for them to go upon. Bowman is going to the bishop this week and he is coming here again on Saturday to know what I advise him to do!!! The matter is finally to be settled on 22 November.

Bowman says he is quite sure neither St John's nor King's College nor Charing Cross will keep a sisterhood with vows. But then you see he contradicts himself, for he told me that he could not conceive how Miss J. could be such a fool as to throw up all this work for such nonsense, and then he told me that he could not believe but that she had already made some arrangements for keeping on the work. Bowman says "on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (Thursday week) I shall be in the chair. *What am I to do? What am I to say?*" But, if she asks me point blank whether I have heard anything from Bowman, what *can* I say?

Bowman himself does not see the essential difference between Miss Jones and all the other lady superiors, that she trains and the others do not. And the bishop—you know he sanctions and applauds those idiotic deaconesses and Pelham Dale<sup>49</sup>—and he does not see the entire superiority of the training principle of Miss Jones. How I wish there were no men. Bowman jawed away, reading me up all the back papers, shifting his own ground every moment instead of the one clear statement, which Miss Jones gives, justifying that stupid report, when Miss J. says if only they would not have mentioned anything but finance. He has seen Miss J. and they seem to have come to some sort of reconciliation. He has written to the bishop and we are trying to make the bishop *see* Mr Labart,<sup>50</sup> who long ago offered to come up to see the bishop.

The bishop has convoked a meeting at London House of St John's Council on Friday next. Bowman consents to try and see the bishop first and has written to ask, also for Mr Labart. Nothing *can* be arrived at unless the bishop gives in and withdraws his letter, which perhaps he may have the gleam of sense necessary. This is a *dead* secret.

What do you think that idiotic council have done? Gone, without consulting even Bowman, and asked Miss Byron of All Saints (Univer-

---

49 Thomas Pelham Dale (1821-92), high church priest and visitor to St John's House.

50 William White La Barte, high church priest, declined to be chaplain.

sity) to undertake the work. And Miss B., without a moment's consideration, undertakes the whole work. Very well, I said to Bowman, then I will tell *you* a dead secret: Miss Byron has not *one* sister who knows anything of hospital work but *one* who was discharged from another order for untruthfulness. Miss Byron's sisters all take vows as a regular thing. And if the bishop who [breaks off]

THE WHOLE of the details are virtually settled between Miss Jones and me. If we say nothing, nothing will be done, Miss Jones and I HAVING settled to give up the midwifery ward in K.C.H.

She asks me whether she shall do, as above. Harry B.C. is absolutely nothing but my officer in reality. Harry Bonham Carter is absolutely a person non-existent as regards K.C.H. THE WHOLE CONTRACT is between K.C.H. and ST JOHN'S, *we* repaying. Miss Jones is to ask King's College to ask St John's to ask our committee to withdraw from the midwifery ward? Is that the right way? You see—I don't. *I* manage it with Miss Jones, the agreement to terminate by mutual consent found in practice not to answer.

They're all idiots but Miss Jones. I spoke to Bowman myself. He's an idiot. What they pretended to do with regard to the P.-M. theatre has entirely failed and the effluvia are as bad as ever. The droles and the droles are too much for me. But I could do with the droles: they are reasonable, but it's the droles—I never would have created men, never, never. Such a drole as the bishop of London I really never contemplated.

Well, I had Bowman here jawing away all yesterday evening, till I am much more dead than alive. I believe I brought him to reason. He acknowledged and assented to everything. But, he says, what am I to do next? I say see the bishop of London. Well, he says, I will but (1) the bishop of London is at the N. Foreland and (2) the bishop of London won't take a verbal statement from me. But, he says, I will write to the bishop of London at once and say that I have seen two or three people (he wished to mention me, but I said, Don't) and I want to see him before the meeting. And I will also write to Miss Jones and ask to see her and kiss and be friends. So I said. But, he says, "the bishop won't take a verbal or a written statement from him (Bowman). He says Miss Jones must go with him or he must take a letter from Miss Jones. Now I (F.N.) don't think Miss J. will do either.

This is a difficulty of the bishop's making. And I don't believe (though *I* might) that Miss J. will choose to be had up in the dock to make explanations. But the "vows" and the "oaths" and compulsory



confession are ENTIRELY the bishop's own megrim [hemicrania, severe, nervous headache]. Well, then, Mr Labarte replies to that, neither I nor ANYONE would take ANY kind of care whatever under ANY bishop who chose to write such a letter as that. Well, the only person who is straightforward and aboveboard is Miss Jones. As for the bishop, Bowman showed me letters of his last night which I could not have believed if I had not seen them.

That's just what I told Bowman to find out. But the bishop's word is "oaths." Bowman showed me a letter of the bishop's last night to this effect: that he could not conceive why this arrangement should not be made, that the council should keep the nurses with a housekeeper over them, that the sisterhood should be set free to engage with the governors of hospitals as they thought fit, and that they (the council) should put out their nurses to hospital nursing as to private nursing as they thought fit.

I told Bowman as mildly as I could that such a proposition was absolutely untenable, that my whole life had been but one protestation against such a plan, that anyone who could propose such a thing simply showed that either he had not considered or was incapable of considering the question. Miss Jones always told me that the bishop had tried to sever her from the council. And I actually never believed her till I saw it last night in the bishop's own hand.

**JS:** 1. To tell Mr Bowman exactly all that Miss Jones said.

**FN:** I did and he was satisfied.

**JS:** 2. Let Mr Bowman see the bishop *and tell him all* and see whether an arrangement cannot be come to.

**FN:** He says he will. But he says the bishop will not accept a statement from him.

**JS:** 3. The council to restrict its reports in future simply to finance and general matters without touching on the sisterhood.

4. If it be considered desirable to have a report on the work of the sisterhood, this report to be supplied by the superior personally.

**FN:** [Regarding] 3 and 4: he says he consents to directly, but he says, if Miss J. had but said she wished this, it might all have been settled.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/67/8

7 December 1867

*Burn.* I have gone over the Rules for 1865 which you sent me—combining them with what you told me—not because I hope to do any

good but because you asked me. What appears to me to flow from this consideration is this: the rules of 1865 are as autocratic on everything except the details of nursing as can well be. Looking at them on the legal side, the mother superior has nothing to do at all except to provide for efficient exercise of nursing duties in hospitals, private families, etc. There is a jealous guardianship over everything religious. There is also control over the general efficiency of the nursing, whether in hospitals or in private families. All the possible work in St John's House is exercised exactly on the same terms. What can be done by the sisters in hospitals is precisely what can be done by them in the other duties of the house. The rules show entire liberty for the superioress in all details of nursing—but the most absolute control by the council in everything else.

The idea is that, on these terms, the council will enter into arrangements with superior and sisters but on no other terms than these. The rules are a very distinct "*constitution*" with rights on both sides strictly defined—and which can only be departed from (being and remaining as I see them in black and white) by secession on one side or the other. (That is, as you tell me that you "do not wish to make any proposition as to altering them or any of them.") I simply lay before you the cold legal view of the thing.

You know that I would give my heart's blood to alter, if I could, the present disastrous state of things. You say: why can't they take our work exactly as the hospitals do? Simply because they might just as well take the R.C. Mother Gonzaga's<sup>51</sup> work or the R.C. soeur supérieure's work as yours, if on those terms. (I will allude to this with regard to the Rev Mother of Bermondsey farther on.) They have "gone in" for being flesh, and you ask them: why they can't be fowls? at the same time that you say you "do not wish to propose any alteration" from the flesh state. I do not say which is right or which is wrong. I am simply trying to lay before you what *is*.

You know I think councils should have nothing to do except with finance and the general supervision (such as that no work should be undertaken without their control), which of course also includes the dismissal, upon dissatisfaction. All these powers are still more autocratically and vexatiously used against R.C. communities than here. And you would not find a single gentleman in England who would

---

51 Mary Gonzaga Barrie (1825-73), Sister of Mercy who nursed in the Crimea; for correspondence see p 1014.

stand up as responsible before the public for your finance without having such control. Do you think I could ask, e.g., Sir Harry Verney, to assume before the public the responsibility of my Fund and not allow him any control? You see what All Saints is—they do exactly what you suggest. And I can only say, if University College is satisfied, it is thankful for small mercies. I am not speaking at random. You perhaps do not know that they applied to my council (not to me) to do something for us, as you are so good as to do. And I would not let the proposition even be entertained. I should just as soon think of entrusting any public money in the hands of All Saints as in the hands of those “British Nursing Associations” which are always applying to me for “advice.”

There is an institution (not a hospital) which Miss Sellon has had for some years on the same kind of terms that All Saints has University College—and then she writes to me, after having had it for years, to give her a certificate with the secular management, as if she had been a servant under suspicion. You know *that* is a humiliation I would not submit to for one moment. But such things must always happen where there is not a lay council.

2. You say that the bishop would let you have any chaplain independent of him—but that you don’t want to be independent of your bishop. Dearie, does not that mean that you must have the appointment of the bishop as well as the appointment of the chaplain? You want to be “dependent on” the bishop. But then the bishop is to think what you think. Take it the other way: suppose the sisters were Irish Protestants and the chaplain a ritualist chaplain whom the bishop wished to make “conditions” with?

One must consider the subject every way and not only as regards the lifetime of one person. You say that I “would not accept such a position myself.” My dearest—if the bishop were to write to my chaplain and make it a “condition” with him that I should not look out of window and that he should prevent me—I should say I didn’t wish to look out of window—but you may sign twenty promises, if you like it, that you will prevent me from looking out of window—as I was not going to do it, what harm does that do me?

3. This is a very small matter—and I really have hesitated a great deal whether I should give you one extra little harass to your many and great harasses—but I think that you and I know each other enough before God for you to trust me that it is from the overwhelming importance of the great subject (which to my mind, as you know,

concerns nothing less than whether sisterhoods can exist or not in the Church of England)—that I mention what otherwise would be a trifle. Just as R.C. communities are, in one direction at least, getting out of formalism, we seem to be falling into it. Funds are entrusted even now by Protestant boards to R.C. communities. And, of course, in R.C. countries, the relations of business between the superiors of communities and secular institutions and secular individuals are innumerable.

No one in the world can have had the opportunity even of seeing so many of these relations as I have—of being concerned in so many—of receiving so many letters from superiors of every country, which I do, even to this day. I have never seen any letter or paper, not even from orders in Italy (the most formalistic of any country) where the superioress did not sign with her own name. Of course the document would not be legal without. To me they might write with only their religious name, but *this* was at full length and only in a private letter and, except in the very closest intimacy, followed by their own name. Nay, more, I have had to read and forward letters from men superiors to mother superiors and the own name of the mother superior has always been given at full length, whether with or without the religious name before it. I think the rule is a very simple one: let the mother superior be or call herself or sign herself anything she likes *with her sisterhood*. But with the world without, whether religious or secular, let her sign with and use her own name—with any title appropriate to seculars, e.g., matron or superintendent general or whatever she *actually* is *in fact* as regards the world without.

The hieroglyph of Church of England superioresses (though I never knew Miss Sellon<sup>52</sup> use any such)—to say nothing of its affording no evidence as to who the writer is—sets many a “parson” or “low church doctor” against the poor woman who bears it on her certificate. And many excellent and religious persons are deterred by the “high style.” Believe me, I do not speak the words of your council.

Dearest, I wish I had anything to give you but my poor prayers and my poor experience of things of which circumstances have given me an experience which no one else can have had. If perhaps it may please God to take me before the end of this winter, I shall leave you with a sad heart, though I cannot do you any good.

---

52 Priscilla Lydia Sellon (1821-76), founder of the Anglican Society of Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Trinity, Devonport.

Mrs Herbert, who does not usually say anything so true, poor thing, said to me: All the other Church of England sisterhoods are nothing but poor apes' imitations of R.C. sisterhoods. Miss Jones alone has a principle, a foundation, a solid meaning of its own. That is just my feeling. And if yours fails, if yours becomes like the others (though during your life you will keep it up) I shall feel that this all-important question is decided in the negative (viz., whether sisterhoods can exist in the Church of England). University College Hospital's sisterhood "recommended itself to the attention" of my council in these words: that it was on the same footing as yours. That is just what it is not.

While you live, you will keep up the work to what it is now. And, while I live, I shall be able to make my council accept anything that you are (personally) so good as to do for us. But there is not one of my council who would not resign at once if I attempted to put any part of our work in the hands of a sisterhood without your present form and without your personal guarantee. Take again the case of accepting work on the terms you wish. As far as I can be supposed to know anyone who has been so good as to live under me for nearly two years, almost in the same room, and with whom I am in constant communication (the Rev Mother of Bermondsey, Mrs Moore, R.C.) I could absolutely guarantee the propriety of committing to her any part of the Fund, i.e., that whatever she undertook she could and would faithfully and honestly perform. (Of course this is quite out of the question. I could not possibly offer a R.C. to my council.) Yet this is the way you wish your council to take you.

But, when she goes (SHE is a saint) I should feel the same absolute positive certainty that her successor could not be trusted as that *she* could. I only mention this because I feel so strongly that personal guarantees are nothing—that sisterhoods depending on the life of one person are nothing—and that when you once leave the firm path, though a very stony one, with all its rubs and inconveniences, of a religious community on a secular basis, you know not into what quags and thickets and marshy land it will ultimately land the community, even if it does not bring it to an end—as with your life may possibly be the case.

And now, dearest, I have let a day or two pass over, because I am only able to write at intervals. But there is no interval in the ceaseless anxiety with which I think of and pray for your future. It is worse than death. I am sure you will believe me when I say that I have tried to lay the case before you—not from the side of your council but from the

side of my own life's experience—just as I have tried to lay the case before Mr Bowman, not from your side but from the side of life's experience of all countries. I should be a very unfair and unfaithful friend if I did not. No word of this is suggested by Mr Bowman or by anything I have heard from or about either council or bishop. (I have always told you quite frankly: *this* is what I understand your council or bishop says—*this* is what I suppose your council or bishop would say.)

Believe me now when I say that *this* is written entirely from myself—though after giving every moment of consideration night and day which I could command, consideration before God—to the points raised by yourself and by him, Mr Bowman and by the council generally and bishop. Still, you know you said yourself that “no one could understand the real points of difference between yourself and council.” That is just what I feel—I do not understand them. I do not at this moment know the real reasons why you resign. I don't understand your grievances against the council—nor theirs against you. And as, on a point which I do not exaggerate if I call it one of vital importance to the Church of England, that is, to know whether your sisterhood, the only one on a sound basis, *can* stand or not—it is surely worthwhile that there should be at least a clear understanding what the point or points of difference are.

I therefore venture to suggest that there is one thing yet to be done and that is that you and the council should each set down in a series of distinct propositions all the grievances you have against each other. It surely is worthwhile (it would not take long to do what must be so very distinct in your mind). It would then be possible (what is not now possible) to see whether, by each side giving up any point which they do not consider essential—by rubbing a little off one angle and a little off another angle, the wheels could not be made to move again and the whole machine, which has done *so much* good, be made to go on even better than it ever has done. Believe me, this is not advice which I would not tender if I could and which you would not take if I did. It is simply trying to lay the case before your own firm and clear mind—perhaps the firmest and clearest mind I know—and certainly the greatest courage I know—either in men or women. God forever bless you.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/67/9

9 December 1867

To my great surprise (and after I had quite and completely done my letter to you) Mr Bowman called and asked to see me. Nothing but

the feeling that perhaps it might be ordered by God made me admit him. (For I had had three business interviews. I was racked with cough and pain and congestion and feverishness.) The result of our interview was this (and I am sure you would not think that I had spared him if you knew what I have said and written to him) that, if you only would ask whether any suggestions of yours to modify the position of the sisterhood in St John's House would be entertained and fairly considered, terms, satisfactory to both sides, that is, as satisfactory as anything can be in this world —might be arrived at, your suggestions would be received with the greatest respect (you *must* know how extremely anxious they are to retain the sisterhood).

I think, do you know? that they have swallowed a good deal of humble pie—not that I have the least objection to their swallowing a great deal more—still I think you have given them a good dose and it has done them good. I am writing before daylight in the morning and can only add, I am sure that, if you have any real wish to continue with your council, it would be possible now to make such terms as would constitute you an “independent sisterhood, employed under an agreement.” And you know that I have never taken the part of your council—never advised and never would advise you to accept any interference of their part except in financial matters and what this involves.

God bless you.

### **Closing the Training School and Midwifery Ward at King's College Hospital**

**Editor:** It is not clear how early Nightingale became aware of the excessive mortality at the midwifery ward. Cartwright noted how “unusually successful” the ward was in its first year of operation, in 1862-63 reporting ninety-three women delivered without fatality. When it was closed in 1867, 792 women had been delivered with twenty-eight fatalities, for a rate of 3.5 percent, when 4 percent was “not uncommon in a lying-in hospital.”<sup>53</sup> An article in the *Medical Times and Gazette* stated that the average mortality rate for “the more important cities of Europe” reached 1/29 (or 3.4 percent).<sup>54</sup> Baly

---

53 Frederick F. Cartwright, “Nightingales and Eagles: The Reform of British Nursing” 148.

54 “The Nightingale Memorial and Lying-in Hospitals” 121.

pointed out, citing a report from Guy's Hospital, that a death rate of 4.4 percent did not result in the closing of their ward (74), a puzzling point as other information has Guy's only conducting home births.

As Le Fort's data would (later) show, the Paris maternity institutions routinely had death rates over 10 *percent* and in 1864 that the *Maternité*, the institution with the most "perfect" training of midwives, rose to over 20 percent. Specifically the Paris Maternité's death rate (from all causes), 1860-64, averaged 12.4 percent, the Clinique de la Faculté (the medical school's institution) for the same period 7 percent, the Hôtel-Dieu 4.6 percent (Le Fort, *Des Maternités* 1:25-26, 28). Even more telling, Le Fort gave as the death rate for "the four maternity" institutions in London, 1860-64, as 1/28 (45), citing a study by Robert Barnes, the same as the King's College ward. Clearly the death rate at King's College Hospital was not such as to require closure compared with rates at institutions. But all the institutional death rates were higher than those for home births.

Other issues demanded both Nightingale's and Jones's attention throughout the years the midwifery ward and training school were in operation. In 1864 Nightingale added to Mary Jones's workload by asking her to assist with the plans for the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, which she did.<sup>55</sup> That William Rathbone needed the work to be done at "railway speed" only added to the pressure. She wrote Nightingale: "So very many patients have lately been sent in here only to die almost immediately, some indeed not living to reach the ward." One patient, "when I saw how very ill poor Mrs Briggs was" she wondered that she had come at all: "We thought she would have died the same night."<sup>56</sup> In 1865 Nightingale asked about training nurses for India. Jones wrote her back: "India has indeed a full claim upon us, but what can be done in this matter? It makes me mad with shame that the brave and good governor general's demand for nurses cannot be promptly met."<sup>57</sup> In 1865 there was also consideration of training workhouse girls at King's College Hospital for nursing.<sup>58</sup>

Robert Barnes's lectures on puerperal fever of 1865 are useful for considering the state of information at this crucial time. It is not known whether Nightingale read them (he was lecturer on midwifery at St Thomas' and they were published in the *Lancet*). She certainly

55 Correspondence in *Public Health Care* (6:240-41, 245-46, 259, 392-94).

56 Letter to Nightingale 5 March 1864, ADD MSS 47744 f24.

57 Letter to Nightingale 25 January 1865, ADD MSS 47744 f52.

58 Letter to Nightingale 3 May 1865, ADD MSS 47744 f68.



knew the work of his son, Robert Sydenham Fancourt Barnes, for she gave copies of his midwifery books to nurses (see p 388 below).

The fifth of Robert Barnes's "Lectures on Puerperal Fever" gives the usual eclectic list of causes, including "autogenetic . . . out of conditions proper to the patient herself." He argued against the assumption "that puerperal fever is mainly caused by elements of infection caught up from dissecting or from persons suffering under contagious diseases and carried directly to the lying-in room by the medical attendants." Bringing in comparative statistics, he further argued against the contention "that, if obstetric practice were entirely separated from the practice of medicine and surgery, and conducted by females, puerperal fever would be materially diminished" (531). He showed lower rates of death in deliveries by medical men of St Thomas' and Guy's Hospitals than the lying-in institutions, and argued that the hospitals got the more difficult cases.

Barnes asked: "Are midwives really exempt from the charge of being poison carriers? If so how is it that even in the Royal Maternity Charity cases of puerperal fever arose? The truth is, they are more likely, for reasons I shall hereafter explain, to carry the seeds of puerperal fever than are men."

Mary Jones herself was overworked and Nightingale was concerned about her health. In 1866 Jones was recuperating at Embley when Nightingale asked for her advice on training nursing superintendents. Jones's reply was negative, arguing for sisterhoods to be the agency for nursing.<sup>59</sup>

Nightingale wrote to Dr Acland c1866 that she entirely agreed with Dr Brodie's remark upon lying-in women, "If a lying-in woman has a home at all, she is safest in that. Put two lying-in women together, you more than double the danger. Put three together, you more than treble it. Indeed, it would not be too much to say that the danger increases as the *square* of the number." The basis for this conclusion, however, is not evident, for Nightingale had at that time collected no data. The "square" estimation, if hyperbole, is suggestive of the enormous differences reported by Le Fort. She noted the low mortality at Marylebone Workhouse Infirmary, "thanks to its small number of beds," but asked, "why does it have puerperal fever at all? A lying-in woman ought never to die, except from unavoidable accident."<sup>60</sup>

---

59 Letter 31 May 1866, ADD Mss 47744 f88.

60 In *Public Health Care* (6:356).

That Jones had neither ability in statistics nor knowledge of European practices was simply not a consideration (no other nurse would have been better in those respects). Nightingale herself never saw the arrangements at King's College Hospital, where the post-mortem room was under the delivery room and the students went "perpetually . . . straight from the post-mortems" into the wards (see next letter). Jones worried about it but hoped that she was mistaken (see p 194 below). The original plan was to have no students in the ward. Hospital design would be a major focus of the lying-in book.

The correspondence below shows that Nightingale was not alarmed at the first rumblings of trouble, for it seemed that hospital politics was the cause. The message from the medical authorities was clearly mixed: the ward had to be closed but they wanted the midwifery training reorganized and recommenced.

Source: From an exchange with Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45752 ff183-84

[17 June 1867]

This was written (five weeks ago to Dr Sutherland) when Miss Jones was pressing me for an immediate decision (as far as regarded advice to *her*). To be returned to F.N. It's a very serious matter. It amounts to this: that I am to decide whether the lying-in ward, with all its advantages to the poor in training midwives, is to be given up. There has been either real or fancied increase of illness among the lying-in women. Miss Jones, who is the only one who has any sense, is positive that it comes mainly from the post-mortem theatre and its proximity. Dr Priestley<sup>61</sup> says that it comes from having a lying-in ward in a general hospital.

But, she says, that is nonsense: there are no other patients on the floor or near them. And, she says, Dr P. does not like the midwifery nurse school, which he thinks beneath him and wants to have the ward for the students. However the matter is serious enough and has to be decided.

*She* had said (1) that no students were to go into the ward, except in the regular course with their professor. They go in perpetually, and straight from the post-mortems; (2) that the smell of the post-mortem theatre is *quite* perceptible in the ward. They won't believe it. (3) She had said that no unmarried lying-in woman was to be admitted *except*

---

61 William Overend Priestley (1829-1900), later Sir, accoucheur-in-charge, professor of midwifery.

by an authority from her; they have admitted such, latterly five with disease upon them. And there has been pyemia in the ward.

Certainly I don't mean to advocate it. But Dr Priestley, *she thinks*, is going to condemn it to abolish the lying-in ward. He has been at the directors already and to take extraordinary parturition cases into the *same ward* for *his* students. I can't do that. The lady superintendent comes here herself, lays the whole case before me and says that a decision is imminent.

It is not exactly so. The Council of St John's House pays for the ward. We pay them. Miss Jones really manages the whole affair, she and I. She comes to me and says what do you advise? How am I (Miss Jones) to ascertain whether the ward is really (under proper management) so unhealthy as that this invaluable school is to be given up? Because, there *is* strong ground for suspicion that Dr P. is only intriguing to get the ward for his own students with a worse kind of cases.

But, she says, they *can* only do that, *if* she and I consent. They don't dare. And her and my consent depend upon whether we really think that we are killing women to teach midwives:

1 case of puerperal fever which recovered;

Pyemia

2 cases of smallpox came in with it upon them

" " scarlet fever " " " " " "

Source: Letter of Mary Jones to Nightingale, ADD Mss 47744 ff125-27

St John's House  
7-8 Norfolk Street  
Strand, W.C.  
23 June 1867

My dearest friend

I know what a grief this poor midwifery ward is to you just now and this knowledge only deepens my own distress. The ward truly is never out of my mind and thus whichever way I will in trying to find out the cause of mischief I always end at the unhappy post-mortem room as the prime, if not the sole, cause of the evil. Of course I am speaking only of mere human means and arrangements for the rest, perhaps I thought too much of working in union with you and am punished. I ought to have insisted more strongly to the hospital committee on the evil of that post-mortem, which has always haunted me, instead of hoping I might be mistaken.

About the inquiry of which you speak and the part which your committee should take, I do not think you need call a special meeting just

yet. The time for the usual closing of the ward in its turn for cleaning of the walls, etc., is just at hand, and I should wish to put the matter plainly before the hospital committee before any formal communication from your committee. . . .

The latter [post-mortem theatre] is lighted and ventilated by a lantern, rather skylight, so the two ends being hinged are almost constantly open and the roof of the P.-M. is level with the floor of the corridor, and this corridor does not extend above the *first* floor. There is no corridor on the midwifery floor or the floor immediately beneath it.

2. Dissections for anatomical purposes usually take place at the *college* in the Strand. If any exceptional subject were so used in the hospital it would be in the P.-M. theatre. The "dead house" is immediately under the P.-M. room—the bodies are raised by a hoist.

3. I have marked the three beds in each of the lying-in wards. Sometimes a fourth bed is needed, not often. The women are removed to the large ward a few hours after delivery. A bed is brought alongside the newly delivered woman to which she is removed and wheeled or carried to the recovery ward.

4. The ventilating opening, both in the midwifery and children's wards, have each a glazed frame, pivot-hung (moving horizontally in midwifery floor, vertically in children's ward) so as to be opened or closed as needed. Some of the windows on either side may always be open. All the windows are tripartite, some opening sash-wise, others so.

I need scarcely say how thankful I should be to be used to do any good among our poor workhouse people and, if the midwifery school *must* go from K.C.H., I had much rather it were re-established in a workhouse than elsewhere. They did ask me some time ago to take the St Giles' Workhouse Infirmary, but I was just preparing for Charing Cross and had not living material (sisters) for both, but my few sisters were disappointed that I felt obliged to refuse it and would have grappled it all the more heartily and lovingly because it was so bad.

**Editor:** A statement from the King's College Hospital committee (or Mary Jones?) expressed "the desire to remedy the evil, so seriously affecting the healthiness of our midwifery ward," with "a plan for neutralizing mischief from P.-M. All necessary regulations as to students and patients admitted are to be strictly enforced. So I trust you will agree with me to try again in hope of a much less mortality, under God's blessing, than heretofore."<sup>62</sup>

---

62 Letter or note 1 August 1867, ADD Mss 47744 f132.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/67/5

5 August 1867

You will guess how excessively I am driven just now, from my not having answered your note of 1 August about the P.-M. theatre. I concur with you (as when do I not?)—let them try. In regard to the cutting off of the P.-M. room and the proposed students' regulations, let them try. They are evidently frightened and that is a good thing. Let them do their best to remedy the evil. Then we will see.

I am sure you well know that I, as well as you, think of all the patients in the hospital and not only of the lying-in cases. Therefore I rejoice that the thing is taken into consideration for the whole hospital. Otherwise I admit that, ever since I saw you that Sunday, I have felt that I wished our lying-in school were *well out*, under you, in a workhouse. However, it is well to try if the sad experience can be so made use of as not to be repeated in future. I think "Matilda Biddle" may, if you approve her, be quite safely taken. And I will tell H. Bonham Carter so.

I am so overworked with the India Public Health Service—just now (the Orissa terrible disaster [famine], like your P.-M. theatre, has given us a hold upon them and a favourable opportunity) that I can only say I have been in treaty lately with a Bombay Parsi, Naoroji Furdoonji,<sup>63</sup> about nurses' institutions. I ventured to give him a pencil introduction to you—to see not only the midwifery concern but your institute generally.

God bless you.

Source: From a letter of Mary Jones to Nightingale, ADD Mss 47744 ff138-39

17 October [1867]

A very plain straightforward matter appears to have been strangely bungled over. I have only once seen a student present at any delivery—and that was a case of craniotomy—before Dr Priestley's time. If they ever do come into our midwifery wards (beyond their visits with Dr Priestley) it is as any outside medical man would come to see any case of special interest in the general wards. I hope what I have said serves to make the purpose of the ward sufficiently clear. I am so sorry you should have had so much trouble—I can in no way account for the strange misrepresentation.

---

63 Naoroji Furdoonji (1817-85), writer and social reformer.

We have a resident “assistant physician accoucheur” and had long before this midwifery service was commenced in our hospital. He goes through the wards twice a day to see after the lying-in patients, who never need medical attention, but it is a very rare occurrence for him to be present at any ordinary delivery. Indeed I do not think he was ever present but in cases of difficulty and danger. To him the midwife would refer in cases of necessity and on him rests the responsibility of sending for Dr Priestley. He also directs the work of the students among the out-patients and attends any outside case when a student might not be at hand.

I have not read any report of the social science meeting nor do I know who “Dr Stewart” is. I have been so amazed by the “*facts*”! asserted by some of these public speakers, and sickened by their misrepresentation, that I doubt much of what they say on subjects of which I know nothing. Do they *care* to speak the truth? I *know* they do untold mischief by their unwarrantable assertions.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47715 ff128-29

2 December 1867

*Private.* Miss Jones (of K.C.H.) comes to me today (1) about their great affair, (2) about the poor midwifery ward. I consider it as quite settled that we leave K.C.H. and am rather glad that it is not left to *us* to say we *will* go. I have seen a proposition from Dr Priestley (in writing) that *we* should build huts for them—everything else remaining as before. There is not a yard of ground in any proximity to K.C.H. where huts could be put up. Also, we are giving up even soldiers’ wives’ lying-in huts and looking to improving their quarters for lyings-in.

I do not wish to prejudge our affair. But, in case of accidents, perhaps I may as well mention (to you) that I cannot at present see any adequate inducement for our council ever to enter into any such undertaking as providing lying-in beds or wards or hospital again. If we can take, e.g., workhouse lying-in beds, which are there already and must be there, and nurse them better, and train our midwifery nurses there under such a person as Miss Jones, *that* is the only thing, as far as I can see at present, for our council to undertake.

ever yours

F.N.

N.B. (This is quite by the way and *quite* private) I don’t want to be under Dr Priestley at all. I was very glad to be under Dr Arthur Farre.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/196

[December 1867]

We are going to leave King's College Hospital with our midwifery ward. And all *that* has to be done over again. Then I have seen Mr Bowman three afternoons and Miss Jones two, about *their* quarrel between the sisters and the council, which is wearing her to death. God only knows how to settle it.

**Editor:** A letter from the hospital to Henry Bonham Carter made it official:

Since the last meeting of the Council of St John's House, the secretary of King's College Hospital has written to inform the Council that the Nightingale ward has been permanently closed as a maternity ward under the opinion of Dr Priestley, endorsed by that of the medical board, that it is not advisable to have a maternity ward in a general hospital. The committee of management of King's College Hospital express however a very strong hope that the Fund may [be] "utilized in some other manner in accordance with the wishes of the benevolent donor in connection with King's College Hospital."<sup>64</sup>

Source: Incomplete letter to an unnamed recipient, ADD Mss 45800 ff207-08

[late January 1868 or later]

[Mary Jones] managed a training school of mine for midwifery nurses. In consequence of a misunderstanding with the Council of St John's House, due, first to the mismanagement, secondly, to the ill temper on the part of the council in this unfortunate difference, and thirdly, to their imputing "views" to Miss Jones which, however, she does not hold, the nursing in King's College Hospital is now as bad as or worse than (as I am informed by competent eyewitnesses) any hospital in the kingdom. And the bishop is consecrating the nursing, which leads to churchyards, with as much apparent zeal as bishops are said to consecrate the churchyard itself. No other remedy is possible except for the hospital committee to break their contract with St John's Council on the ground of incompetency and to renew it with Miss Jones and her sisterhood. I am waiting to reopen my midwives' school till I can reconstitute it (elsewhere) under Miss Jones.

---

64 Letter of Lionel Beale 16 January 1868, ADD Mss 47715 f153.

Pardon this long letter on a subject which I may be impertinent in writing about thus, *as to a friend*, and mistaken in supposing to be interesting to you. And pray believe me,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: From notes, ADD Mss 45753 ff15-17

[January 1868]

All doctors to be locked up in lunatic asylums by act of Parliament. *And all clergy and all men.*

Midwifery nurses: Dr Priestley's plan [is] that *we* should build huts *on the ground in front of King's College Hospital* for special cases of abnormal parturition to be attended by nurses and students alike. I told Miss Jones that I considered Dr P. a lunatic.

I have distinctly severed our connection with K.C.H. this day. I have told Miss Jones that we will now consider whether we could establish a connection with a workhouse *under her*. Or whether we could establish a school to attend lying-in women *at home under her*. . . . To my surprise she did not seem to consider the latter impossible to place under proper supervision. There's no kind of similarity, but there's no school. You might just as well say that I could establish a school for hospital nurses to learn as hospital students do.

Marylebone is TOO FAR. St Giles.

About the far higher matter of Miss Jones herself. She positively says that she never will re-enter St John's as an integral part of it, that they will work for St John's as they do for the hospitals. If not, not. . . . The nurses are the property of the council. She says, when she says that the council must not interfere with the "inner life" of the sisters, they say, "they don't want to." When she says, then let us go on so, then they say "then what's the good of our being a council at all?" their "unreason is unbearable." But she's no objection, to leave ALL that to the council. I told her so.

Source: From a draft letter to Nathaniel Powell with a postscript added by Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45800 ff217-18 (see also an earlier draft in Dr Sutherland's hand ff215-16), and a note or draft in Dr Sutherland's hand f219

[ca. 1 February 1868]

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 29 January informing me that you had closed the midwifery ward at King's College Hospital on account of deaths from puerperal fever and expressing the desire of the committee and the medical board that some way might



still be devised of training midwifery nurses in connection with your hospital under the "Nightingale Fund."

I am most desirous in the first place of expressing how grateful I feel to the committee for the kindness of their offer. The unfortunate recurrences which have led to the closing of the lying-in ward came to my knowledge early in June last. I immediately applied myself not only to obtain complete information on the subject but also to draw up comparative statistics with other lying-in wards and hospitals in London, Paris and Dublin. As you are aware, urgent application was made to the community to remedy certain glaring causes of offence in the immediate vicinity of the lying-in ward itself. The result of all was my own expressed determination that the midwifery training should be continued merely during trial of those remedies and, on their failure, that it should be discontinued as soon as possible.

[stroked through here to end] I regretted this necessity all the more that the first proposal for training nurses at King's College Hospital originated in the great confidence inspired by the qualities of Miss Jones, the then-head of the nursing establishment. This made me doubly grateful for the kind willingness of King's College Hospital to give the essentials for carrying out the scheme.

I need scarcely state that the class of women who usually act as midwifery nurses require very special training, not only in the knowledge of their art but in character and conduct. It was the knowledge of the high capabilities of Miss Jones which mainly induced the selection of King's College Hospital as a training school. The ward can no longer be used for the purpose. And unfortunately Miss Jones is no longer in the hospital. I am therefore in this position that the midwifery training school is entirely broken up. And I deeply regret that I do not see my way in its reorganization in connection with King's College Hospital.

Permit me again to repeat my thanks for all your great kindness to us and my regret for this termination of our connection and to beg that you will believe me, Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

[JS:] I cannot reply further to your proposal without laying the subject before the committee of the Nightingale Fund and I have therefore sent your letter to the secretary, who will communicate with you officially.

[ca. beginning February 1868]

[JS:] The governors of King's College Hospital have in the public press made it appear that they were the parties who took alarm about the deaths in their midwifery ward and determined to close it, notwithstanding that it was opened at the instance of the Nightingale Fund Committee. Now, as soon as F.N. was informed that deaths had taken place in the ward, she, on her part, made inquiries and took steps for discontinuing the connection of the Nightingale Fund with the K.C.H. This should be stated.

**Editor:** An anonymous note, "The Nightingale Memorial and Lying-in Hospitals" appeared in the *Medical Times and Gazette* 1 February 1868, opening with: The closure of the Nightingale Ward in King's College Hospital cannot fail to renew the discussion which has now and again arisen as to the propriety of instituting and maintaining lying-in hospitals." It gave the death rate for the ward as 1 in 28.9, compared with the mortality rate in the out-patient department at the same hospital as 1 in 212 (121). Dr Priestley's views on the need for closing were quoted, also his recommendation for building outside the hospital or in hired rooms near the hospital (122). Even acknowledging a large margin for inaccuracies in the data on home deliveries, the note concluded "that lying-in hospitals, as they are at present conducted, are almost unmix'd evils."

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/68/2

5 February 1868

*Private.* Perhaps you know that the K.C.H. people are worrying us about the lying-in ward. Could you without the least trouble lay your hand on a letter which I wrote to you in June containing the comparative statistics of death rate I had collected (in consequence of your information) about lying-in wards in workhouses, hospitals, etc., in London and Paris? But do not, I beg of you, give yourself the least trouble about finding this letter (I took no copy of it). I had rather never hear from you again than give you trouble—I can reproduce it.

The K.C.H. people have missed the point. Could you conceive all the wards in K.C.H. filled with lying-in women, probably not one out of two would come out alive! May God bless you.

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/116, copy ADD Mss 43400 ff196-98

3 March 1868

*Private.* . . . About our deplorable midwifery mortality at King's College, please to observe the hospital committee and Dr Priestley have told their own story. I have not told mine, which is, if it were worth telling, that the person who raked out the statistics and who finally had the ward closed, was I. *They* wanted to have the ward for male students and for "abnormal cases of parturition." And they have since applied to us more than once to "*build*" for them on the already overcrowded ground of King's College Hospital. Could you fancy every ward in King's College Hospital a lying-in ward, probably one case out of three might not come out alive. But I am too sick at heart to make a "row."

**Editor:** The crown princess of Prussia was born Princess Victoria (1840-1901), eldest daughter of Queen Victoria and therefore princess royal, later Empress Frederick. There is correspondence with her (see p 821 below). She was well familiar with English institutions and returned often to England. She had given birth in her new home, using a Prussian midwife, and hence had experience of both systems. She had visited English maternity institutions before meeting with Nightingale. Incidentally, the births of both Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were attended by (the same) German midwife, Charlotte Siebold, but all the queen's babies were delivered by medical men.

The crown princess's request to Nightingale for assistance on nurse training, to include midwifery, led to much work and ultimately helped instigate the writing of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, which Nightingale acknowledged (see p 329 below). For the crown princess the low mortality rates in (some) soldiers' wives' huts at military camps were a compelling example. Nightingale sought out information from Lieutenant Ommanney on these plans, material which went eventually into the writing of the book.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47716 ff33-37

5 December 1868

*Private.* The crown princess of Prussia was here on Tuesday to discuss plans for a training school for nurses near Spandau. If I can possibly find time, I must tell you a good deal of "collateral matter," but now I must rush at once "in medias res" [into the middle of things].

She wants to know whether she might send us German "ladies" or women to be trained by us: one for a matron, two for head surgical and medical nurses, one for a lying-in matron. (We should be at perfect liberty to modify this and to say "you will want such and such officer to be trained." Indeed she asked me to draw up for her a complete nursing hierarchy plan for the proposed hospital, six pavilions of sixty-four beds each, one or two convalescent cottages in the grounds, and one lying-in hut in the grounds), a hospital of which I revised the plans for her. I have already consulted Mrs Wardroper about this, the nursing staff necessary. The princess's object is briefly this: to introduce, if she can, all our English notions of cleanliness and fresh air into German nursing. She will have nothing to do with Kaiserswerth, nothing to do with Bethanien. (I did not think it desirable to argue this point with her because she is perfectly right on the main point and I could have capped all her stories. I have actually seen typhus and pyemia produced in Germany, not by overcrowding but by sheer dirt.)

Now comes about the lying-in matron, which I fear will be the grand difficulty. How can we train her one? German midwives are far better educated than ours; indeed, they are almost as thorough accoucheuses as the French sages-femmes at the Paris Maternité. But they are dirty, oh so dirty. I do think the mortality and puerperal fever from this cause among German ladies as great as among Hindu and Parsi ladies, who always have good confinements but die afterwards of dirt. The princess's intimate friend, a court lady, died from this. The princess, who was accouchée of her fifth child by a German midwife, was obliged to tell her to wash her hands before she delivered her. Then their clothes, their personal uncleanness, no one can have any idea what it is who has not seen it as I have. . . .

Then I see difficulties. The woman must learn German. Then, how can we judge of her capacity to guide a German midwife, probably far cleverer than herself, into English habits of cleanliness? On the other hand, if the princess sends *us* a German midwife, *where* could we train her? Would it do to train her, i.e., in habits of cleanliness, in the female wards of St Thomas'? The princess, who is as quick as lightning (to my cost), has commissioned me to get for her all the plans and workings of the successful soldiers' wives lying-in huts, in some of which we have had as many as 800 lyings-in running without a single case of puerperal disease. This I have begun doing, in order to give her the conditions under which lying-in women can be brought together with the least risk of puerperal disease.

(I understood her to say that the daughter of Queen Charlotte's matron is a trained midwife.) I told her that English people of sense thought little of Queen Charlotte's certificates, which are positively sometimes granted at the end of a month. (She was quite "up" in the question of Queen Charlotte's mortality.) This part, the lying-in matron, seems to me beset with difficulties, as I suppose you would not think any of the midwifery nurses from King's College Hospital, if a little more finished, would do? . . .

Lastly and really lastly, don't you think we must train for her without pay—you know we shan't really get paid—and therefore we may as well do the thing graciously. She offered to pay, but I know what German royalties are.

Note to lying-in hut: the princess's main object appeared to me to train monthly nurses, not midwives (who are better in Germany than in England as *accoucheuses*). Of course if this is her object, we can't say you shan't. (She says the saving of life would be enormous in Germany from this reform, and I believe it.) She also proposed to me to choose and send us a woman, to be trained by *us* in *cleanliness* and at the *Maternité* in *midwifery* (at Paris). To the last proposition you know I must say in that case she *must* be a person as well able to take care of herself as, e.g., Miss Osburn or Miss Garrett. It is a most immoral place.

Source: From notes for Dr Sutherland on an interview with the crown princess, ADD MSS 45753 ff149-51

[2-19 December 1868]

She did not ask me for a general minute but for the working of that successful one (which *I* told her of). Well, what passed was this: she praised Queen Charlotte's. I said, Yes but the death rate is very high. She said that can't be helped when lying-in women are together, and, unless they're together, you can't have a midwives' school. I said it *can* be helped. That's what I told her. And I gave her the Chichester instance.

It was very kind of the D.G. to do that lying-in paper, but it is not of the least use to the crown princess. She says what she wanted was not the statistics of the lyings-in (which after all show a death rate among hundreds worse than that among thousands in the workhouses), but the plan and working of the one lying-in hut which you told her had had 800 lying-in cases without one casualty. What's required to tell her what to avoid, she says. . . .

The princess wants to make a training school for midwives. That's her purpose. What the princess says is this: what I wanted to have is

the *plan, ground plan and section*, and the working of that one lying-in hut where there were no deaths. It's no use sending me the statistics of all those hospitals and putting at the bottom that out of -- deaths were not from puerperal causes, without specifying *in which* hospitals this were so. For example, in Chatham, if the deaths there recorded were *all* from puerperal causes, then the mortality there was higher than that of the worst London workhouse with thousands of cases. What I wanted was to take the lying-in hut with 800 cases without a death and learn all about that.

I can't construct a lying-in hut or plan of working from anything in that paper. Also, it's no use telling me excessive cleanliness and ventilation. If I were to ask a German midwife, she would say that excessive cleanliness is what she uses.

Who is she? She says she *has* been to Queen Charlotte's and that the excessive cleanliness was there beyond praise. She now wants to know *what* are the conditions which have secured in the Colchester hut.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Add Mss 47716 ff61-62

30 January 1869

*Crown princess*. No "further arrangement" was made with her. I gave her your letter, saying that we could hardly do anything for her in the way of training till Easter 1870. I think we stand on a very good footing with her. You know I shall not be sorry if she finds other means of training and we have not the responsibility—provided she goes on with her plans. If words mean anything a very beautiful farewell letter I had from her means this. We have also to do plans for a lying-in hospital for her—at the War Office. I think I told you (I told her) that we had had a common rude wooden hut divided thus:

[hand-drawn diagram of the hut and floor plan] in which we have had 600 lyings-in running without a single casualty of any kind. I gave her the plan of this and we are now trying to make a plan (at the War Office—copy for her) for thirty-six beds in *single* wards for a lying-in hospital, a difficult thing to contrive, as you will suppose.

ever yours

F.N.

She said she should write to me when she was a little settled—about plans, training, etc.

## **Research for and Writing *Introductory Notes* on *Lying-in Institutions***

**Editor:** It was not until 1869 that Nightingale began to pull together the material needed for writing up the midwifery mortality material. Just after the closing of the lying-in ward (January 1868) she was taken up with the death of Agnes Jones (February 1868) and the difficulties in replacing her at the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary. There was of course the ongoing work on India, and much other work on nursing, especially as other workhouse infirmaries began to seek trained nurses.

Nightingale evidently was encouraged to publish the lying-in work by John Stuart Mill. She told Julius Mohl: “I published my book on Socrates’ mother, who had been a midwife, partly to please him. It was a very odd thing; it was a subject he had taken up; he was president of a society for *that*.”<sup>65</sup> The crown princess’s requests for assistance in training midwives was another instigating factor.

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 kept Nightingale busy with urgent requests for nursing services, hospitals and relief. It was not until 1871 that the book, with considerable drafting help from Dr Sutherland (never enough!), was finally written.

The letters and notes below reveal great frustration. The Nightingale method of locating and using the best information was sorely tried on this subject. Mary Jones was no longer directly involved and not very helpful (she did answer some specific inquiries). Nightingale canvassed widely and received information and advice from many sources, J.H. Barnes of Liverpool and Lieutenant W.F. Ommanney of the War Office as well as the usual Galton and Farr. The appeals to Dr Sutherland for more help are revealing. Nightingale once even referred to the work as “your manuscript.” She was so ill at one point that she left directions for him to finish the book on her (soon-expected) death (see p 222 below).

Nightingale and Sutherland struggled over the data and were sometimes in conflict over their interpretation. Nightingale was struck with the low and diminishing death rates at the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, but Sutherland was more sceptical, insisting that there was no clear decline but only the absence of epidemic (see p 246 below). Nightingale later came to consider that the Liverpool data were “less

---

<sup>65</sup> Letter to Julius Mohl 20 May [1873] in Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:221-22. The mother of the Greek philosopher, Socrates (c469-399 BCE), was a midwife.

remarkable" than she had originally thought, as indeed the figures in the book demonstrate (Table 5). Unfortunately in 1871 William Farr, the leading expert on statistics, was unavailable to assist as he was fully taken up with the decennial census—the exchanges with him up to then are most important.

Nightingale eventually realized that something had to be produced, so she temporized by calling the book *Introductory Notes*, with the expectation that she would publish a much fuller second edition, which she never did. The data collection continued after publication, and indeed Nightingale sent out copies of the book with the request for corrections and advice for this projected second edition. Dr Braxton Hicks evidently got her a considerable amount of data on home births.

While all this work trying to explain what went wrong was going on, Nightingale continued to receive requests for advice on other institutions, notably army hospitals for soldiers' wives, and other training programs.

Source: From a letter to Lieutenant Ommanney, ADD Mss 45801 ff174-75

8 January 1869

PROVISIONAL ONLY. *Private*. In reply to your queries concerning the proposed lying-in hospital project I beg to say that:

1. The proportions you suggest for a single-bed ward (not to be used as a delivery ward) 15' x 13' x 11' high, giving 2145 c. ft. and 195 sup. ft. are very good.

2. The suggestion I made for a delivery ward of 6000 c. ft presupposed the idea that it was to be for the whole lying-in hospital, on one floor, and so arranged and connected *under cover* that the delivery ward would be pretty nearly equidistant from each lying-in ward. No institution or charity would, I believe, go to the expense of more than one delivery ward, although, if there are two floors, there must be two delivery wards. (If there were a delivery ward to each floor of each pavilion or cottage, there would then be no need of attaching a single-bed ward to each delivery ward, because the chances would then be infinitesimally small of all the delivery wards being occupied at once. And the single-bed ward attached is only to provide for the event of a poor woman being unable to be moved to her own ward for some hours after delivery, in which case she is usually watched and attended in the delivery ward till death or recovery from exhaustion but which, if a new delivery case were to come in, would be dangerous—or even impossible.)



The 6000 c. ft delivery ward is intended to be large enough for two or even three delivery cases and for all the pupil midwives at once. One single-bed ward attached to it would be enough, in the event above-mentioned, to remove after delivery a dangerously exhausted patient into, for the temporary emergency.

3. The proportions you propose for the delivery ward 22" x 20" x 14" high, giving 6140 c. ft. and 440 sup. ft. are very good.

4. About the number of nurses: no charity or institution, I believe, could possibly bear the expense of a single-bed ward lying-in hospital for thirty-two patients unless there were a training school. (Most accoucheurs would, I believe, answer your question at once by saying: there must be a nurse to every two wards = sixteen nurses to thirty-two patients!! independently of midwives!)

Even with a training school, the first year would be one of immense difficulty, because all well-managed teaching schools "take in" at two periods of the year, so as never to have the whole of the pupils fresh hands at once. But the *first* batch must necessarily be all fresh hands. You *cannot* turn in a raw girl to sit up with a lying-in woman and new-born infant. And you can't spare the girl a whole midwife to herself to teach her how to handle an infant.

5. "Any case which requires overlooking" *must* "be attended" *anyhow* "day and night" by a woman *in* the room. But it is often necessary, especially for inexperienced pupils, to summon help at a moment's notice. I should be therefore unwilling to say that, in each pavilion or cottage, there should not be one or even two nurse's rooms—certainly a scullery (all these independent of the women who are necessarily sitting up *in* those lying-in wards, which require sitting up), remembering at the same time that it is neither possible nor desirable to organize a regular night-nurse service, as you do in general hospitals. (One or two patients with their infants are given to each pupil to look to entirely herself under supervision—after delivery.)

A very large and convenient clean linen store must be assigned to the matron—perhaps as large as would be required for a general hospital of 100 patients, and probably portions of clean linen would have to be kept in each division.

Source: From a letter to J.J. Frederick,<sup>66</sup> Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/69/1

14 January 1869

*Private.* First, let me thank you for so kindly sending me the tracing of the Colchester hut plan, the answers to various questions concerning the workings of that lying-in hospital and many other things. All that you were kind enough to undertake arrived in time for the crown princess of Prussia, and she begged her sincere thanks to be conveyed to all those who had so kindly contributed to forwarding her views.

She has (very wisely) returned me some of the plans and papers, to be forwarded to her at Berlin when we have arrived at something satisfactory in the way of a (single-bed ward) lying-in hospital plan for thirty-six wards (or beds), at which the War Office is now working, and of which we are to send her a copy. I mention this only to show you that your trouble has not been in vain.

**Editor:** A letter of Mary Jones to Nightingale answered questions as to delivery times and spacing of women in the delivery ward. Jones gave details: that the average time in the delivery ward after delivery was 1½ hours; that sometimes there were three delivery cases together, in about every eight-ten cases; the average number of days in the hospital was sixteen; they did not permit any to leave under fourteen days and allowed three weeks in ordinary cases. "Perhaps this might be too long, but we had so very many weakly, half-starved women that to send some away sooner was to ensure a breakdown." There was "no grave objection, I think, to more than one delivery in the same ward at one time in ordinary cases."

Jones stated that one delivery ward, "however spacious, in constant use for whole hospital would be bad; on each floor of the hospital there should be two delivery wards to be used alternately for the whole floor, at given periods." Four of the single-bed wards "ought," as Nightingale had proposed, "always to be vacant in succession for thorough disinfection" and this applies even more strongly if possible to the delivery wards. One of each floor ought always to be vacant, in alternation, for thorough disinfection.

She specified that "the bedding, i.e., the mattress and blankets of any one bed in delivery ward, should not be used for more than four

---

66 John Joseph Frederick, secretary to the Army Sanitary Commission; Nightingale left him £300 and her blue books on India in her will (1:853, 855).

delivery cases in succession without undergoing some process of disinfection, and this quite independent of any accident, and the mattress of course being protected by Macintosh sheeting." She recommended a "low truck to carry patients."

Jones concluded: "Your lying-in hut hospital was so [illeg] satisfactory it is quite a pleasure to read what you say of it. If your new hospital answers as well, and proves that isolation of cases is *the* safe mode of management of lying-in hospitals (as I expect it will do) it will be a great blessing. Thank you for telling me about it."<sup>67</sup>

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/117, copy Add Mss 43400 f212

23 January 1869

Many thanks for your kind promise (about the lying-in and fever inquiry). Dr Sutherland bids me add now a suggestion that, if you took all the births, deducting excess in multiple births, you would obtain the women delivered, *minus* the stillbirths, and that on this number you might calculate the death rate. We want to know the percentage of deaths among women who are delivered at home in different districts. You will know so much better than I do how to tell what is wanted and even what *is* wanted that I stop here. (This is only a codicil to my former testament.)

**Editor:** A letter by Mary Jones to Nightingale refers to Gladstone's intention of "appropriating church revenues for training midwives and nurses," which is characterized as "startling enough." Jones wondered about the use of the money intended for the maintenance of worship and instruction of children in the faith; "at any rate I should hope that all such nurses and midwives would be required to be exclusively churchwomen." She concluded that "Mr Gladstone has undertaken a most awful responsibility—may our dear Lord shield him from evil."<sup>68</sup>

Source: Note for Dr Sutherland with response, Add Mss 45753 ff206-11

[ca. 4 March 1869]

1. The minimum of cubic space for a lying-in woman in a single-bedded ward, *even where that is not the delivery ward*, is 2000-2500 cubic feet. To put the lying-in woman, her infant, with a woman washing

---

67 Letter of Mary Jones 11 January 1869, Add Mss 47744 ff144-45.

68 Letter of Mary Jones 4 March 1869, Add Mss 47744 ff155-56.

and dressing it at the fire, midwife, midwife's assistant, and perhaps doctor into a space of 120 sq. ft. is inadmissible. (Were it a delivery ward, they would not even have space to turn round.)

2. A lying-in hospital of thirty-six beds (but I will call it thirty-two patients, because there ought *always* to be four wards (or beds) in rotation entirely vacant) would train from twelve-fifteen pupil midwives. The whole of these would probably be present at *every* delivery or at least all that could be spared from attending on the other patients. A delivery ward, quite separate, as large as an ordinary hut, is absolutely essential.

3. No day room at all. A day room in a lying-in hospital is a positive nuisance.

4. *Personnel*: one matron, one head midwife, one assistant midwife, twelve-fifteen pupil midwives (female servants besides). The head midwife will be present, of course, at all the deliveries, the assistant making such ordinary deliveries as may possibly fall at the same hour as a protracted or difficult case which the head midwife cannot leave. Deliveries as often or rather oftener take place by night than by day. If then the bedroom (named "nurse") is for her, it is quite out of the question that she should occupy it. But the row of bathing machines (called wards) is out of the question altogether.

The last is quite as much out of the way of anybody as if it were two miles off (how can an almost lifeless infant and a perhaps equally exhausted mother ring a bell or make themselves heard?) and the one next the so-called "nurse's" room, probably she won't be in her room at all.

5. No dispensary, especially no dispenser. A dose of castor oil is all that is wanted in a lying-in hospital.

6. No "nurse's" room should ever be turned into a scullery. This is a *sine qua non*. This involves another point. The real distracting noise to a really exhausted patient would be to have every drop of water, every slop, every cup of tea, etc., carried past her room to and from the patients beyond her. The real "quiet" which a lying-in patient requires is not the quiet here proposed, but *not* to hear the noise of a protracted delivery and not to hear the to-ings and fro-ings.

7. A surgeon's room may be necessary to keep instruments. The surgeon himself comes only twice a day and is called in for any dangerous case of delivery or afterbirth or accident or hemorrhage.

8. A collection of the Colchester huts, four on each side an oblong, two at the end, viz., one a delivery hut, the other a spare hut, *so that*

*one of the nine huts shall be in rotation always empty*, kitchen hut at the other end would be a lying-in hospital. The present one is the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out, viz., a lying-in hospital with the lyings-in left out and the infant utterly ignored.

Well, you know, I've considered it since last week very carefully and my only remarks will be administrative:

1. The four single wards will never be used. It should be called a thirty-two bed hospital (twenty-eight beds to be constantly occupied) for this reason, when one group of four is under whitewashing and cleansing, as *one* is always to be, you can't occupy that poor little fifth ward by itself. Or if you do it must have a complete service to itself.

I have said too that the regular service will be one night nurse to each four. How can you put one night nurse to those four? I told him that you could not. The nurse *always* sleeps in the lady's room at first and then (with the baby) in her dressing room. It is not a servant that is wanted. On the contrary it must be an experienced pupil midwife. . . .

You must restrict the night watchers to four beds. As for the nurse bedroom, as I explained to him, all he has to do is to put assistance by bells within reach of that night-watcher.

2. I think the scullery, where there *may* be eight babies at a time, quite large enough for one block of four but rather small for two. And I think the same of the other conveniences. Suppose you had to draw eight hot water baths for eight convulsions in eight babies at once.

3. I think the relative position of door and window in *some* of the wards inconvenient for the bed. In *some* there is scarcely a place proper for a bed. You never put a lying-in bed in an angle to mark off bed space so as to show the extent of room about it. Those wards would practically never be used. A nurse (not the watcher) would be put to sleep in them.

It is not a question of detachment. It is that the service will be divided into fours. Now you can't divide a service of fours by fives. I said quite distinctly that there was to be a night nurse for four at the *outside*, also that it was more dangerous to have the extra nurse sleeping on one floor only than not to have any. Suppose her called downstairs, her upstairs night bell rings, they don't know where she is. I explained to him distinctly that the nurse who sleeps there is simply to answer, say, the four bells of the night-watcher [illeg] . . .

One delivery ward to each floor is all that any charity would put up with and they would say better have but one floor. One would do for

one floor. Of course when I gave that size, I meant one delivery ward for the whole thirty-two patients, where they might have two or even three deliveries at once and the whole of the pupils present.

There would be *no* nurses. No charity or institution could possibly bear the expense of a single-bed ward lying-in hospital (without a training school) because they would literally require sixteen nurses to thirty-two wards. Even as it is, I can't see how the first year will be managed, because you can't turn in a raw girl to a newborn infant and lying-in woman and you can't spare the girl a whole midwife to herself to teach her.

You may possibly have, among thirty-two patients, sixteen of them with their infants who can't be left for one minute night or day for (say) three days and nights after delivery. But then there is someone, a neighbour or an eldest girl, always in the room.

There is a head midwife. Each patient after delivery is carried to her own ward. That can only be done when there is no other case and, as I told that Lieutenant [Ommanney] of Engineers to whom I am appointed midwifery teacher, there are so many cases which *can't* be moved immediately after delivery there must be a small ward [illeg].

**JS:** 1. The lying-in ward will do.

2. The pavilion had better be on one floor and so arranged and connected under cover that the lying-in ward will be equidistant from each one lying-in ward will be enough.

3. The proposed dimensions of the lying-in ward will answer.

4. Nursing must be done by pupil midwives to save cost.

5. Nursing rooms are not required for the pavilion. There should be a scullery. W.C. and W.C. sink for each, also a small linen room.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Dr J.H. Barnes, Add Mss 45801 f210

25 March 1869

The Lying-in Department at Liverpool Workhouse has achieved under your auspices a very enviable notoriety from its absence of puerperal diseases. Miss Freeman<sup>69</sup> has been so kind as to send me its statistics for 1868. She will ask you if it would be possible for you to give me, not detailed statistics, but merely (1) the total number of deliveries for 1867; (2) the total deaths among puerperal women *and the causes* for the same year.

---

69 Louisa Freeman, superintendent at the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary after the death of Agnes Jones.

It would be most important if you could give me the same data for a few years farther back as, e.g., for 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866. But I scarcely need say that if you could give them me for the last ten years, for which ten years I have procured them from many places (most disastrous in their statistics, unlike yours), that this would be more important still.

Source: Note to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45753 ff233-34

[ca. 3 April 1869]

The mortality of lying-in women in no general hospital with which we are yet acquainted is the half or the quarter of what it is in the *Maternité* at Paris, Vienna, in Queen Charlotte's Hospital and in many others; the *number of cases* at Aldershot is not so large as in *any* large London workhouse.

In the lying-in hospitals in every European country where the highest known mortality occurs, the practitioners take no other cases. The time is exactly the same at Colchester and at Aldershot. And the results are exactly opposite. Not only this but there is a higher mortality at Aldershot than in any London workhouse.

If you don't help me to begin the lying-in paper at once, I deny you, I forswear you, I disown you.

Source: Note for Dr Sutherland with response, ADD Mss 45753 ff213-14

[April 1869]

General principles for the use of Lieutenant Ommanney and Dr Sutherland:

1. Lying-in women usually, at least sometimes, lie-in of infants.
2. Nurses are not like tadpoles. You can't cut them in two and put one half on one floor and one on another. . . .

I mean to write and publish separately the chapter you propose on lying-in hospitals and shall be very much obliged if you will help me. Lieutenant Ommanney knows nothing about it. There must be a nurse sleeping on *each* floor, if that system is adopted *at all*.

**JS:** *Dr Farr:* Could you give me the normal death rate from puerperal disease (excluding deaths in public institutions) for registration districts in towns more or less unhealthy and for country districts more or less healthy?

2. Could you give me the fever death rates in the same districts?

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Dr J.H. Barnes, ADD Mss 45801 ff217-20

15 April 1869

I am extremely obliged to you for so kindly forwarding to me such details as can now be obtained as to the death rate among the lying-in women in your workhouse for the three last years.

It is so remarkable a fact that, out of 1590 deliveries in the three years, there should have been only four deaths, and only two slight outbreaks of puerperal fever without any fatal results, that, for the benefit of humanity, one wishes to have the most ample information on a death rate which, even with the untoward sanitary arrangement you have so justly denounced, is actually lower than the death rate among lying-in women in healthy districts.

Shall you think that I am taxing your kindness too severely if I ask you to give me (roughly) any answers to the following questions, which you may be so very good as to feel disposed to give? viz.:

1. information as to your lying-in ward or wards, distinguishing between delivery ward, lying-in ward or (or perhaps these two are the same), "convalescent" ward, the points are:

- a. length, breadth, height;
- b. number and size of windows and if on opposite sides?
- c. number of fireplaces;
- d. means of ventilation;
- e. number of beds;

f. number of beds usually occupied at one time (I take for granted that all the deliveries are conducted in the delivery ward).

2. Do you ever change the ward used as a delivery ward? or the ward or wards used for the women after delivery?

3. What average number of days do women remain in the wards *after* delivery?

4. What proportion of these lying-in women then leave the workhouse to return home? (a) or remain more or less permanently as workhouse inmates? and (b) what proportion, if any, are workhouse inmates *before* lying-in? (c) Are any admitted except when labour is imminent?

5. In what state are the women when admitted? (a) that is, are they of the usual weakly class of the town? or (b) is any selection of cases made?

6. Might I ask some account of your general plan of management? Do you attend lying-in cases solely whether in or out of the workhouse? (a) or do you attend other cases also? (I take for granted that



the nurses and midwives employed about the lying-in women are exclusively limited to the lying-in department.)

7. Is the lying-in division entirely isolated or at what distance from the general female wards or the infectious wards? What have been the precautions for averting puerperal fever?

8. (a) How often are the wards limewashed? (b) What have been the rigid measures of cleanliness?

9. Is the exposure of the ward such as to secure good *outside* ventilation? I really feel uneasy at so presuming upon your kindness as to trouble you with so many questions. But, at least, any information that you are so good as to give will not be wasted. The subject of the miserably high death rate from puerperal diseases among lying-in women in institutions is now receiving so much attention that so very remarkable an exception as yours ought to attract the fullest notice.

Source: From two letters to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45764 f139 and f149

19 April 1869

*Most Private.* I am doing *Notes on Lying-in Hospitals* something after the same fashion as my *Notes on Hospitals*, with plans, for which I have collected a mass of curious facts. This ideal plan of Lieutenant Ommanney's was to have formed one in the book. And also Lieutenant Ommanney, or Colonel (?) Murray, promised Dr Sutherland to get me a *sketch ground plan of Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital* (I would most gladly pay anybody who would go and do it for me from your department) and of some others. But I have heard nothing more of it. *Is it feasible?*

24 April 1869

*Private. Lying-in Hospitals.* Many thanks for your two notes. "Charles Hawkins" was and probably is "surgeon consulting" to Queen Charlotte's. I do not think that Colonel Murray said anything more to Dr Sutherland than that "he could find someone not so good as Lieutenant Ommanney to go to Q. Charlotte's to take a plan." Anyhow, I feel sure that nothing was done. (Dr Sutherland had asked him, without my knowledge, to send Lieutenant Ommanney.) I have no doubt that Queen Charlotte's *has* plans which might be borrowed, if you are so good as to do the drawings I need. But it is rather awkward for me to write to ask permission for them. I have another object besides merely writing a paper in doing this inquiry, as perhaps you know, viz., our anxiety to re-establish our midwifery nurse school (which was put a stop to by the very high mortality in King's College Hospital).

Now all the lying-in hospitals in London have pestered me to place our school with them. Charles Hawkins applied not only to me but formally to Harry Bonham Carter and I believe was considerably mortified by refusal. (The fact is that the mortality in Queen Charlotte's has always been higher than even in so bad a hospital as K.C.H.)

Dr Edmunds of the British Lying-in Hospital has come to grief, which I am not sorry for as he always wanted us to join with his very absurd Female Medical Society, which has, in my opinion, done a great deal of harm. All this makes it awkward for me to ask favours. Nevertheless, if you are so good as to do the drawings (when Mr Mennie comes back) and do not think you can write for permission to see the plans, if any, I will put my scruples in my pocket and write to Q. Charlotte.

The Marylebone Lying-in Workhouse wards are certainly successful. Did you have plans of them before your cubic space committee? "Beggars should never be choosers," else I would "choose" those, too. If you could kindly make a drawing of those for me too? I would gladly pay for having these done.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45764 f153-54

6 May 1869

*Queen Charlotte.* I am exceedingly obliged to you for these Q. Charlotte's plans. I think there is little difficulty in understanding why the women die there. As you are so good as to ask me what plans I want and how done, I answer, if it is easier to do tracings than copies, tracings would answer every purpose of mine. If you propose to draw instead of tracing, the copies should be half linear size for my purpose. The plans which would be essential for me are:

1. the basement, to show the agreeable sewer traversing the building;
2. the first-floor plan for patients (the second floor appears to be the same);
3. the cross section on the sheet showing the north elevation. I do not think it is necessary for me to have the two elevations showing the beautiful character of the architecture.

N.B. There appears to be no delivery ward, which must much increase the danger to the patients. There should be always two such, to be used month and month about and thoroughly cleansed in the interval, month and month about. Even with this precaution the danger of fever seems enormous.

ever yours most truly

F. Nightingale

It appears that there is another floor, *a top of all*, for servants and nurses, so that the patients are in a sandwich between, a nice arrangement. There is also a trapdoor in ceiling of second floor W.C. compartment. But I suppose this is not for the aeration of the nurses above. If it is, it would be instructive to copy the second-floor plan instead of the first-floor for me.

Source: From a note to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45753 f260

June 1869

A curious fact that, in the British Lying-in [Hospital], the last ten years have a mortality just twice the first thirteen. Have you found the *three* years or Parisian mortality?

The Maison d'accouchement is the highest mortality known. It has actually been up to 250 per 1000, but that is not a compound. The Liverpool is but little higher than all England.

Source: From a note, Add Mss 45756 ff129-30

[c1869-71]

Q. Charlotte has no delivery ward. We should think it impossible to manage cleanliness in such a case. Endell St. does not have more than ten deliveries a month. We think that enough to account for a low death rate, and more shame for her that it is so high. Liverpool is not after all the tremendous difference we at first thought: eleven years ending in '68.

	Queen Charlotte's		Liverpool	
	Deliveries	Deaths	General	Puerperal
[1858]	341	3	6	1
[1859]	320	26	1	4
[1860]	256	18	3	6
[1861]	369	20	2	5
[1862]	351	14	1	6
[1863]	386	6	2	—
[1864]	384	13	3	2
[1865]	225	9	—	3
[1866]	408	7	—	4
[1867]	412	8	3	—
[1868]	464	5	1	1
[total]	3916	129	22	32
[average]	$11\sqrt{129} = 11.7/\text{yr.}$		$11\sqrt{22} = 2/\text{yr.}$	
[total]	$11\sqrt{54} = 4.9/\text{yr.}$		$11\sqrt{32} = 2.9/\text{yr.}$	

**Editor:** The letter of Dr James Y. Simpson excerpted next was written in response to one by Nightingale (not available) on hospital mortality, presumably in general or the subject of his recent papers, amputation surgery. Simpson sent Nightingale two papers and addressed her concern about general patient health status affecting surgical outcomes. He next took up the issue of obstetrics and the closing of the King's College Hospital ward.

Source: From a letter of J.Y. Simpson, ADD Mss 45802 ff152-54

Edinburg

[ca. 20] June 1869

In the *British Medical Journal* of last week<sup>70</sup> I have answered some objections, etc., but I have not yet got a copy of the journal. In this journal I have suggested the free opening of the staircases in the London hospitals as possibly a salutary measure. When visiting King's College Hospital I could not help looking upon the magnificent staircase there as a great magazine of deteriorated and malefic air collected from the wards and ready to be sent back into the wards. Why should not half or all its windows be taken out and the staircase be converted from a magazine of foul to a magazine of fresh air to feed the wards with? Was not the insalubrity in your ward here not in part attributable to this source?

The construction of a proper obstetric hospital is still a problem.

1. Deteriorated air from the wards of *other* medical and surgical patients is always perilous. Thence so is the position of an obstetric ward away among the wards of a general hospital.

2. Crowding is more fatal in an obstetric than in another ward. You can manufacture thus puerperal fever and death at will. But,

3. the spreading of puerperal fever by the medical attendant or nurse from those attacked to those that are in labour is another element of mortality. Against the two first of these dangers we can guard by isolated buildings, and by isolating a lying-in woman in wards containing one or two patients only, but it is more difficult always to guard against the third. In constructing a new lying-in hospital in connection with the hospital here I hope to see (1) an isolated cottage or village hospital, (2) rooms containing one or two patients only, with a pupil nurse tending on each room and sleeping therein and (3) its constructing material of iron or something which could be easily

---

70 James Y. Simpson, "Hospitalism: Its Influence upon Limb-Amputations in the London Hospitals, etc." (12 June 1869):533-35.

taken down and built up again. Mr Newton of Liverpool, the great builder of iron churches, houses, etc., is working at present at the problem of making out strong iron hospitals and he hopes to construct them greatly cheaper than when made of stone and lime.

I have a great fancy to line them internally with a length of vegetable charcoal which is quite cheap and burns off all effervescences made. It could be placed between that outside iron wall and a wire grating in beneath. And the grating could be painted, etc.

I am told that an obstetric hospital in Melbourne made of separate small rooms had succeeded very well. There is said to be one at Copenhagen, but I have learned no particulars of it. Have you seen Mr Le Fort's large work on the subject?

But I have encroached too much on your patience. Excuse me and believe me, with the deepest respects,

your faithful servant

J.Y. Simpson

**Editor:** Nightingale evidently had great difficulty finding a copy of Le Fort's book probably because it was only privately printed, perhaps in a small run. She received a letter (22 June 1869) from the secretary of King's College Hospital, enclosing a "return" in answer to her letter of the previous day. He stated further: "I agree that I have not been able to learn the title of Dr Le Fort's work on lying-in hospitals, but I hope to be more successful shortly and to have the honour of forwarding to you the title of the work in question."<sup>71</sup> She eventually got a copy from Dr Farr, as the second letter below shows.

I might note that when I attempted to obtain a copy there was not one to be had in Canada or the United States. Nor did the British Library have a copy, but it did have Le Fort's *Oeuvres*, which includes it. I obtained my copy from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. That the École de Médecine in Paris did not possess a copy is also noteworthy, for it ran a large midwifery institution with high mortality rates. That in Nightingale's time there was so little good information on the subject of maternal mortality is only one of the problems; what little there was seems to have scarcely circulated. Similarly for the copy I obtained of James Matthews Duncan's *On the Mortality of Childbed Fever and Maternity Hospitals* from the British Library (for there were none in North America) the pages were uncut.

---

71 Letter of J.W. Waldron 22 June 1869, Add Mss 45802 f31.

Source: From a note to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45753 261-62

[late July 1869]

It is a thing which I have thought about a great deal. I *think* that she would have to be treated in her own room, that the other three rooms of the quartet would have to be emptied, possibly at once and that as soon as the puerperal fever case had recovered or died, her room and the other three should stand empty and be limewashed, etc.

But I have asked myself, since I read Le Fort, an ulterior question. Query whether you should not remove all women recovering naturally after (say) five days to another "recovering" ward. I don't know. It merely occurred to me.

We rather think that the two delivery wards should not be in the same pavilion, because you could not *thoroughly* limewash and knock about in the one while women were lying-in in the other over or below. Certainly three if not four delivery beds for twelve lying-in women constant. But I think I have put all that in my scheme.

Then it could not be a midwifery school unless you had at least three four-bedded, viz., twelve patients.

Delivery	1 ward and duplicate	
Lying-in ward	3 of 4 beds = 12 occupied beds	
Convalescent	3 of 4 beds = 12 occupied beds	
Total	7	24 patients
Duplicate ward	1 delivery	
" "	2 4-bed	8
	<hr/> 10 wards	<hr/> 32 beds

I have no objection to that. All I said was that you could have a midwifery school of ten pupils with twelve beds. Certainly, and you can only remedy that defect by having a duplicate or partly duplicate set of wards.

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Wellcome Ms 5474/118, copy ADD Mss 43400 ff234-35

Embley

Romsey

7 August 1869

I have just received Le Fort's *Maternités* through your kindness and could not restrain my ardour from glancing through it at once. But, though I have done no more than this, I must not indulge my ardour at the expense of my gratitude, but will thank you at once (for the loan of it). It is a most important work, not however exhaustive, and

in some places disappointing. For example, though the statistical tables are many and good, he does not distinguish between *causes* of death, as you do. Also, he devotes too many pages to the different “Letters of Admission” (in different lying-in institutions) which certainly don’t give puerperal fever (except to the reader). Then he gives a just amount of space (and of indignation) to the Paris “Maternité,” the death rate of which actually reached in 1864 202 per 1000, as we see from M Husson’s tables, but gives no plan. (I have never been able to procure or to see a plan of the Paris “Maternité.”) There are, however, valuable plans and tables in the book of Vienna, Munich, etc., “maternités” and also *proposed* plans for lying-in hospitals. Englishmen must make haste or these Frenchmen will outstrip us.

Dr Le Fort takes my view that, as women *will* have children (though they had much better not) there *must* be midwives, and as practical midwifery can only be taught *in hospitals*, what we have to do is to find out the form of hospital which is *not* destructive to lying-in women. (Like every other Frenchman, he expends a great deal of wrath upon the total or partial exclusion of unmarried mothers from *our* lying-in hospitals, which—though I agree with him as to its being queer morality—is rather ill-timed wrath, considering that poor mothers go to lying-in hospitals to die, but to workhouses to live, at least in a much greater proportion.) As I shall make the book a study I will not trouble you with any more remarks at present.

2. I heard that, at the Leeds “Medical Association,” of which I think you were a vice-president, a paper was read upon *lying-in hospital mortalities*, by whom I know not. Should I gain *any new information from it*? Was there any discussion?

Source: Letter to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45753 f279

19 September 1869

I earnestly beg Dr Sutherland to edit a paper on *lying-in* hospitals, embodying the materials I have so laboriously prepared, all which are in the bottom drawer of the small chest of six drawers nearest the window in the drawing room and in the upper shelf of the two shelves behind brown Holland curtains in my bedroom.

Also, I beg that Dr Sutherland will do the same with the materials for a paper on *pauperism*, being those which I have prepared for a second part of my “Notes on Pauperism” (in *Fraser’s Magazine* of March 1869) all which materials are in the small ottoman which opens in the drawing room (printed papers in it are only those of St Thomas’).

Also, the same with the materials for a paper on *selling land with houses* in towns which are in the bottom drawer of the chest of four drawers (without lock and key) near the fireplace in the drawing room. And I beg that Dr Sutherland will accept due pecuniary compensation for such editing from my cash.

Florence Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Dr J.H. Barnes, Liverpool Medical Institution, copy ADD Mss 45802 ff69 and 110

3 November 1869

In answer to yours of 1 November, I can assure you that it was not "flattering" at all but the literal and honest truth which I wrote to you concerning your management of the Liverpool Workhouse lying-in wards. I am sure that your removal would be a very great loss to that institution, though I should be sorry that your wishes, if they point in another direction, should not be satisfied. But I am afraid that I must not break through a rule which, for obvious reasons, I have been compelled to make, viz., never to influence or interfere in appointments, and that I am therefore compelled, however unwillingly, to adhere to my principle of not giving my opinions as testimonials. I shall be extremely obliged to you for the summary you are so kind as to propose giving me of your lying-in cases at the end of the year.

19 January 1870

You must have thought me very ungrateful not to have thanked you sooner for your kindness in sending me your lying-in statistics. They are very remarkable, very satisfactory. Your death rate in the workhouse for the last three years appears to be scarcely higher than that of lying-in women at home in the healthy districts. My reason for delaying to thank you was that I have been so much worse than usual that I was not able to look out the papers you asked for among an immense mass of statistics I had collected on the lying-in hospital subject.

I now enclose those you asked for (2), and shall be much obliged to you if you will return them to me, as they are, as soon as you have done with them. I hope to show you that your trouble has not been in vain. And indeed it is only pressure of business and of illness which has prevented my winding up 'ere this a statement of comparative lying-in statistics.



Source: From a note to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45754 f68

[ca. January 1870]

Our lying-in paper has now been lying-in for exactly eleven months, two months longer than the providential period longest allowed. We could finish it in a fortnight, if you liked. Here are the new materials. Then our paper is to consist of "There should be no lying-in hospitals."

Yes—that is for our paper. I would put that. But personally you know we should never think of building. We should take the healthiest of the workhouses (which *are there*) or Ommanney's building, if it is built before 1870. *We* should spend our money in training, not in building.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones with her comments, ADD Mss 47744 f188-91

6 May 1870

*Four plans and a Ms Statement. Lying-in Hospital Plans* (two sets of two). Though the plans are in a very imperfect state, I think that I had better submit them now to your kind consideration and criticism, rather than run the risk of letting them keep us waiting another sixteen months. You will see that there are now two ideas:

1. the single-bed ward idea (single-bed wards in groups of four) (which you and I before discussed);

2. the four-bed ward idea. For No. 2 the idea is for the lying-in woman to have three stages or removals: (1) delivery in delivery ward; (2) four or five days immediately after delivery in one of the pavilion wards; (3) removed to another pavilion ward for her *convalescence*. This triple change, together with excessive measures of cleansing, seems, strange to say, to have succeeded in the Liverpool Workhouse lying-in wards, where nothing else is good. Their mortality is no higher than among women lying-in at home in the country.

In both plans 1 and 2 the same method would be adopted of having four-eight beds in rotation always empty, in order that *that* ward or group of wards should be thoroughly limewashed and cleansed and stand empty, say, for twice three weeks in the year. In both plans, 1 and 2 there would be two delivery wards to each floor, one always standing empty on each floor for thorough cleansing.

Among your criticisms, please mention what you think of the position of the delivery ward (2 A) plan. I fear that it would be almost impossible to keep the long branch passage sufficiently warm on winter nights to convey newly delivered women through. Also, it is not a

very good plan to have the delivery ward in use and the delivery ward under cleansing close together—is it?

**MJ:** No.

**FN:** But you know about these things so much better than I do that I will not insist farther till I have heard your opinion. I suggested two alternatives:

1. That the end pavilion wards at the two ends should be used alternately as delivery wards—the nearest wards (to the delivery ward *actually* in use) to be used for the newly delivered women—the farther wards, for the time being, for the convalescence.

2. That the administrative block should be thrust a little farther out on a peduncle or branch passage and an intermediate pavilion ward inserted opposite. Or if the “delivery wards” (on the plan) were used as convalescent wards, or for puerperal fevers (though none such ought there to be), there would not be the same necessity for warming the long branch passage. But of all this you are a much better judge than I. (I take it—but this is a builder’s question—that it would be much easier and cheaper to warm the main corridor than the branch passage, which is not a passage at all, but only a covered way.)

II You will see that 2 B is the detailed plan of the pavilion *ward* of which 2 A is the block plan. Please criticize freely, scullery and everything in 2 B plan.

III With regard to 1 A and 1 BD you will see that this is the single-bed ward plan in its earliest idea and it is proposed to substitute administrative block of Plan 2 when approved and criticized by you into Plan 1. We have not to decide *between* (1) single-bed ward plan and (2) four-bed ward plan but only to improve *both* to the utmost of our power. Perhaps it would save you trouble to return me these questions of mine with the plans and your remarks.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

One objection to the scullery of single-bed ward plan (1 BD) is that there is only one scullery and one set [of] ward offices to *two* groups of four beds, so that one scullery and ward offices would have to serve constantly, even when either group of four beds was standing empty for cleansing. Do you think this is a vital objection? and that there *must* be scullery and ward offices to each group of four beds separate, in order that the *whole* should (in its rotation) stand entirely empty for cleansing, say twice in the year for three weeks?

**MJ:** *Yes I do.*

**FN:** Please criticize freely the whole, the part for the pupil midwives in 2 A as well as the wards and sculleries in 2 B and 1 B. I could find and send you your invaluable letter of about January 1869 if this would save you any trouble in making your criticisms.

Source: From a letter and a note to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45754 ff154-55 and 173

### *Lying-in Hospital Plans*

10 May 1870

1. *Administrative Block* 2 A. This is extremely admirable in its details and I have but one trifle to criticize, i.e., that there must be *somewhere* where the midwife can examine a woman to know if labour is imminent. This *may* be quite sufficiently provided for by “surgeon’s room.”

2. *Wards and Sculleries* 2 B, admirable in all details.

3. *Delivery Wards* 2 A. The more I look into this, the more I find the present proposition inadmissible. If the covered way (from main corridor to there) can be warmed on winter nights so as to be nearly the same temperature as the wards (this is a builder’s question) without very great expense, I have nothing more to say about this.

There are other objections and very grave ones against the proposed delivery wards: (a) the scullery accommodation is WHOLLY INSUFFICIENT; (b) there *must* be one scullery to *each* delivery ward, and this should be *on at least an equal scale* to the ward sculleries. (There must be hot and cold water constantly laid on, night and day.) (c) It is wholly impossible to cleanse and limewash one delivery ward in such close proximity to the other *in use*. All the reasons for having the ordinary wards completely separate and isolated apply, only with tenfold force, to the delivery wards. (d) As for the scullery, it never could be cleansed. It would be literally a sink of iniquity and always in use!!

People have little idea (who have never seen anything but a soldiers’ wives’ hospital—where there are perhaps forty deliveries a year) what the work is, day and night, day and night, in a *civil* lying-in hospital of even half this size—where there may be three deliveries in a night and where all the sculleries are constantly at work, night and day. Every bed is always full.

4. I suggested occupying a ward *at each end* as a delivery ward alternately—the nearer wards being occupied for newly delivered women—the farther wards for convalescent women—merely as a hint to the architect, for it is an architect’s question. Women in labour it is not desirable to convey to the delivery ward *past* the other wards.

I enclose the note of Miss Jones, who has more recent *practical* experience than I have (*in all her observations I entirely concur*), including those on the *single-bed* wards and scullery, and also a note of my own to her. Please return the whole to me.

[6 May-8 June 1870]

It is to be considered that every one of those wards and sculleries will be empty for forty days in the year and each delivery ward for 182½ days in the year. That of course makes no difference in the external ventilation questions. But it does in the other, viz., the having so many patients on such an area of ground.

Source: From a letter to Lieutenant Ommanney, ADD Mss 45802 ff140-143 and 146-47

8 June 1870

I beg to return you all your plans and memoranda, according to your kind desire. I have gone carefully into every hole and corner of plan and memorandum 3 A with my friend, Miss Jones, whom I have mentioned to you before, as having successful and recent experience in these things. We can find nothing to say but admiration for these thoughtfully contrived plans. I have written our notes and answers to your queries upon another sheet. I have now only to accept your kind offer to have plan 3 A drawn upon the idea of the *three sides of a square* sketch shown in Memorandum 3 B. Might I ask you to give me a rough idea of the estimated cost of the building, 3 B—very expensive, I should imagine? (Dr Sutherland now proposes *huts* as being much cheaper. A lying-in hospital to be useful for a large town should be so near as to be fairly accessible within a short time. A site for huts could, I suppose, scarcely be found in such a situation?)

I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the great skill and patience with which you have contrived these difficult plans. Perhaps you will kindly let me have an addition to the *three sides of a square* plan, a woodcut page plan of the four-bed ward and its sculleries and appurtenances and a woodcut page plan of the group of four single-bed wards with its scullery and appurtenances.

I have to apologize this time for keeping you waiting, since you were so good as to say that I might write to you from Monday last. I have had to wait till I could have a consultation with Miss Jones and both my friend and I are much pressed by business. Pray believe me, Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

P.S. Would you kindly let me have the whole of those plans and memoranda back to look at when you are so good as to send 3A and 3B plans.

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/70/5

[18 June 1870]

*Lying-in Hospital Plan.* Here I am again, but this time it is only to ask you two or three specific questions before the plan is finally settled.

1. You see a slight modification has been made in the position of the scullery attached to the delivery ward. Do you think this signifies?

2. The positions of the fireplaces in the pupil nurses' rooms have been altered from the outside to the inside walls as giving a better position for the bed.

3. Into the corridor walls recesses a' a' have been introduced in which either the Galton ventilating grate or Nettleton's open stove could be placed. Would you kindly consider these arrangements and also the following points:

(1) Segregation ward *not* to be connected with main corridors?

(2) Linen store 21'0" x 9'6" a linen rack 2'6" wide in the centre formed of open batten shelves about 2' apart and carried up to within 6" of the ceiling, at one end a bedding rack of similar construction, a length of 8' of which would store twelve mattresses and the remaining 18" might be made into a bolster rack for twelve bolsters. Will this suffice?

(3) I confess that there is a certain look of closeness about the two-storeyed court with buildings projecting into it. What do you think? One must take into consideration however that one or more of these wards (and always two delivery wards) will be vacant in rotation for cleaning.

At Liverpool Workhouse (which has been so successful) they lime-wash every lying-in room three or four times a year. Possibly *this* would be best, viz., to have each ward vacated for four times ten days every year, each *delivery* ward would be of course vacant half the year—in periods of ? days.

They (the draughtsmen) ask us *not to fold* their plan. I accordingly send it between two sheets of cardboard and will send for it by 8 o'clock on *Tuesday morning*, with your kind permission, unless I hear from you to the contrary. But *pray* do not let me hurry you. God bless you.

Source: From a letter to Lieutenant Ommanney, ADD Mss 45802 ff146-47

21 June 1870

*Lying-in Hospital Plan.* I return your plan with a great many thanks. And, in answer to yours of 18 June, I would proceed with the plan as it is, for:

1. The slight modification in position of scullery to delivery ward is of no consequence. (My friend, Miss Jones, suggests that there may be some objection to position of third bed in delivery ward between two windows and door as to draughts. Do you think so and could the arrangement be improved?)

2. The alteration of position of fireplace in pupil nurses' rooms is an improvement.

3. Fireplaces in corridor very good, viz., recesses a' a'. Segregation ward may be left as it is. Linen store and bolster and mattress rack as proposed very good and sufficient.

I shall gratefully accept *all* your kind propositions about finishing the plans. Do you not think it would be desirable to omit the scale of this general plan, leaving that to architects, while marking the dimensions, course, on the two page plans (which you are so good as to do), these being the units of construction? You give the architects the principle, leaving them to work it out.

Source: From four undated notes to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45754 ff195, 200, 244 and 248

[late June-July 1870]

We have not one London workhouse with an average of anything like 500 deliveries *per annum*. (For the *five years* it is more like 500 deliveries.) We have not one London workhouse with an average of 500 deliveries for *five years* (instead of *per annum*) which has not a mortality several times as great as Liverpool.

Do not you forget that you said there must be a chapter on the *management* of existing lying-in institutions and that you specially left a good deal I had collected on *management* which would otherwise have been inserted in the already written Ms because you reserved it, you said, for a future chapter by itself?

I regret exceedingly that the lying-in paper is not ready. Dr C.J.B. Williams<sup>72</sup> (whom I was obliged to call in on my own account) has

---

72 Dr Charles James Blasius Williams (1805-89), professor of medicine at University College, president of the Pathological Society.

consulted me about the memorial to Sir James Simpson (on the committee of which he is). Some are bent on building a hospital. If we had been ready with our facts and plans for them, we should have been just in the nick of God's providence. (Dr Williams himself is all astray about carbolic acid as the chief remedy in hospitals—but listened attentively for an hour to all I said (greatly to my bodily detriment).

I cannot write another word today. If you come tomorrow, I hope I may be able to *see* you. We have much to decide. This is the *third* time I leave London leaving the lying-in paper *in statu quo*.

I shall leave it to you to decide whether it shall be abandoned altogether—or what is to be done—only repeating for myself that the only way I can work now is by receiving written notes from you and working them up into my own language—then printing and showing you the work. It is just fourteen months since you desired me to put those great folios in the chair (for the lying-in paper) There they have been ever since.

Source: From a printed article on the training of army midwives, ADD Mss 45754 ff198-99 (Nightingale comments on the printed text in bold)

[article dated 1 July 1870]

Title: The **Non-Training** of Army Midwives **with two or three good words (at p 3) for non-midwives**. . . . no woman must be admitted . . . at least twenty cases of labour **per week for six months**. . . . Outline of Instruction by Lectures. **All very good, but accounts for the high midwifery mortality in the army “to the satisfaction of” any ordinary person.**

[after the list of lectures] **A woman might answer all these questions to perfection and kill the lying-in patient at the first non-natural labour she meets with—which, it appears, is actually the case in the army.**

Source: From a letter to Dr C.J.B. Williams, ADD Mss 45802 f149

21 July 1870

I have been most anxious to hunt up anything for you from Sir James Simpson which, as I understood you, was to be later than January 1869 and to express whether he approved of *any* form of lying-in hospital. Will the enclosed of *June* 1869 be of any use to you? vide second sheet. It is the only one I can lay my hands upon. I was most desirous to send it you before last Tuesday, but you know what it is to look over vast heaps of papers, and I with no powers of locomotion or even of

sitting up. I do not even know whether what I send will be of any use to you. Mr Saunders and Mr Clover with nitrous oxide, according to your kind advice, are just coming to extract my peccant members of teeth.

**Editor:** There was an exchange with Dr Sutherland (12 August 1870) on Lieutenant Ommanney's plans for a lying-in hospital for army wives, which Nightingale complained she could not understand. Dr Sutherland gave his objections; he did not like the architectural appearance of the general plan, but it "would do." He suggested that she put it in "simply as an illustrative arrangement."<sup>73</sup>

In her letter to William Farr, immediately below, Nightingale limited herself to only one question (on account of his being busy with the census), Duncan's invaliding the accuracy of medical certificates of death. Farr subsequently criticized Duncan's deduction and went on to cite Nightingale's *Introductory Notes* with approval.<sup>74</sup>

Source: From a letter to William Farr, Private Collection of Susan Teagle, copy ADD Mss 43400 ff247-49

16 January 1871

*Dr Duncan's Lying-in Statistics.*<sup>75</sup> At the moment that you are putting forth your beneficent feelers all over this land, spinning your web to tell us how many we are, not how many we have killed and lost in horrid war—how can I trouble you with a single question? Nor would I but that I think it likely that, having already mastered the subject and the criticism brought by Dr Duncan, you could dictate the reply almost in a single paragraph.

You were so very kind—a year? more than a year ago—as to send me some of your invaluable statistics of childbed mortality. From Le Fort's book I obtained much and I had also collected a good deal from particular institutions. The war for six months had put aside the possibility of my working it all up. But, a few days ago, I was asked very seriously, for a practical purpose, to bring out my proposed "paper" as soon as possible and I opened my material again with the view of constructing a parallel between the death rates in lying-in hospitals and those in homes.

<sup>73</sup> Letter with response, ADD Mss 12 August 1870, ADD Mss 45755 f31.

<sup>74</sup> William Farr, 33rd Annual Report to the Registrar-General, 1871:410-11.

<sup>75</sup> James Matthews Duncan, *On the Mortality of Childbed Fever and Maternity Hospitals*, 1870.



Dr Matthews Duncan (whose book you have certainly seen, but which I enclose for your kind reference) has, as a fundamental idea, to controvert the views of Sir James Simpson and others about the necessarily high death rates in midwifery hospitals. And, as you see, he calls in question the exactness of the statistical data on which these views were founded, and which I had already worked up into an imperfect Ms.<sup>76</sup>

Would you be so very good as to tell me what *you think* I should *think* of his objections—to your registrars, amongst others—and how, if at all, I had best deal with them? May I feel it safe, statistically, to use the death rates we have for hospitals, dispensaries and private homes, admitting at the same time their necessary incorrectness? Or how should you use these data? Or would you advise me, before treating of the high death rates in lying-in hospitals as a practical argument, to wait until you can give the world absolutely correct midwifery statistics?

Pray excuse my inquiry, which there is no one but yourself who can answer; return me my tiresome and “aggravating” book and believe me,  
ever yours most truly

Florence Nightingale

Source: From an incomplete letter to Parthenope or Emily Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/9

[ca. January-February 1871]

Compared with the midwives’ instruction both practical and scientific in Paris, the midwifery instruction and above all the midwifery *examination* of *students* in London is a mere farce—and instructing and certifying of *midwives* in London is something worse and more wicked than a farce. (I have known women *certificated* at Q. Charlotte’s Hospital *after one month!!!* and go out to India to practise—women whom I had refused to take under six months and refused altogether to take “to pick up instruction.”) (All the above I *think* I stated to Sir Harry in a long letter I wrote to him at his desire (eight or twelve pages) in answer to a letter to him of Miss Garrett’s one or two years ago. And I am afraid I am quite unequal to repeating it now, however gladly I would help you [?])

---

76 Duncan’s book indeed argues against the negative view of maternity hospitals; he is especially critical of Le Fort’s study, even calling his comparative figures between maternal deaths of 1 in 29 in hospitals compared with 1 in 212 from home deliveries “deluding” (116).

In London and the United Kingdom licenses are granted “to practise midwifery” by the nineteen licensing bodies to students after “conducting” twenty, twelve, or even six “deliveries.” (As Sidney Herbert said, when we were constructing the constitution of the Army Medical School at Netley, which takes men *after* they have passed the licensing bodies, in order to supplement the notorious defects of their medical education: “it sounds like the ‘labours of Hercules.’”) *Do you wish women to have this education?*

It is true that these men, licensed thus to practise midwifery, have all the advantages of medical education and examination. But as Lord Salisbury, who generally hits the right nail on the head, says in opposing Lord de Grey’s medical bill) [illeg] forms though he was one of the [illeg] most ardent worshippers at the shrine of examination yet he would not be “willing to have his leg amputated by a man who had only read about cutting off legs.” (In my (lilac) private report to Lord Panmure of 1857, I have gone fully into the defects of our medical schools and examinations. I cannot now look for the pages.)

5. *Is it this which you wish to see women admitted to?* I want something very different. In several foreign schools for midwives besides that at Paris, there is really “severe training” and “rigid examination.” There is nothing at all in my opinion which deserves this name as applied to students here. And those who pass the examination best are often those who practically know the least. (Men have passed excellent examinations who actually did not know the heart from the liver when placed before them.)

6. I may have said that it was absurd whereas it is (most properly) exacted from students that they should have attended in a hospital for three years, absurd to suppose that a few months would enable a woman to know anything, which would qualify her for practice. But this will not be remedied by “joint classes and lectures” or by “classes and lectures” at all.

N.B. It seems to me that *any* one may “expect to be consulted and trusted” here. The more impudent the quack, the more he is “trusted.”

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland with his comments, ADD Mss 45755 ff173-80

6 March 1871

*Lying-in Hospitals.* I was much obliged to you for sending me this Ms paper. I have gone through it all, though with no little difficulty, for it is my case, as I believe it is that of all much-worn invalids, that examin-

ing and revising a Ms is far more laborious to them than writing one from notes—which notes, existing in several hands, YOU have not sent me. To proceed:

1. It reads like an introductory chapter and, when I wrote the Ms which is its basis, you said that *that was to be the introduction*. I think the title should be *Introductory Notes* rather than the proposed title.

2. There are besides more than two or three allusions in it (one or two in the part in your own hand) to matter which never comes. For example, one in your hand alludes to “proposals” supplied by “Miss Jones” which never come. And there is not a word from “Miss Jones” there. (This was a guess that something might come because it was in the original paper in your own hand. I merely copied it.)

3. I feel nevertheless so entirely unable to go over and over again the matter of the present Ms, which has already been gone over and over again for 2¼ years, that I propose as follows: to publish this Ms (with some additions and corrections which are indispensable and which I will presently detail) as I published the first and second 5/ editions of my *Notes on Hospitals*, leaving it to my chance of life and work to publish a future enlarged edition, like Longman’s of my *Notes on Hospitals*.<sup>77</sup>

There should therefore be a very small number of copies of *this* edition, if published. I would almost prefix a very few words saying that *this* is merely thrown out as a nucleus or hook to obtain accretions or to catch other fish—although the facts themselves, the nucleus, have been made as correct as it was possible and as would have been done for a finished work.

4. The corrections and additions which are indispensable, though there are more which would be desirable, are:

(a) There is some confusion about *Dr Rigden’s* “9 deaths” (put in in your handwriting). It is put in as “8 deaths” and as “9 deaths” and the percentage appears to be calculated on the “8” in the place where it is put in as the “9” or rather the puerperal-disease-death rate appears to be calculated on the “8” and the 9th death is then added, without giving its *cause* (?). Mr Rigden does not give the cause; the death took place the day after delivery (*no* doubt it was an accident). I have corrected the statement.

---

77 The third edition of *Notes on Hospitals*, by Longman, Green, 1863, is a considerably expanded 195 pages, compared with the original paper of 22 pages in 1858, to which several other papers were added in 1859; see *Hospital Reform*.

(b) *Aldershot*: I obtained last year with much labour an account from the chaplain of the working of the “sisters” of last years in the lying-in hospital, from whom it appeared that the matron’s and mid-wife’s duties are not as you have stated them in the Ms. His letters (Rev J.E. Sabin<sup>78</sup>) are among the papers. But you do not appear to have consulted them and you have not sent them to me. (We never could get any account from the A.M.D. of this matter.) JS: Done.

(c) Should there not be a second allusion to the *Waterford* Hospital? at p 46a? We obtained their papers—you said their statistics should go in. And there is a second place where it would seem as if an allusion to it had dropped out by mistake in the recapitulation, p 46 2nd side. This is not however of any consequence.

(d) *Description of Lieutenant Ommanney’s plans*. This is defective and sometimes in error. (Indeed I was obliged to go over and over it again before I could recognize my old friend.) The most important omissions are: (1) no notice taken of the plan of using the wards *in rotation*, which was the most elementary feature of our reform. Incidental allusion is indeed made to frequent “aeration” (what word is that? *I* don’t know it), which might mean opening the windows.

(2) No notice taken of our plan of moving all lying-in women *three* times, from delivery ward, eight hours to lying-in ward, five or six days to recovery or convalescent ward, till discharge. I thought this was an elementary feature in our plan too, though not so much so as the other. JS: Done.

(3) This reminds me that the element of “average number of days” in lying-in institutions (which is of great importance two ways) appears not consistently treated in this paper. It is emphatically stated in the *military* lying-in part, and altogether overlooked in all other parts. Now it is not at all certain that the persistent refusal of the soldier’s wife to stay more than ten-twelve days in these lying-in huts is not a great element of their healthiness. King’s College Hospital boasted itself that it kept our poor women a full month. They were too glad to stay. It is certain that this increases the elements of danger. It had speedily to be reduced to *sixteen* days.

Marylebone and other workhouses keep their lying-in cases an average number of *eighteen [to] twenty-one* days. Liverpool Workhouse, I *think*, states its average number of days as *fourteen*. But the only num-

---

78 J.E. Sabin, senior chaplain at Scutari and a co-worker on reforms for ordinary soldiers.

ber, stated in the Ms, besides the soldiers' wives, is Dr Rigden's. (Of course the other way this is of importance is that the captious will say: Yes, but you do not know the deaths which happen *after* discharge.)

Description of Ommanney's plan.

(4) The part however which puzzles me most is the alteration of the *numbers* of beds, which we strictly limited to forty, because we strictly limited the *middle* pavilion on each side to one floor, one pavilion always to stand empty in rotation for cleansing and limewashing, so that only thirty-two [to] thirty-six beds are ever occupied.

The numbers have been altered in your description and in your hand even on Lieutenant Ommanney's plan and raised to forty-eight, a second floor being apparently added to the two *one*-floor pavilions *inside* the court. (This runs throughout the "description" in your hand, though not in Ommanney's.) I have erased the forty-eight in your hand and restored the forty on Lieutenant Ommanney's design.

Those are the main indispensable additions and corrections on the existing Ms which, as it appears, require making. I could do the additions for it is really less painful to me writing from notes than examining and revising a Ms (which is in effect what I have been doing) *if I had but the notes*. But these *are not*—at least here. They consist of my letters to Lieutenant Ommanney, a letter to me from Miss Jones and *his* paper on his own plan, part of which at least should go in as a quotation from him.

Also, e.g., there is not one word in the description (in the Ms before me) about the system of reliefs for pupil midwives, which is so important that it modified the whole idea of the administration block. Lastly, there must (this is *must*, not may) be some slight sketch of the management of lying-in women and of a midwifery training school, *insofar* as this determines some constructive arrangements as imperative and others as to be avoided. In nearly every page of the Ms this is alluded to as coming and never comes. Enough exists to form this indispensable chapter in my letters to Ommanney and in that one of Miss Jones's to me—I should not propose to put *more* (at least not in this edition, which I look upon merely as a feeler). But this again I could write with my notes and cannot without.

N.B. The parts (a) and (c) about *Dr Rigden* and *Waterford* I should not choose to put in *without you*, even if I could—these being as it were professional. The addition about Waterford not essential.

5. I have indicated the additions and corrections manifestly indispensable. There are besides (in the sheets of the Ms in my handwrit-

ing which are not come) pencil indications of things which had been omitted and which I thought should come in later, that Ms being, as I was told, merely an introduction. . . .

I know not whether to send you back the Ms with this letter (which it has taken me two days to write). But on the whole I think I had better keep it till I have your answer to this. I had better see *this* again, as I have no other note of what the Ms appears to require, although I have freely corrected it as I went on, as far as my memory served me—without the papers referred to and have indicated (in red) some lacunes which must be filled up.

I wait your answer. Thank you for this trouble you have taken about this Ms.

P.S. and N.B. I will only just say that, in the very title written in your hand mention is made of a “proposal”—“for organizing, etc.,” which never comes. Even if I add the small chapter I propose this must, I think, go out of the title. (The last sheet of the Ms in my hand, which is not come, left off with the beginning words of this “*proposal*,” which was at last about to be “*proposed*.”)

yours v. faithfully

F. Nightingale

It is perhaps worthwhile just to say that the expression at lying-in institutions should be “instantly closed” comes three, if not four times over. It is somewhat of an irritating expression, even if used only once. But this is a matter of taste.

Source: From three letters to Dr Sutherland, the first with his comments, ADD Mss 45755 ff187-96, 197 and 209

28 March 1871

7 A.M.

*Lying-in papers.* You are kind enough to invite me to send you back these papers in order to “finish my book” with my “observations, additional points,” and “an additional chapter” or “sketch of proposed administration.” I have written the additional chapter and now enclose it with the whole. I tried to enlarge, add to and modify the three or five last pages of *your* Ms (pp 49-50). But, after several attempts, I failed or rather found it impossible and so wrote what I had to say on management as bearing on construction in the forty-one new additional pages now sent.

I have erased two or three passages in your last page (p 50), which come word for word, or are treated differently, in mine. But there must be more such passages. This work of renewal, comparison and

weeding is quite beyond my powers—I do not think that I can do more to it. After it has received your proposed “finishing” I think it must be published, if at all, and merely as an *Introductory Note* or feeler (I have put a few words on the reverse of the title page) for this reason. . . .

1. Would it not be well to insert the sheet of King’s College mortality (marked by me as “insert + p 3”) (blue foolscap) omitting the *names* of the unfortunate sufferers (though perhaps it would be better to put it in at the end of the Appendix if at all)? Upon it would hang a most curious, though painful, inquiry (which I thought we were to have made but of which I find *no* trace in the Ms).

The deaths in that melancholy foolscap sheet are often three or four weeks later than the date of delivery. The date of *attack* (of puerperal fever) is not given; perhaps it cannot be found to be a fact that a woman, after going on well for five or six days, is *then* attacked by puerperal fever. It would throw important light upon the question, both upon the *necessity* of removing women going on well after the fifth or sixth day to a convalescent ward and upon the danger of associating women in different stages of recovery in the same ward, i.e., women in the first day or two after delivery and after the first week or so.

I have studied that sheet with painful interest, though not much can be made out of it, owing to the want of the date of attack of puerperal fever. (In the last year the erysipelas case<sup>79</sup> which, by Dr Priestley’s own showing, did the mischief appears to have *died before the admission* of the two cases whose deaths from puerperal fever he attributes *directly* to it.) In all statistics, it would be most important to have: date of *delivery*, date of *attack*, date of *death*.

2. Without going into this larger point, I have, under “Sites,” p 25 of my new Ms (white thread) merely stated the *average* of days of patients’ stay in certain institutions, not giving any conclusions from it, though it is one of the most important elements and ought to be known, at *least* for Q. Charlotte’s and the Paris Maternité in addition to these. The place where I have inserted it is not a good place. But in the body of the (green string) Ms, I can only find it even noted for two institutions. And no attempt at any general summary or conclusion on this point is ever made. I have done what I could and do not

---

79 Both erysipelas and puerperal fever are now known to come from the same cause, streptococcus A.

feel I could enter upon this discussion now, not for *this* publication at least.

At the Paris Maternité, pregnant women are admitted weeks and even months beforehand, wait upon the accouchées, are mixed up with them; a proportion of pregnant women AND a proportion of accouchées are placed under the care of one and the same élève sage-femme in each case at one and the same time. All this is a most important element in the case of the Paris Maternité mortality. It would not be tolerated even in a workhouse in England where pregnant women *are* admitted. Yet I find no mention made of it in the Ms.

3. Would it not be well to insert Mr Barnes's "Summary" of lying-in cases in Liverpool Workhouse for 1868-69 (marked by me X X 34 a) perhaps in the Appendix? I say this because it gives some valuable information, especially about proportion of unmarried mothers in workhouses, because one or two of its points are treated in your account of Dr Rigden *and nowhere else*. On the other hand there are some points in this "Summary" of which we have not treated in regard to other institutions and, therefore, it might be as well to omit them.

4. I send Dr Rigden's letters, that you may correct, if you please, what appears ambiguous at p 8 of the (green string) Ms.

5. I return my own old letter of 6 March, because you have twice written to me: "let me have it again without fail, as I could almost from it complete the Ms" and "I think we might make the Ms better before sending it to Longman" (in which *indeed* I agree). "Your letter contains many points I could make use of."

6. I have inserted corrections from Mr Sabin's letters as to Aldershot and from Dr Balfour's letters. I have *not* verified a *single figure* (I could not go into all that again now). I have corrected some inaccuracies, but cannot in the least vouch that there are not many more.

Let me here just caution against hastily erasing or correcting without reference to the original documents, of which I see some traces in the Ms, or without ascertaining that it does or does not come in somewhere else, of which I also see some traces. (One point I saw stated one way in one page and the reverse in another. This I corrected.)

7. I have not even *looked* at the "unused pages" of my original old Ms in my own hand, which you returned to me. This is quite *impossible* to me. Nor have I consulted by any means all the original papers and information collected, though enough to see that we have dropt many stitches. But it would be impossible for me, in the way this Ms has lin-



gered, been patched, lingered again, repatched again, to make this general overhauling now.

8. Some *minimum* of cubic and superficial space necessary for each lying-in woman *must* be given *somewhere*. I can find it nowhere. (I have put it in for delivery wards.) Please put it in for lying-in wards at pp 5-6 of my new Ms. Also, it does not even appear in Lieutenant Ommanney's description of his own designs. Perhaps we told him to omit "Dimensions." But a *minimum must* go into my additional chapter (the new Ms) if nowhere else.

9. I send Lieutenant Ommanney's own memo, of which in justice to him some part must go in and, I believe, we now think, *all*. I have made a few annotations *on* the memo sheets.

10. There must be many repetitions between your own last four or five pages (green string Ms) and Lieutenant Ommanney's memo. And my own *new* Ms or additional chapter, which is in fact the original of them all—the whole of it dating from notes of mine of January 1869. But I can give no more head to considering these repetitions—inevitable in the way this work has been done, i.e., without consulting what had gone before. I would again caution against hasty correction or erasures without having the whole in one's head.

I do not know that I can say more because I don't know that I can *do* more. I enclose the whole Mss, put up in a sort of consecutiveness, though painfully aware how bad this is. It *must* be amended. I enclose no other papers but Dr Rigden's letters (and my own of 6 March) for your reference. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken and are willing to take and am,

yours very faithfully

F. Nightingale

I have made an insertion at p 41a of your (green string) Ms.

*Dr Sutherland*, please insert on p 1 of my own Ms the proportion of births to 100 women from Farr. **JS:** Done.

**FN:** And also if possible the proportion of births to surgical operations if rough data. **JS:** Could not be done with any degree of accuracy.

29 March 1871

*Lying-in papers.* No sooner was my packet to you gone than there arrives the enclosed for 1870 from good Mr Barnes of Liverpool. I think IT OUGHT TO GO IN. It is remarkable the freedom from puerperal fever that I really do not see how the badness of the *locale* differs from that of King's College with the sole exceptions of:

1. Absence of Post-Mortem Theatre;
  2. " " Students;
  3. Removal of women after five or six days to convalescent wards. All these things are important. I think there is some mistake in the copy.
- |                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| E.g., No. of Women | 441 |
| Twins              | 7   |
| Children           | 448 |
| No. of Males born  | 280 |
| No. of Females "   | 213 |
| Children           | 493 |

Also: I do not see the *causes* of the two "deaths." I *must* write to thank him especially as he has been ill and would ask him these or any questions you like.

15 April 1871

LYING-IN PAPERS. I send you the Liverpool Workhouse statistics for 1870 and Mr Barnes's note. You see that they have had but two deaths in 500 deliveries from diseased heart and dropsy and *no* deaths from puerperal disease or accident. (I call it 500 because they had 5500 deliveries in eleven years. But it *is* only forty-four.)

It continues to me the most extraordinary phenomenon, because their numbers are three or four times as great as those of the largest London workhouses, I think (you have all my papers so that I cannot refer), and certainly three or four times as great as we had at King's College. Their *locale* is in my opinion worse than at King's College. And the only favourable conditions are, as to *locale*:

1. No post-mortem theatre;
2. No students;
3. Removing the women three or even four times, viz., delivery ward to lying-in ward, to recovery ward, to body of house.
4. And (I suppose) no one having the wickedness to send in an erysipelas case in labour from the general wards to the lying-in department as Dr Priestley did in our case (for which he ought to have been dismissed, instead of his dismissing us—in his lecture).<sup>80</sup>

II In the present confusion of women's minds about medicine, one current wishing for "men's education," another believing that they

---

<sup>80</sup> In the text of *Introductory Notes* Nightingale describes the situation as the woman with erysipelas remaining in the general ward, attended by a midwife, who was then kept away from the midwifery wards "for a considerable time" (see p 251 below).

can “pick up” medicine in a nurses’ or midwifery nurses’ school to “practise” in India or the colonies (you would hardly believe how many applications I have had of this sort), I think I could not conscientiously close my paper without stating in an appendix note what are the rights of this question. But I wish particularly not, by raising “a storm in a teacup” on a contested point, to injure the effect of this *incontestable* point as to lying-in mortality.

I would therefore put in only a meek little note, of which I have written two rough drafts (which I enclose) not as wishing at all to put in either of these—but simply as specimens of what I think it right to say.

As I am treating the question of a midwifery school for women, I do not see how I can well avoid the point of what a complete midwifery education *is*, whether for women or for men. But again I say I do not wish to arouse opposition to *sanitary* truths, which we wish to press and which we wish to invite others *to add to*. Also, I do feel it *so* impossible to write a paper as we have done this—in patchwork—you *can’t* patch *paper*—it *tears*. Perhaps you had better return me *this* note when you return the papers.

Source: From three letters to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45755 ff212-17, 218-21 and 224-27, the last with his comments

18 April 1871

*Lying-in Hospital Plans.* I think you forget (which cannot fail to be the case where a paper like this has been hanging fire for nearly 2½ years) how *every* question you have now started has been discussed and rediscussed and settled and Lieutenant Ommanney’s plans sent back to him again and again (his patience has been beyond praise) for the very reason that they did not sufficiently embody the essential principles which you are now again calling in question.

1. One of these, and the most absolutely essential, was that every floor should have *two* delivery wards, entirely pavilionized with all ward offices, scullery, etc., under separate roofs, so that each should stand entirely empty with all its offices alternately to be turned inside out by cleansing. A plan of Mr Ommanney’s where the two delivery wards were in a sort of double pavilion, with scullery between, was entirely rejected merely on this account, that the one could not be cleansed properly while the other was in use. Nothing would induce me to admit any block plan into my paper which did not provide for *two* delivery wards entirely pavilionized for each floor. But indeed it is impossible for me to *reopen* these questions—so entirely settled.

2. There is an objection to having "delivery wards" *in the same line* with the others and the *corner* is far the best place for them, as was settled after much discussion.

3. There is an objection to having more *than three pavilions* to a side, owing to the constant necessity of being able to summon instant help by night bells (even with the most perfect management of matrons and midwives) to the farthest pavilion. Were the service of lying-in wards regular, like general hospitals, there would be a very obvious advantage in having the sleeping block of each set of attendants attached to its own side. But I believe that such a division of attendants would be practically impossible in a lying-in school. This, again, was entirely discussed and settled.

4. *About one floor pavilions*: for two months in 1869, for three months in 1870, this was discussed and rediscussed. I really have nothing more to say. The conclusion was this: for a lying-in institution of eight or ten beds, I have not a doubt that three (four-bed) huts would be the best—one always to stand empty in rotation—the delivery bed to be in one compartment of each hut. If you have the delivery ward in a hut to itself you *must* have warmed corridors. And that increases expense amazingly. But, when you come to a lying-in hospital of any size, and when you dismiss the idea of rough army huts, it would be, on account of cost, very difficult to propose *one-storeyed* regular pavilions connected with warmed corridors. We dismissed the idea (no doubt the common hut is preferable) but scarcely applicable for a midwifery school.

5. *Number of Pupils*. All this was discussed *usque ad nauseam*. In a large lying-in institution, say thirty-fourty beds, you may have almost *a pupil per bed*, because it is not desirable to take up the pupils' time with the mere mechanical processes of after-delivery—mother and infant. They must have time *for theoretical instruction* and this cannot be given unless there is an ample number of pupils, *more* than is enough for mere drudging about the patients. But it is obvious that *one pupil per bed* would not do in small lying-in institutions because there would not be deliveries enough to practise them. (We reckoned at King's C.H. six pupils to ten beds, which gave us only about 130 deliveries a year, I think. But you have all my papers.) . . .

*For the latter part of it*: I must refer you to my two long letters of 5 (or 6) March and of about three or four weeks ago—because I am quite unable to write the same thing over and over again.

In answer to those you (then) stated that there was a great deal more to do than mere "stringing together," that you were struck with

the badness of the “Conclusions” and wished to “rewrite” them “before going to Longman’s, which you have repeated since and in which I concurred. Also, that you recognized the necessity of putting in something about “average days in hospital” *and its effect on patients* and of working the “summary of deaths at K.C.H.,” which I sent you (in the papers) about three or four weeks ago, also, etc.

But I cannot rewrite those long letters (you state *in this letter* “the last chapter will have to be written” in which I concurred). I am really unable to do these rediscussions of a 100 times told tale.

[19 April 1871]

*Childbed Statistics Record Book.* I am unable to look through Duncan, therefore return him to you for the object in view (with the “heads,” in Mr Frederick’s writing) enclosed in this. I think that, after “8. date of labour” should come 9. *duration of labour in hours*. An important element, and after or before “21. date of discharge” should come *period of stay in the lying-in department in days*. This is useful as checking accuracy of “dates of admission and discharge.”

I do not think it would be possible to Dr Farr to give time to this now. He told me some weeks ago that he regretted he could not help me more, but that he should be so taken up with the census for months to come that this year he could not, that next year he hoped to give his serious attention to organizing statistics for me. (I sent you his letter.) I believe that if I wrote to him now, as you propose, he would not answer for a month and then would say he could not answer. I propose therefore that we should do the best we can for this edition, hoping, please God, to ensure a much more complete one next year.

2. *Liverpool Workhouse Statistics.* I send you all I have, as I believe (but again I say it is almost impossible for me *here* to answer you *there* with papers and plans *there*). Blue strip “1868” I believe is only an imperfect one of what you have perfect under “1868-69” (together). In the three letters of Mr Barnes I send you, I believe there are all the data, although confused, that we have.

3. *Your third question “Note in Appendix.”* If you will please consult my previous letter (last Saturday’s I *think*) you will see that I stated expressly that my Ms (about the she-doctors) should go as a *Note in Appendix* and nowhere else, if it went in at all. (And there is even written at the top of the Ms “Note Appendix.”) It would be wholly out of place in the “Preface,” as it has nothing to do with *sanitary* matters or with *construction*—the two matters treated of. It is simply an explana-

tory *Appendix*, because I cannot let people think that a midwifery nurse is a midwife—still less a physician accoucheuse—and because this distinction has been long recognized in France and Germany, where there *are real* physicians accoucheuses.

But as it will excite opposition, and I do not wish to prejudice my paper. I could not consent to its going anywhere except in the *Appendix*. (And I stated this, though not so plainly, in my letter to you.) The note about midwifery nurses and midwives should stay where it is (I have known Q. Charlotte's and others give a midwife's certificate at the end of *one month!* while we at K.C.H., at the end of *six months*, would only give a midwifery *nurse's* certificate.)

20 April 1871

*Registry of Midwifery Cases*. I scarcely know what to say about this. I could have judged better, if the first strip had been returned to me. It seems to me *very good*. But I should have thought it better to put together all the columns which regard the woman and then all the columns which regard the child. Especially, ought not the column "Dead born" (9 from end) to come next "the column, infant dead cause of death" (1 from end)?

(You have not put in "*days of stay in lying-in departments*.") I do not know that it is necessary. Also there may some misunderstanding arise from "Date of *Discharge* from *Lying-in Ward*" (column 4 from end). If, as at Liverpool Workhouse they have (and everywhere ought to have) convalescent wards *in* the lying-in department, apart from (1) delivery, (2) lying-in wards—do you mean to ask the "date of" *removal* from "*lying-in ward*" or the "date of" *discharge* from lying-in *department*? I think you must alter either the word "*ward*" for department or the word "*discharge*" for change or removal. . . .

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland with his comments, ADD Mss 45755 ff228-30

24 April 1871

*Lying-in paper*. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken. I have gone over it, with all the attention of which I am capable, again, but have merely corrected some literal and verbal errors (of which, pardon me, there are many) and a few graver ones, where the premise does not bear or contradicts the conclusion as, e.g., in the text; "a lying-in woman should never enter a *general* hospital," interpolated "*because of the mortality in lying-in hospitals*." I feel quite incapable of doing anything more on this Ms. No one in perfect health

could or ought to do a statistical and practical paper in the way this has been done. And for me it is impossible. The paper now is *all patching*. And patching, observe, is not adding to or working out. No artist ever patches, though he works out and adds to his sketches.

The original colour is now quite lost. And patches, losing all proportion to each other, now cover and tear it out of all shape. I will only mention one or two instances and this for improvement in the proof.

1. The Liverpool Workhouse part has now lost all point and is given in a manner contrary to everything *you have ever taught*.

**JS:** Certainly not.

**FN:** That is, the whole thirteen years are lumped together.

**JS:** Quite right.

**FN:** Losing sight entirely of the extraordinary fact that the mortality has *progressively diminished*,

**JS:** NOT SO.

**FN:** instead of increasing till, for the last four or five years, it has been as low as that of women delivered at home in the country.

**JS:** It has increased and diminished in thirteen years.

**FN:** And this *last* year there has been none—no puerperal mortality.

**JS:** It would be unsafe to use Liverpool evidence in any other way. Next year there may be ten deaths from puerperal fever. The real explanation is that for several years past there has been no epidemic.

**FN:** I shall, when the proof comes back, while retaining your table of the thirteen years, print a table from Barnes's data of nos. of deaths, causes of death, year by year.

**JS:** You may do this, but the practical conclusion will clearly be that there has been no epidemic.

**FN:** I would insert it *now*, but that I am utterly unable. It brings me almost to the verge of brain fever, as it has often done before, to go through this patching again. . . . Penelope's web was nothing to it.<sup>81</sup>

**JS:** I got your note with the table and will go over it carefully. I am busy with the Ms and will, I hope, make it better.

---

81 Penelope, during Ulysses' twenty-year absence at the Trojan Wars, wove by day and unpicked by night to avoid having to choose a successor to her absent husband; she had been compelled to promise she would do so when the web was completed.

Source: From a note to William Rathbone, Liverpool Record Office, Rathbone Papers 610

[c1871]

There is a side remark which I would make, *not* for Mr Greg:<sup>82</sup>

The high mortality from puerperal fever and *childbirth at their own homes* and the low mortality in the *workhouse* (only 4 per 1000), the *number* of childbirth cases nursed by the district nurses (400) being but a few less than what the *workhouse* has had of late years annually. (It used to have nearer 500.) I want to ask two questions:

1. What proportion of these *childbirth* cases are DELIVERED by *doctors* (or students) and what by the *district nurses* themselves?

2. Also, does the same nurse nurse *fever* AND *childbirth* cases? If so, ought this to be?

Source: From a letter to Messrs Spottiswoode, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C106

17 July 1871

*My Notes on Lying-in Institutions*

Gentlemen

I beg to thank you for sending me this "revise" so quickly (the paper reads 100 percent better for having the tables in the text). I have now renumbered the tables and references and put in the headings, as desired, and beg to return the revise. I do not know whether you intended me to do this or to correct this revise before sending me the whole. *If not*, will you be so good as to send me *this* back with a *second* copy and the rest, at your earliest convenience (*two* copies of the whole revise).

I am extremely obliged to you for making such prompt progress with it, which is what I very much need. (I retain the lithographs till I have the whole.) I have made some corrections to woodcut p 40, which had not been attended to. Pray believe me, gentlemen,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** The book seems to have been printed without much care at the end. To the unnumbered tables we have added letters, e.g., Table A. Plans and diagrams have been numbered, e.g., Figure 1, and references both to tables and figures made clearer in the text.

---

82 William Rathbone Greg (1809-81), essayist.





## INTRODUCTORY NOTES ON LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS

---

Nightingale in the preface, right after the whimsical dedication to Socrates' mother, "without permission," sets out the problem of the midwifery ward at King's College Hospital. The circumstances of each of the deaths that occurred from 1862-67 are listed. It is clear from this first table that deaths from puerperal fever occurred at roughly the same rate in the years 1862-66, from two to five a year. The bad year was 1867, with nine deaths out of 125 deliveries. The case of the woman with erysipelas who died of puerperal fever who seems to have started the whole chain of deaths of that year is noted.

The science for understanding those deaths of course was then lacking, but Nightingale's statistical approach was entirely apt: to ascertain the "normal death rate of lying-in women." This then becomes the basis for the comparison of death rates in particular institutions or situations. Only then can the "great question" be decided, "as to whether a training school for midwifery nurses can be safely conducted" in such a building, or must such nurses be trained only "at the bedside in the patient's own home," which of course meant "far more difficulty and far less chance of success" (see p 253 below)

Nightingale next related the comparative data from other countries, especially using Le Fort, from military hospitals and from home births ("outdoor" for out-patient). She gave considerable attention to comparative mortality data from workhouse infirmaries. A great deal of space then is given to plans of institutions. The unfavourable circumstances of the midwifery ward at King's College Hospital is readily apparently in Figure 3, proximity to a regular sick ward and the post-mortem theatre. Even the midwifery ward itself appears to be lacking in cross ventilation.

Nightingale's two-page "Recapitulation" is firm and clear as to the problems and careful in drawing implications for practice. Her analy-

sis goes further than that of earlier (male) investigators in insisting on the normalcy of birthing: “Lying-in is neither a disease nor an accident” (see p 305 below). She ends by reiterating Le Fort on the far greater safety of home births to hospital. Then she asks “Can the Construction and Management of Lying-in Institutions be Improved?” Much material from the correspondence with Lieutenant Ommanney appears here. There are detailed discussions of ventilation, site, materials and administration.

The “Appendix: Midwifery as a Career,” as explained to Dr Sutherland, is the place for her advocacy of midwifery rather than medicine proper as the career for women.

Unless from causes unconnected with the puerperal state, no woman ought to die in her lying-in; and there ought, in a lying-in institution, to be no death rate at all.

Source: Florence Nightingale, *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions, Together with a Proposal for Organizing an Institution for Training Midwives and Midwifery Nurses* (London: Longmans, Green 1871)

If I may dedicate, without “permission,” these small “Notes” to the shade of Socrates’ mother, may I likewise, without presumption, call to my help the questioning shade of her son, that I who write may have the spirit of questioning aright, and that those who read may learn not of me but of themselves? And, further, has he not said: “The midwives are respectable women, and have a character to lose”?

## PREFACE

In the year 1862 the Committee of the Nightingale Fund, with a view to extending the advantages of their training institution, entered into an arrangement with the authorities of St John’s House, under which wards were fitted up in the new part of King’s College Hospital, opening out of the great staircase and shut up within their own doors, for the reception of midwifery cases. The wards were under the charge of the (then) lady superintendent. Arrangements were made for medical attendance, a skilled midwife was engaged, a certain number of pupil nurses were admitted for training; and hopes were entertained that this new branch of our Training School would confer a great benefit on the poor, especially in country districts, where trained midwifery nurses are needed.

Every precaution had apparently been taken to render the Midwifery Department perfectly safe, and it was not until the school had been upwards of five years in existence that the attention of the Nightingale Committee was called to the fact that deaths from puerperal diseases had taken place in each of the preceding years.

During the period of nearly six years that the wards were in use, the records show that 780 women had been delivered in the institution, and that out of this number twenty-six had died—a mortality of 33.3 per 1000 (exclusive of the case of a poor woman who was delivered in a cab, and died in the hospital of *postpartum* hemorrhage).

The most fatal year was 1867, in which year nine out of the twenty-six deaths took place. In the month of January a pregnant woman, who was under treatment for erysipelas in the hospital, was delivered in a general medical ward, No. 4, in the first-built wing of the hospital. A midwife was told off to attend her, who was not suffered to be near the midwifery wards for a considerable time. The erysipelas case died of puerperal fever, and this death was followed by a succession of puerperal deaths in the lying-in wards until November, when the wards were as soon as possible closed.

An analysis of the causes of death showed that, with the exception of one death from hemorrhage, not a single death had taken place from accidents incidental to childbearing during the whole six years. There were three deaths due to diseases not necessarily concomitants of this condition; while of the others, twenty-three in number, no fewer than seventeen were due to puerperal fever, three to puerperal peritonitis, two to pyemia, and one to metritis. Table A gives the actual fates and dates.

Under these deplorable circumstances the closing of the wards was a matter of course, and since that event we have been anxiously inquiring whether it would be justifiable to reopen our Midwifery Nursing School under other conditions.

This question is discussed in the following pages from a basis of statistical facts supplied by the best authorities, and a few proposals have been added with the view of turning to the best account our past experience, by extracting from it any leading principles which may present themselves for practical application in the future construction and management of lying-in institutions, and more especially in connection with means of training midwifery nurses.

These *Introductory Notes*, collected and put together under circumstances of all but overwhelming business and illness, are now thrown

**TABLE A**  
**Midwifery Statistics, King's College Hospital**

Year	Total Deliveries	Fatal Cases					
		Date of Birth	Nature of Labour	Cause of Death	Date of Death	Deaths to Labours	
1862	97	6 Nov. 30 Nov. 10 Dec.	natural twins natural	puerperal peritonitis phthisis and puerperal fever puerperal peritonitis	25 Nov. 27 Dec. 20 Dec.	1 in 32.3	
1863	105	10 Jan.  29 Apr.	natural, child still-born natural	puerperal fever  puerperal fever	16 Jan.  20 May	1 in 52.5	
1864	141	16 Feb. 14 Apr. 1 Dec.	natural induced born in cab	puerperal fever pyemia hemorrhage	25 Feb. 29 Apr. 7 Dec.	1 in 47	
1865	163	30 Jan. 8 Feb. 24 June  20 Oct. 29 Oct.	natural natural forceps  forceps natural	embolism puerperal fever puer. metritis and pelvis cellulitis laceration of perineum, puerperal fever puerperal fever	12 Feb. 18 Feb. 30 July  3 Nov. 9 Nov.	1 in 32.6	
1866	150	10 Jan. 24 Mar.  8 Oct. 10 Nov. 4 Dec.	natural natural  placenta previa turning forceps natural	gastroenteritis retained placenta, puerperal fever emphysema & bronchitis  peritonitis puerperal fever	20 Jan. 10 Apr.  10 Oct.  15 Nov. 31 Dec.	1 in 30	
1867	125	10 Jan. 7 Feb.  8 Feb. 12 Apr. 18 May 4 June 26 Jul. 5 Nov.  8 Nov.	erysipelas* natural  natural turning natural natural natural twins, 1st dead, 2nd by turning forceps	puerperal fever considerable hemorrhage & puerperal fever puerperal fever puerperal fever pyemia puerperal fever puerperal fever puerperal fever  laceration of vagina, puer- peral fever	30 Jan. 22 Feb.  22 Feb. 22 Apr. 27 May 19 June 11 Aug. 10 Nov.  14 Nov.	1 in 13.8	
Total	781	deaths: 27					1 in 28.9

\* Had erysipelas when admitted, so was confined in No. 4 ward.

out merely as a nucleus, in the hope that others will be kind enough to supplement, to add and to alter, in fact, only as a hook with a modest little fish on it—a bait to catch other and finer fish. The facts themselves, the nucleus, have been made as correct as it was possible, and as would have been done for a finished work. But the facts themselves are only put forth as feelers—feelers to feel my own way.

I need scarcely say either that these *Notes* are not at all meant to discuss every point which presents itself in midwifery statistics. On the contrary, they are, for the moment, purposely limited to the consideration of facts immediately relating to the present object.

Let me thank once more with true gratitude all those who have so kindly supplied me with help and information, some of whose names will appear in the following pages.

### NOTES ON LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS

The first step to be taken in the discussion is to inquire, what is the real normal death rate of lying-in women? And, having ascertained this to the extent which existing data may enable us to do, we must compare this death rate with the rates occurring in establishments into which parturition cases are received in numbers. We have then to classify the causes of death, so far as we can, from the data, with the view of ascertaining whether any particular cause of death predominates in lying-in institutions and, if so, why so? And finally, seeing that everybody must be born, that every birth in civilized countries is as a rule attended by somebody, and ought to be by a skilled attendant; since, therefore, the attendance upon lying-in women is the widest practice in the world, and these attendants should be trained, we must decide the great question as to whether a training school for midwifery nurses can be safely conducted in any building receiving a number of parturition cases, or whether such nurses must be only trained at the bedside in the patient's own home, with far more difficulty and far less chance of success.

### MIDWIFERY STATISTICS

It must be admitted, at the very outset of this inquiry, that midwifery statistics are in an unsatisfactory condition. To say the least of it, there has been as much discussion regarding mortality and its causes among lying-in women as there has been regarding the mortality due to hospitals. Yet there appears to have been no uniform system of record of deaths, or of the causes of death, in many institutions, and no com-

mon agreement as to the period after delivery within which deaths should be counted as due to the puerperal condition. Many of the most important institutions in Europe merely record the deaths occurring during the period women are in hospital, and they appear not unfrequently to do this without any reference to the causes. Similar defects are obvious enough in the records of home deliveries; and hence it follows that the mass of statistics which have been accumulated regarding home and hospital deliveries admit of comparison only in one element, namely, the total deaths to total deliveries, and this only approximately.

Dr Matthews Duncan, in his recent work on the *Mortality of Childbed and Maternity Hospitals*, has dwelt forcibly on these defects in midwifery statistics, and has made out a strong case for improvement in records. But, as will be afterwards shown, with all their defects, midwifery statistics point to one truth, namely, that there is a large amount of preventible mortality in midwifery practice, and that, as a general rule, the mortality is far, far greater in lying-in hospitals than among women lying-in at home.

There are several of what may be called secondary influences also, which must affect to a certain extent the results of comparison of death rates among different groups of lying-in cases. Such are the ages of women, the number of the pregnancy, the duration of labour and the like. It is impossible, in the present state of our information, to attribute to each, or all of these, their due influence; neither, if we could do so, would it materially affect the general result just stated. But it is otherwise with another class of conditions, of which statistics take no cognizance. Such are the general sanitary state of hospitals, wards, houses and rooms where deliveries take place; the management adopted; the classes of patients; their state of health and stamina before delivery; the time they are kept in midwifery wards before and after delivery. These elements are directly connected with the questions at issue, and yet our information regarding them is by no means so full as we could wish—indeed is almost nothing.

Our only resource at present is to deal with such statistical information as we possess and to ascertain fairly what it tells us. This we shall now endeavour to do, beginning with an estimate of the normal mortality due to childbirth in various European countries.

## NORMAL DEATH RATE OF LYING-IN WOMEN IN ENGLAND

In the Registrar-General's Thirtieth Annual Report, 1867, there is an instructive series of tables giving approximately the present normal death rate among lying-in women in England.

One of these tables (abstracted on Table 1) shows that, including deliveries in lying-in hospitals, there were in England, during the year 1867, 768,349 births, and that 3933 women died in childbed. This gives an approximate total mortality of 5.1 per 1000 from all causes.

**TABLE 1**  
**Mortality after Childbirth in England, 1867**  
**(Registrar-General's Thirtieth Annual Report)**

Total Births	768,349
Deaths from Accidents in Childbirth	2,346
Deaths from Puerperal Diseases	1,066
Deaths from Miasmatic Diseases	137
Deaths from Consumption and Chest Diseases	230
Deaths from All Other Causes	154
Total Deaths	3,933

The causes of mortality are also given in Table 1 as follows:

1. There were 2346 deaths by accidents of childbirth (hemorrhage, convulsions, exhaustion, mania, etc.).
2. There were 1066 deaths due to puerperal diseases (puerperal fever, puerperal peritonitis, metritis, pyemia, etc.).
3. Of the remaining 521 deaths, 137 were due to non-puerperal fevers and eruptive fevers; 230 were occasioned by consumption and other chest diseases and 154 by other causes.
4. By adding together deaths from puerperal diseases and those from fevers, we find that, out of a total mortality of 3933, the deaths from diseases more or less connected with what is called "blood poisoning" amounted to 1203, or rather more than 30 percent of the total mortality.
5. The mortality per 1000 deliveries (or rather per 1000 births) from each class of causes in England, in 1867, stands thus:

Accidents of childbirth	3	per 1000
Puerperal diseases	1.4	" "
Others, including non-puerperal fevers	.7	" "
Total	5.1	" "



The same report gives the following puerperal death rates for all England during thirteen years, 1855 to 1867 (see Table 2).

Accidents of childbirth	3.22	per 1000
Puerperal diseases	1.61	" "
Total, exclusive of other deaths	4.83	" "

**TABLE 2**  
**Mortality per Thousand after Delivery from Puerperal Diseases**  
**and Accidents of Childbirth**

Places	Mortality per Thousand Deliveries		
	Puerperal Diseases	Accidents of Childbirth	Puerperal Diseases and Accidents of Childbirth
King's College lying-in ward, 5 years	29.4	0	29.4
12 Parisian Hospitals:			
1861	—	—	75.2
1862	—	—	56.7
1863	—	—	60.6
Queen Charlotte's lying-in Hospital, 40 years	14.3	5.3	19.6
27 London workhouses, in which both deliveries and deaths have taken place	4.1	2.1	6.2
40 London workhouses, including those without deaths, 5 years	3.3	1.7	5.0
Liverpool Workhouse lying-in wards, 13 years	3.4	2.2	5.6
All England, 13 years	1.61	3.22	4.83
Ditto, 64 healthy districts (312,402 deliveries), 10 years	—	—	4.3
Ditto, 11 large towns (1,402,304 deliveries), 10 years	—	—	4.9
8 military lying-in hospitals, 2 to 12 years	3.9	3.4	7.3

An important element in the analysis of these death rates is their relative prevalence in town and country. This is abstracted on Table 2 from the Registrar-General's Report for a period of ten years, as follows:

*Deaths from Accidents of Childbirth and Puerperal Diseases*

England, 64 healthy districts, 312,402 deliveries 4.3 per 1000

Ditto, 11 large towns, 1,402,304 deliveries 4.9 " "

In other words, out of every 5000 deliveries in towns there are three more deaths from accidents of childbirth and puerperal diseases than occur among the same number of deliveries in healthy districts. These facts, with a small deduction for the higher death rates in lying-in hospitals, give the present mortality in English homes. They appear to show that puerperal women are subject to something of the same law of increase of death rates in towns as other people, but part of the increase is no doubt due to the higher death rates in delivery wards in these towns. The facts also appear to indicate a probable reduction of death rates among lying-in women in England from the extension of public health improvements both in town and country.

NORMAL MORTALITY AMONG LYING-IN WOMEN IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

The next step in the inquiry is to ascertain, so far as it may be possible to do so, what is the death rate among lying-in women delivered at their own homes in different European countries. Besides the mortality statistics for healthy districts in England, already given, the only available data for this information are reports of public institutes having outdoor midwifery practice and any records of private practice which may have been published. In adducing these data, however, it is necessary to do so with the reservation already made that their accuracy is only approximate.

The most extensive series of data of this class is given by Dr Le Fort, in his able treatise *Des maternités*, for a number of institutions in different European countries. The facts from Dr Le Fort's book are abstracted on Table 3, in which it is shown that out of 934,781 deliveries at home, in Edinburgh, London, Paris, Leipzig, Berlin, Munich, Greifswald, Stettin and St Petersburg, there were 4405 deaths, equivalent to a mortality of 4.7 per 1000. When compared with the Registrar-General's returns for town districts, this rate is apparently somewhat too low; it is only an approximation, but still sufficiently near the rate given by the Registrar-General to show that there is a true death rate for home deliveries not far removed from the Registrar-General's figure.

**TABLE 3**  
**Death Rate from All Causes amongst Women Delivered in**  
**Their Own Homes (Abstracted from Dr Le Fort's Tables)**

Places	No. of years of Observation	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per Thousand
Edinburgh	1	5186	28	5
London:				
Westminster General Dispensary	11	7,717	17	2
Ditto Benevolent Institution	7	4,761	8	1
Royal Maternity Charity	5	17,242	53	3
London population	5	562,623	2222	3.9
St Thomas' Hospital	7	3,512	9	2.5
Guy's Hospital	8	11,928	36	3
Ditto	1	1,505	4	2
Ditto	1	1,702	3	1.7
Ditto	1	1,576	11	6
Paris:				
12th Arrondissement	1	3,222	10	3
Bureau de Bienfaisance	1	6,212	32	5
Ditto	1	6,422	39	6
City of Paris	1	44,481	262	5
Ditto	1	42,796	226	5
Leipzig Polyclinique	11	1,203	13	10
Berlin Polyclinique	1	500	7	14
Munich Polyclinique	5	1,911	16	8
Greifswald Polyclinique	4	295	6	20
Stettin Polyclinique	17	375	0	0
St Petersburg Polyclinique	15	209,612	1403	6.6
Total	—	934,781	4405	4.7

St George's Hospital statistics for "the six years preceding 1870 show only one maternal death in every 305 cases" in the Outdoor Maternity Department.

From home records, it is hoped at some future time to give many more data of this kind, and to distinguish the causes of death: puerperal from non-puerperal mortality, as well as that caused by puerperal diseases from that caused by accidents of childbirth. At present the data for doing this are lamentably deficient, if not almost altogether wanting. One good recorded fact will here be given. Among 1929 mothers delivered at home by Guy's Hospital in 1869, five deaths only are recorded and none from puerperal diseases; two were from heart disease, two from pneumonia, one from exhaustion.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE DATA

The value of the Registrar-General's results, and of those given by Le Fort, has been called in question by Dr Duncan in his work already cited, partly on the authority of certain results of home practice, quoted from Dr M'Clintock, who has collected the statistics of 16,774 deliveries exclusively from home practice. There were among these forty-five deaths from accidents of labour, fifty-two deaths from puerperal diseases and thirty-four deaths from non-puerperal diseases, giving a total mortality of 131, or nearly 8 per 1000. On considering these figures, the first impression they convey is not that either the Registrar-General or Le Fort is wrong. But it is a very painful impression of another kind altogether. One feels disposed to ask whether it can be true that, in the hands of educated accoucheurs, the inevitable fate of women undergoing, not a diseased, but an entirely natural condition, at home, is that one out of every 128 must die? If the facts are correct, then one cannot help feeling that they present a very strong *prima facie* case for inquiry, with the view of devising a remedy for such a state of things. It must be seen, however, that these statistics of home practice are as open to the charge of want of accuracy as those of the Registrar-General or Le Fort. The question can only be settled by inquiry and by more carefully kept statistics of midwifery practice, but in the meantime here are a few facts, kindly placed at my disposal by Mr Rigden, of Canterbury, which are by no means so hopeless as those given by Dr Duncan.

"An analysis of 4132 consecutive cases in midwifery occurring in private practice during a period of thirty years, particularly in reference to mortality, eight mothers died: three from convulsions and coma, four from puerperal fever and one from heart disease, about an hour after a comparatively easy labour." The report states eight, but after it was supplied another death took place, the day after delivery, making nine in all. The cause of death is not given. Mr Rigden explains that these figures relate only to the first fortnight after delivery, but he states that if any other deaths had taken place within the month, he must have heard of them.

Assuming the deliveries at 4133 and the deaths at nine, Mr Rigden's facts show a total mortality of 2.17 per 1000, of which less than 1 per 1000 was due to puerperal fever.

## ESTIMATED APPROXIMATE HOME DEATH RATE

In estimating the probable accuracy of statistical data in which there may be both excesses and deficiencies, sources of error are diminished by largeness in the numbers employed in striking averages. Bearing this in mind, and after considering the objections brought against the accuracy of the figures, there seems no reason for rejecting the Registrar-General's average total mortality among lying-in women in England of 5.1 per 1000 as affording a sufficiently close approximation to the present real death rate among lying-in women delivered at home, for all practical purposes of comparison with the death rates in lying-in hospitals.

## DEATH RATES IN LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS

We shall next show approximately what are the death rates in establishments for lying-in women. We will give an abstract of mortality statistics for a number of these institutions, the general results of which may be stated as follows:

In eight military lying-in hospitals (Table 4), in which 5575 deliveries took place, in periods of from two to twelve years, there were fifty deaths (excluding a death before admission)—a death rate of 8.8 per 1000.

In Liverpool Workhouse lying-in wards (Table 5), with an approximate number of 6396 deliveries in thirteen years, there were fifty-eight deaths from all causes—a mortality of 9.06 per 1000.

And in twenty-seven London workhouse infirmaries (Table 6), amongst which deaths took place, having 9411 deliveries in five years, there were ninety-three deaths from all causes. The death rate was 9.8 per 1000. (In 1868-69-70, there were in Liverpool Workhouse 1416 deliveries, including twenty premature, and six deaths from all causes of which three at least were non-puerperal. The *total* death rate was only 4.2 per 1000. There were thirteen London workhouses in which, in five years, 2459 deliveries, but no deaths in childbed, took place.)

The City of London Lying-in Institution, during ten years, 1859-68, had 4966 deliveries and 54 deaths—a rate of 10.9 per 1000. The British Lying-in Institution had 1741 deliveries and 25 deaths in eleven years, 1858-68, giving a death rate of 14.3 per 1000 (Table 8).

The mortality in Queen Charlotte's Lying-in hospital: 9626 deliveries and 244 deaths, from 1828 to 1868 (Table 7), was 25.3 per 1000.

**TABLE 4**  
**Return of the Number of Admissions for Parturition, and Deaths Occurring in the Undermentioned Women's Hospitals (Military) (Supplied by the Director-General, Army Medical Department)**

	Station and Period								Total
	Devonport Apr. 1861 to Dec. 1869	Colchester 1865 to Oct. 1870	Portsmouth 1861 to Dec. 1869	Aldershot 1857 to Dec. 1869	Shorncliffe Up to Dec. 1869	Chatham Dec. 1863 to Dec. 1869	Woolwich Nov. 1863 to Dec. 1869	Curragh 1868 & 1869	
No. of Deliveries	158	252	302	3028	702	342	751	40	5575
Causes of Death									
Puerperal Fever and Peritonitis, Pyaemia, Phlebitis, &c.	—	—	2	14	—	—	5 <sup>‡</sup>	—	21
Scarlatina	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	3
Puerperal Convulsions	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	3
Hemorrhage, Effects of	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	—	5
Ruptured Uterus	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Syncope and Exhaustion	—	—	—	4	—	—	1	—	5
Premature Labour and Adherent Placenta	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Craniotomy	—	—	1	1	2	—	—	—	4
Inversion of Uterus	—	—	—	—	—	1 <sup>†</sup>	—	—	1
Embolism	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Metritis	—	—	—	1 <sup>*</sup>	—	—	—	—	1
Pneumonia and Bronchitis	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Phthisis	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Dropsy	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Cause not Recorded	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Total Deaths	1	—	4	31	4	3	8	—	51

\* Patient died 48 hours after delivery.

† Patient died on her way to the hospital: not included in the calculated rates.

‡ One case had gastric fever on admission, and in two cases puerperal peritonitis came on after instrumental delivery.

**TABLE 5**  
**Statistics of Midwifery Wards in Liverpool Workhouse**  
**for Thirteen Years, 1858-70 Inclusive (Abstracted**  
**from Data Supplied by Dr Barnes, Liverpool)**

Approximate Total Deliveries	6396
Causes of Death:	
Puerperal Peritonitis	16
Puerperal Fever	4
Metritis	1
Phlegmaeia Dolens	1
Convulsions	5
Debility and Exhaustion	5
Obstructed Labour	1
Hemorrhage	2
Rupture of Uterus	1
Typhus and Relapsing Fever	2
Measles	1
Pneumonia	3
Laryngitis	1
Phthisis	4
Heart Disease	5
Nephritic Disease and Dropsy	3
Jaundice and Bowel Disease	2
Not Stated (Inquest)	1
Total Deaths	58

The Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, with 6521 deliveries in the years 1857-61, yielded 169 deaths—a death rate of 26 per 1000. But, if we take the years 1828-61, with 63,621 deliveries, we find that the deaths were 924, and the death rate only 14.5 per 1000—the average annual number of deliveries being almost as many thousands as in Queen Charlotte's Hospital were hundreds.

The lying-in wards of King's College Hospital, years 1862-67 (Table 9), gave twenty-seven deaths—a death rate of 33.3 per 1000 on 780 deliveries.

Lamentable as are these death rates in many British institutions, they are small in comparison with those which have ruled in many foreign hospitals. Table 10 contains an abstract from Dr Le Fort's work of the statistics of fifty-eight lying-in institutions in nearly every country of Europe, and extending in many cases over a considerable number of years. There is only one hospital (at Bourg) in which there was no

**TABLE 6**  
**Mortality after Childbirth in Five Years, up to the End of 1865, in**  
**Forty London Workhouse Infirmarys in Which Deliveries Took**  
**Place (Abstracted from Report on Metropolitan Workhouses)**

	Deliveries	
	27 workhouses 9411	13 workhouses 2459
Deaths from Puerperal Diseases	39	0
Deaths from Accidents in Childbirth	20	0
Deaths from Miasmatic Diseases	0	0
Deaths from Consumption & Chest Diseases	15	0
Deaths from All Other Causes	19	0
Total Deaths	93	0

**TABLE 7**  
**Mortality in Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, 1828 to 1868**

Deliveries	9626
Deaths from Puerperal Diseases	138
Deaths from Accidents in Childbirth	51
Deaths from Miasmatic Diseases	8
Deaths from Consumption & Chest Diseases	32
Deaths from all other causes	15
Total Deaths	244

death in four years, out of 461 deliveries. There is one hospital (at Troyes) with a death rate of 4 per 1000 on 460 deliveries in four years. There are two instances of death rates of 7 per 1000. There is one of 9, and there are two of 10 per 1000.

In every other case the death rates have exceeded these amounts, rising higher and higher in different institutions, until they culminate in a death rate of no less than 140 per 1000, at Strasburg, on a four years' average among 556 deliveries. Le Fort's data show a striking variation in the death rates of the same hospitals in different years, as will presently be seen to be the case in hospitals in this country. There are instances in these foreign hospitals of the death rates varying from four to sevenfold in different groups of years in the same hospital.

Le Fort's data show that in lying-in hospitals in various countries and climates, scattered over nearly the whole of Europe, out of



888,312 deliveries there were no fewer than 30,394 deaths, giving an average death rate of 34 per 1000, a rate exceeding the high mortality which led to the discontinuance of our school for training midwifery nurses in King's College Hospital.

**TABLE 8**  
**Mortality per Thousand from All Causes after Delivery**  
**(Abstracted from Official Reports and Returns)**

Places	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per 1000 Deliveries
12 Parisian hospitals:			
1861	7,309	—	95.1
1862	7,027	—	69.7
1863	7,289	—	70.3
King's College Hospital, 1862-67	780*	26	33.3
Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, 1857-61	6,521	169	26.0
Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital 1828-68	9,626	244	25.3
British Lying-in Institution, 11 years, 1858-68	1,741	25	14.3
City of London Lying-in Hospital, 1859-68	4,966	54	10.9
8 military lying-in hospitals, 2 to 12 yrs	5,575	50	8.8
Liverpool Workhouse Lying-in Wards, 13 yrs, 1858-70	6,396	58	9.06
40 London workhouse infirmaries, 5 years	11,870	93	7.8
1 military lying-in hospital (a wooden hut) 1865-70	252	0	0
All England, 1867	768,349	3933	5.1

\* Exclusive of a fatal case delivered in a cab.

**TABLE 9**  
**Mortality after Childbirth in Lying-in Ward,**  
**King's College Hospital, 1862-67**

Deliveries	781*
Deaths from Puerperal Diseases	23
Deaths from Accidents in Childbirth	1*
Deaths from Miasmatic Diseases	0
Deaths from Consumption and Chest Diseases	1
Deaths from All Other Causes	2
Total Deaths	27

\* One delivery took place in a cab, and the woman died in hospital.

**TABLE 10**  
**Death Rate from All Causes amongst Women Delivered in Lying-in Hospitals (Abstracted from Dr Le Fort's "Des Maternités")**

Maternity Hospitals	No. of years of Observation	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per Thousand
Vienna Maternité	50	103,731	2,811	25
Students' Clinique	30	104,492	5,560	53
Midwives Clinique	30	88,083	3,064	34
Académie Joséphine	1	277	24	86
Prague Maternité	15	41,477	1,383	33
Munich Maternité	4	4,064	86	21
Göttingen Maternité	8	1,029	32	32
Gratz Maternité	3	3,089	97	31
Greifswald Clinique	4	316	18	56
Bremen Hospital	6	139	10	71
Halle Clinique	1	102	3	29
Berlin Clinique de l'Université	1	401	11	27
Frankfort-on-Main Maternité	7	1,213	13	10
Leipzig Ancienne Maternité	46	5,137	89	17
Leipzig Nouvelle Maternité	3	594	20	33
Pesth Clinique	5	2,571	86	33
Moscow Maternité de la Maison des Enfants Trouvés	11	11,556	230	19
Ditto	10	16,721	436	26
Ditto	10	27,759	776	28
St Petersburg				
Clinique de la Faculté	6	376	34	90
Hospital Kalinikin	15	1,288	20	15
Institut des Sages Femmes	15	8,036	238	29
Maternité des Enfants Trouvés	15	16,011	825	51
Dublin Maternité	58	84,390	875	10
Ditto	7	21,867	309	14
Ditto	5	12,885	198	15
Ditto	7	16,391	158	9
Ditto	7	13,167	224	17
Ditto	7	13,699	179	13
Ditto	7	13,748	163	11
London Lying-in Hospital	28	5,883	172	29
Edinburgh Hospital	1	277	3	10
Stuttgart Hospital	1	424	3	7
Zurich Maternité	1	200	20	100
Stockholm Maternité	1	650	37	56
Göthenburg Maternité	1	223	18	80
Lund Maternité	1	33	2	60
Freiburg en Beisgau	3	281	10	35
Jéna Clinique	4	308	21	67
Dresden Maternité	51	15,356	373	27

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Maternity Hospitals	No. of years of Observation	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per Thousand
Paris Maternité	8	15,307	610	39
Ditto	10	23,484	1,114	47
Ditto	10	25,895	1,293	49
Ditto	10	26,538	1,125	42
Ditto	10	34,776	1,458	41
Ditto	10	25,094	1,298	51
Ditto	5	9,886	1,226	124
Total for ditto	63	160,704	8,124	56
Paris Clinique de la Faculté	5	1,654	117	70
Ditto	10	9,079	359	39
Ditto	10	9,462	379	40
Ditto	5	4,100	288	70
Total for ditto	30	24,295	1,143	47
Paris St Antoine	9	28	5	178
Ditto	10	32	15	468
Ditto	10	129	20	155
Ditto	10	788	65	82
Ditto	10	2,359	134	56
Ditto	5	1,868	110	58
Total for ditto	54	5,204	349	67
Paris, Hôtel-Dieu	8	833	36	43
Ditto	10	658	34	51
Ditto	10	1,757	81	46
Ditto	10	2,338	17	7
Ditto	10	3,012	106	35
Ditto	10	11,744	325	27
Ditto	5	4,972	232	46
Total for ditto	63	25,314	831	32
Paris St Louis	3	4	0	0
Ditto	10	128	2	15
Ditto	10	1,282	51	39
Ditto	10	2,832	173	61
Ditto	10	2,736	102	37
Ditto	10	7,244	200	27
Ditto	5	3,812	252	66
Total for ditto	58	19,038	780	40
Paris, La Charité	3	648	84	126
Lyons, La Charité	4	3,325	91	17
Hôtel-Dieu	4	2,016	33	16
Rouen Hôpital-Général	4	1,275	9	7
Bordeaux Maternité	4	714	30	42
Lille	4	683	25	35
Rheims	4	646	15	23
Strasbourg	4	556	78	140

TABLE 10 (CONTINUED)

Maternity Hospitals	No. of years of Observation	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per Thousand
Grenoble	4	554	20	36
Bordeaux, St André	4	547	36	65
St Etienne	4	515	8	15
Toulouse	4	493	9	18
Bourg	4	461	0	0
Troyes	4	460	2	4
Marseilles	4	444	16	36
Châteauroux	4	423	20	47
Amiens	4	396	5	12
Colmar	4	396	26	65
Nantes	4	340	17	50
Nancy	4	320	9	28
Orléans	4	301	3	9
Total for all hospitals	—	888,312	30,394	34

TABLE 11

**Mortality per Thousand among Lying-in Women at the Undermentioned  
Parisian Hospitals during the Year 1861 (Abstracted from  
“Statistique Médicale des Hôpitaux,” 1861)**

Hospital	Total Deliveries	Mortality per Thousand		
		Puerperal	Non- Puerperal	Total Deaths
Hôtel-Dieu	1057	43.5	16.1	59.6
Pitié	468	72.6	34.2	106.8
Charité	253	154.2	39.7	193.7
St Antoine	350	71.4	34.3	105.7
Necker	234	29.9	29.9	59.8
Cochin	56	142.9	35.7	178.6
Beaujon	276	43.5	3.6	47.1
Lariboisière	782	69.1	15.3	84.4
St Louis	802	58.6	13.7	72.3
Lourcine	41	24.4	—	24.4
Cliniques	875	75.4	34.3	109.7
Maison d’Accouchements	2115	99.8	12.8	112.5
Total	7309	75.2	19.8	95.1

The absolute loss of life in Parisian lying-in wards has been greater than in those of any other capital city. This is clearly shown in the “Statistique Médicale des Hôpitaux de Paris” kindly supplied to me by M Husson, the director of the General Administration of “Public Assistance” at Paris, of whose many proofs of ability, activity and benevolence it is not here the place to speak. From this the following facts are abstracted. The death rates are therein given for twelve hospitals receiving lying-in cases, only one of which, however, is a lying-in hospital (the “Maison d’accouchement”), and will be found in Tables 11, 12 and 13.

In 1861 the average death rate in these establishments was no less than 95.1 per 1000. In 1862 it was 69.7 per 1000. In 1863 it was 70.3 per 1000.

**TABLE 12**  
**Mortality per Thousand among Lying-in Women at the Undermentioned**  
**Parisian Hospitals during the Year 1862 (Abstracted from**  
**“Statistique médicale des Hôpitaux de Paris,” 1861, 2, 3)**

Hospital	Total Deliveries	Mortality per Thousand		
		Puerperal	Non- Puerperal	Total Deaths
Hôtel-Dieu	975	35.8	9.2	45.1
Pitié	462	45.4	10.8	56.2
Charité	270	62.9	25.9	88.8
St Antoine	311	61.0	19.2	80.3
Necker	190	52.6	21.0	73.6
Cochin	24	41.6	83.3	124.9
Beaujon	257	38.9	19.9	58.8
Lariboisière	816	34.3	13.5	47.8
St Louis	704	79.5	8.5	88.0
Lourcine	45	22.2	—	22.2
Cliniques	769	79.3	14.3	93.6
Maison d’ Accouchements	2204	63.5	11.3	74.9
Total	7027	56.7	12.9	69.7

**TABLE 13**  
**Mortality per Thousand among Lying-in Women at the Undermentioned**  
**Parisian Hospitals during the Year 1863 (Abstracted from**  
**“Statistique médicale des Hôpitaux,” 1863)**

Hospital	Total Deliveries	Mortality per Thousand		
		Puerperal	Non- Puerperal	Total Deaths
Hôtel-Dieu	925	26.7	4.1	30.8
La Pitié	544	44.1	1.8	46.0
Charité	256	66.4	19.5	85.9
St Antoine	410	63.4	11.6	78.0
Necker	232	38.8	21.6	60.3
Cochin	68	73.5	14.7	88.2
Beaujon	313	19.2	12.8	31.9
Lariboisière	870	31.0	9.2	40.2
St Louis	871	23.0	9.2	32.1
Lourcine	43	27.9	—	27.9
Clinique	751	30.6	18.6	49.3
Maison d' Accouchements	2006	130.1	7.4	137.6
Total	7280	60.6	9.7	70.3

#### CLASSIFICATION OF CAUSES OF MORTALITY IN LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS

The next thing is to endeavour to show to what causes these death rates are to be attributed. Unfortunately Dr Le Fort's tables do not enable us to distinguish the causes of death. But the data supplied by British and Parisian hospitals allow the causes to be classified to a certain extent under the heads adopted by the Registrar-General in his Reports.

A classified arrangement of this kind is given in Table 2, and may be resumed, with the view of showing the enormous differences in death rates among puerperal women under different conditions as follows [Table B].

We have already seen, as a result of Dr Le Fort's tables, that the mortality among women delivered at home, as deduced by him, is 4.7 per 1000; while in the hospital it is 34 per 1000, or nearly 7½-fold. Making any reasonable allowance for inaccuracy in the data, still we can hardly escape from his conclusions any more than we can rid ourselves from the consequences which follow from the data given above. We must confront the question called up by the data taken as a whole,

viz., what can be the reason of this ascending scale of fatality shown on Table 8? Why is it that these death rates from all causes in childbirth, beginning at 5.1 per 1000 for all England (town and country), successively become, among the same people 9, 10.9, 14.3, 25.3, 33.3; and if we cross the channel, why should they mount up to 69, 70 and 95 per 1000?

**TABLE B**  
**Mortality per 1000**

	Puerperal diseases	Accidents of Child- birth	Puerperal diseases & accidents of childbirth
All England, 13 years	1.61	3.22	4.83
England (healthy districts) 10 years, 312,402 deliveries	—	—	4.3
England 11 large towns, 10 years, 1,402,304 deliveries	—	—	4.9
Liverpool Workhouse	3.4	2.2	5.6
27 London workhouses having deaths	4.1	2.1	6.2
8 military female hospitals	3.9	3.4	7.3
Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital	14.3	5.3	19.6
King's College Hospital lying-in ward	29.4	—	29.4
12 Parisian hospitals:			
1861	—	—	75.2
1862	—	—	56.7
1863	—	—	60.6

Again, why should fevers and inflammations of the puerperal class, which, as we have seen above, give a death rate for all England of 1.61 per 1000, mount up in English hospitals to 3.4, 4.1, 14.3 and 29.4? There must be some reason, besides the fact of childbirth, why diseases and accidents of this condition should be four times more fatal in a London lying-in hospital, and fifteen times more fatal in Parisian hospitals, than they are in towns of England. What, then, are the immediate causes of these excessive death rates?

CAUSES OF HIGH DEATH RATES IN LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS

The determining causes of these death rates need to be discussed most cautiously, our information concerning them being so scanty. We know from statistics that these deaths occur, but why they occur

and why they vary are questions not yet to be fully answered in our present stage of knowledge (or of ignorance).

At one time a sufficient cause seems to present itself, but the very next outbreak of puerperal disease may occur under quite different conditions. For years an institution may escape excessive mortality, and then it may suffer severely under the same apparent circumstances. All that we can do at present is to see whether there are removable causes in cases where the mortality is excessive, and to remove them. Fully recognizing how much we have need of caution, this subject will be next considered generally and as far as possible in its practical bearings on the points at issue. There are some important remarks in Dr Le Fort's book bearing on this subject which may find a place here.

*Puerperal Fever.* Dr Le Fort states, as the result of his inquiry, that the frequency of obstetrical operations modifies the general mortality only in a slight degree; that the excessive mortality in lying-in hospitals is much greater than can be attributed to ordinary hospital influences; that it depends neither on the social condition of the women, nor on the moral conditions under which delivery may occur; that it may be more or less influenced by the insalubrity of particular hospitals, but that puerperal fever is the principal cause of death after delivery; that this disease shows itself in all hospitals, in all maternity institutions, in all climates, in the south of France as it does at St Petersburg, in Dublin as in Vienna, in London as in Moscow. It exists in America as in Europe.

It is less frequent and fatal during the summer months, attributable in part at least to greater facilities of ventilation following on higher temperature (in other words, to having your windows open instead of shut).

This disease develops itself spontaneously under certain unknown circumstances. When it is about to become epidemic, it is sometimes preceded by the prevalence of erysipelas.

Dr Le Fort points out that what was considered a severe epidemic in the British Lying-in Hospital in the year 1770 is "unfortunately less than the *mean* mortality of the Maternité at Paris."

While admitting that puerperal fever may originate *de novo*, Dr Le Fort dwells strongly on the communicability of the disease as an efficient cause of its prevalence. He adduces opinions of the following physicians: Oppolzer, Rokitansky and Skoda of Vienna; Virchow of Berlin; Lange of Heidelberg; Schwarz of Göttingen; Löschner of Prague; and Hecker of Munich, on the nature and origin of this fatal disease. Gen-



erally they testify to the propagation of puerperal fever by contagion, but they also state that it is a blood disease—a product of foul air, putrid miasms and predisposition to malignant inflammatory action.

Dr Le Fort also cites a number of interesting facts, showing that the indiscriminate visiting by attendants of lying-in women and patients suffering from disease, either within or outside the same establishment, has been a means of exciting puerperal fever action.

*Admission of Students.* It is one of the contingencies necessarily due to connecting together the teaching of midwifery to students, with other portions of clinical instruction, that no precautions can prevent a student passing from a bad surgical case, or from an anatomical theatre, to the bedside of a lying-in woman, while sad experience has proved that the most fatal results may ensue from this circumstance. Of course risks of this kind are greatly increased when there are lying-in wards in general hospitals—especially if a medical school be attached to such a hospital.

This risk had not been overlooked in the arrangements for the lying-in wards at King's College Hospital, under which, while intended solely for the training of midwifery nurses, provision was made for a limited and regulated attendance of students. But, when inquiries came to be made into the probable cause of the high death rates, it was found that the restrictions laid down as to the admission of students had been disregarded; also that there was a post-mortem theatre almost under the ward windows.

*Effect of Numbers.* Dr Le Fort has examined the influence exercised by numbers—or, in other words, by the size of hospitals—on the mortality after childbirth. His general results may be briefly stated as follows: in hospitals receiving annually more than 2000 lying-in cases, comprising the two cliniques of Vienna, 1834-63; the Maternités of Paris, 1849-59; of Prague, 1848-62; and of Moscow, 1853-62; and the Lying-in Hospital of Dublin, 1847-54, the death rate is 40.7 per 1000.

In hospitals receiving between 1000 and 2000 cases a year, including the Enfants Trouvés at Petersburg, 1845-59; the Maternité at Munich, 1859-62, and other places, the death rate is 36 per 1000. In hospitals receiving from 500 to 1000 cases a year, including Pest and the Maternité of Dresden, the death rate is nearly 27 per 1000.

In hospitals where the number of deliveries is between 200 and 500 per annum, comprehending several places cited, among the rest Edinburgh and the London Lying-in Hospital, 1833-60, the death rate is 30½ per 1000.

In hospitals receiving between 100 and 200 cases, as at Frankfort and Göttingen, the death rate is 27.6 per 1000. And in three small establishments receiving fewer than 100 a year, as at Lund, the death rate is above 83½ per 1000.<sup>1</sup>

From these facts Dr Le Fort concludes that the relative mortality in small and large establishments is not favourable to small hospitals, *per se*. The benefit of subdivision may be neutralized by other circumstances.

We must also protest against massing hospitals, alike only in one circumstance, together for the sake of taking their statistics *in bulk* in this way, except for the most general purposes—which is indeed all Dr Le Fort has in view here—especially as our own lying-in institutions of these islands, which come out best individually, appear here confounded amongst the greatest sinners. But Dr Le Fort's general conclusion, against the influence of size *per se*, is no doubt correct.

As a general rule, statistics appear to show that the great mortality of lying-in hospitals is of periodical occurrence. Puerperal women, as everyone knows, are the most susceptible of all subjects to “blood poisoning.” The smallest transference of putrescing miasm from a locality where such miasm exists to the bedside of a lying-in patient is most dangerous. Puerperal women are, moreover, exposed to the risks of “blood poisoning” by the simple fact of being brought together in lying-in wards, and especially by being retained a longer time than is absolutely necessary in lying-in wards after being delivered, while to a great extent they escape this entire class of risks by being attended at home.

There are no doubt difficulties in assigning the exact effect of every condition to which a lying-in woman may be exposed in contributing to these death rates, but there are, nevertheless, a few great fundamental facts which arrest attention in such an inquiry.

It is a fact, for instance, that however grand or however humble a home may be in which the birth of a child takes place, there is only one delivery in the home at one time. Another fact is that a second delivery will certainly not take place in the same room, inhabited by the same couple, for ten months at least, and may not take place in the same room for years. The Registrar-General has shown us that under these conditions the death rate among lying-in women all over England, and from all registered causes, is about 5.1 per 1000.

---

1 Le Fort, *Des maternités* 75-76.

In many London workhouses the number of deliveries yearly is so small that, so far as concerns annual deliveries, they approach more closely to dwelling houses divided among a number of families than they do to lying-in hospitals properly so-called.

Let us now see what relation there is between the annual deliveries and the death rates in these workhouse wards. Assuming that the London workhouse lying-in wards have certain conditions in common, we find that twenty-seven infirmaries suffered from lying-in deaths in five years, and that in thirteen there were no deaths in the same years. Now, in each of these twenty-seven hospitals yielding deaths, the deliveries averaged 29 per annum, while in the thirteen infirmaries without deaths the deliveries averaged under 16 per annum.

Again, in twenty-one infirmaries with deaths, the average disposable space for each occupied lying-in bed was 2246 cubic feet, while in nine infirmaries without deaths the space per occupied bed averaged 3149 cubic feet. These, however, are only averages, and as such may be taken for what they are worth. There were exceptions to these rules in particular cases.

The facts regarding Waterford Lying-in Institution have a very important bearing on this question of subdivision. In the years from 1838 to 1844 this hospital consisted of two rooms in a small house. One room was a delivery ward. The other held eight lying-in beds. The total deliveries in this house amounted to 753, and there were six deaths—8 per 1000. Half this mortality was due to puerperal fever.

In October 1844 this hospital occupied another small house, in which the eight lying-in beds were placed in two rooms instead of one as formerly—four beds per room. Up to October 1867 there had been 2656 deliveries in this house, and nine deaths—a mortality of 3.4 per 1000. There were only two puerperal fever deaths in these 2656 deliveries.

These facts appear to show that subdivision among lying-in cases has a certain influence in warding off mortality. But, on the other hand, the death rates among lying-in cases in particular hospitals are not always in the ratio of the number of occupied beds. A few illustrations of this will suffice.

Thus, in the year 1861, there were in the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, 1135 deliveries, on which the death rate was 51.9 per 1000. In 1828 the deliveries were 2856, and the death rate 15 per 1000. In the four years 1830 to 1833, the deliveries varied from 2138 to 2288, and the death rates were a little more than 5 per 1000. In Queen Charlotte's Hospital the highest death rate occurred in 1849, during which year there were

161 deliveries. The death rate was 93.2 per 1000, while in 1832, with 217 deliveries, the death rate was just one tenth of this amount.

In the Maison d'Accouchement at Paris, during the five decennial periods between 1810 and 1859 there were 141,476 deliveries among which there occurred 6288 deaths, giving a death rate of 44.4 per 1000 (Husson, "Étude sur les Hôpitaux," p 254). The lowest death rate in any of the decennial periods occurred between 1840 and 1849, when it amounted to 41.9 per 1000. The largest number of deliveries of any period in the half century was during this ten years. They amounted to 34,776; while, in the period from 1850 to 1859, the deliveries were 24,944, and the death rate 52 per 1000.

The Dublin Rotunda approximates most to this Paris Maternité in the large number of deliveries, vibrating around 2000 a year; while, in Queen Charlotte's Hospital, where, even since its reconstruction, the mortality has been in many years higher than in the Dublin Rotunda, the number of annual deliveries has varied around 200.

*Danger of Puerperal Epidemics.* These facts have a very important bearing on the whole question of lying-in institutions, for they show that, with scarcely an exception, while the lowest death rate in any given year greatly exceeds the average mortality among lying-in women delivered at home, the inmates of these institutions are exposed to the enormous additional risk of puerperal epidemics.

Take, for instance, Queen Charlotte's Hospital. There is no reason to believe that less care and solicitude for the welfare of its inmates is exercised than would be the case if they were delivered at home. And yet we find that year by year, from 1828 down to the present time, the institution has only escaped deaths for four years. The lowest death rate it ever had was in 1835, when it amounted to 4.6 per 1000. In other years it has been 11, 15, 21, 30, 50, 70, 81, 86, and in one year it rose to the immense death rate of 93.2 per 1000. In 1849 there were, as above-said, 161 deliveries out of which fourteen women died from puerperal fever, being a death rate of 87 per 1000 from this disease alone.

The statistics of other lying-in institutions afford corresponding data. It is a lamentable fact that the mortality in lying-in wards from childbirth, which is *not* a disease, approaches closely to the mortality from all diseases and accidents together in general hospitals, and in many instances even greatly exceeds this mortality. It is the more lamentable, because, as need scarcely be stated, the causes of a higher mortality in infancy and old age cannot exist at childbearing ages. Also, childbirth ought certainly not to be a "miasmatic disease."

Unless, then, it can be clearly shown that these enormous death rates can be abated, or that they are altogether inevitable, does not the whole of the evidence with regard to special lying-in hospitals lead but to one conclusion, viz., that they should be closed? Is there any conceivable amount of privation which would warrant such a step as bringing together a constant number of puerperal women into the same room, in buildings constructed and managed on the principles embodied in existing lying-in institutions?

*Fatality of Lying-in Wards in General Hospitals.* Besides special lying-in hospitals there are general hospitals which receive lying-in cases. Fortunately, there are not many such in England. But in Paris there are eleven general hospitals which receive midwifery cases (Tables 11, 12 and 13, abstracted from the “Statistique Médicale des Hôpitaux de Paris”). A reference to Tables 11, 12 and 13 will show how great the risks are to lying-in women under the same roof with medical and surgical cases, a fact which may be further illustrated by a reference to data for particular hospitals. For example, in 1861, 253 lying-in cases in La Charité gave a total death rate of 193.7 per 1000, of which no less than 154.2 was due to puerperal causes. These tables tell their own story and they throw altogether into the shade the lamentable losses at King’s College Hospital.

The only *amende* that could be made was to shut up the ward; and having done this in the interest of womankind, need it be said that the impression produced by these statistics confirms the conclusion just stated in regard to existing lying-in wards generally, and is that not a single lying-in woman should ever pass within the doors of a general hospital? Is not any risk which can be incurred outside almost infinitely smaller? And as a general hospital must always be a hospital, must not this verdict be an absolute one, not one which can be altered or reversed?

#### INFLUENCE OF CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT OF LYING-IN WARDS ON THE DEATH RATE

Before, however, surrendering entirely the principle of special lying-in institutions, it is only fair to inquire whether the construction, management and arrangements of existing hospitals of this class may possibly have had any influence upon the mortality, apart from the mere fact of bringing lying-in cases together under one roof.

This question is the more important because we now know that construction and arrangement of buildings exert a notable effect on the death statistics of general hospitals. It is at last universally admitted that airy open site, simplicity of plan, subdivision of cases under a num-

ber of separate pavilions, large cubic space, abundant fresh air, mainly from windows on the opposite sides of the wards, drainage arrangements entirely outside the hospital, are essential conditions to the safety of all general hospitals. But, as already stated, it is likewise admitted that lying-in women are peculiarly susceptible to "blood poisoning." This being the case, have we any reason to expect other than a high death rate if we collect lying-in women into such wards, or rather rooms, as are found in many old hospitals?

Nobody with ordinary knowledge of the subject and desirous simply of benefiting suffering people would now dream of appropriating buildings of this kind as hospitals for sick. But it is to be feared that the same scruple has not always existed with regard to lying-in women. And as we now know that such buildings give high death rates among sick and wounded people, there is every reason to fear that they have had their share in raising the death rate among lying-in women to a greater extent than that due merely to the fact of agglomeration. As instances of the existence of danger from such causes, and also from grave errors in administration, two or three illustrations are here introduced from existing lying-in establishments.

*Maternité, Paris.* We have seen from the statistics that the chief of chief offenders in times past has been the Maternité at Paris. This establishment was in former times the Monastery of "Port Royal de Paris." It is situated in one of the most healthy open spots on the outskirts of the French capital, and, as far as situation is concerned, ought to be healthy. The building was devoted to its present destination in 1795 and has undergone many changes since that date. It contains 228 beds for lying-in women, and, besides, accommodation for ninety-four pupil midwives. From 1000 to 2200 deliveries and upwards take place here annually: from 1840 to 1849 there were as many as 3400 annually. Until recently it consisted properly of three divisions: delivery wards, cells for delivered women in the process of recovery and an infirmary. The delivery ward is well lighted on two sides and communicates with an operation theatre, where lectures are also given.

The woman, if progressing favourably after delivery, was removed to one of the cells in what may be called the recovery ward. The construction of these cells was as follows: a long corridor, with windows on opposite sides, was divided into separate cells, each cell having its own window, by partitions stretching one third across the corridor, but not cut off on the end toward the middle of the corridor. Each cell was provided with a bed and a cradle, so that in walking up the

centre of the corridor the divisions, or rather the cells, opened right and left from the passage, like the stalls of a stable. This construction rendered it almost impossible to open the windows.

The infirmary consisted of small wards of three or four beds each, into which were moved indiscriminately patients suffering with all classes of disease. And it appears, from Dr Le Fort's account, that pupil midwives had at the same time patients in the infirmary, and healthy women, both delivered and not delivered, under their care. Pregnant women are often admitted weeks, and even months, before delivery, at the Maternité. (So also at the Midwives' Clinique at Vienna.)

Recently the cells have been removed from the corridor and glass partitions have been thrown across from back to front, each division containing six beds, but communicating with the adjoining divisions by means of doors intended to be used only when the service requires it. The infirmary has been completely separated from this portion of the establishment, but all classes of cases are still transferred into the infirmary as before. As consequences of these arrangements, we have in the Maternité the following conditions:

1. The agglomeration of a number of lying-in women under the same roof;
2. An internal construction of the building not suited to give fresh air, to say the least of it;
3. The infirmary until recently connected with the other portions of the building, and even now receiving all classes of cases among lying-in women, whether febrile or not, for treatment;
4. One class of attendants devoted indiscriminately to all classes of inmates;
5. As already mentioned, women admitted and retained within the walls of the establishment before and after the time simply required for delivery and convalescence.

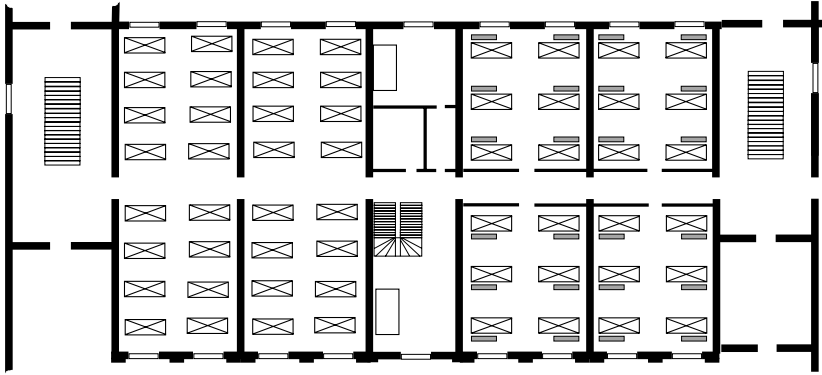
Lastly, an enormous death rate mainly from puerperal diseases.

*Hôpital de la Clinique, Paris* [see Fig. 1]. This establishment is part of the hospital for clinical instruction, close to the buildings of the École de Médecine. The hospital consists of a parallelogram with a central court, containing not only the clinical surgery wards, but also an amphitheatre devoted to anatomical studies, with a mean number of fifty corpses in the course of dissection.

There are six wards devoted to the midwifery department, arranged in a complicated manner, partly across the corridor and partly on each side of the corridor, all of them entered from a central passage

lighted by the open doors of the wards along the sides. They contained fifty-four lying-in beds. From 800 to 900 deliveries took place here annually. 18 to 20 days appear to be the average stay. The beds must, therefore, have been pretty constantly full.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Hôpital de la Clinique, Paris**



(Former arrangement of Lying-in Wards)

The wards devoted to women who have been delivered communicate freely with one another by open doors. The beds are curtained and the curtains are washed only once in six months, even though the occupants of the bed may have died of puerperal fever. The beds are of iron and are provided with a spring mattress, over which is a wool mattress. The latter is removed after each delivery, cleansed and renewed. There is no infirmary for diseases; whether cases of puerperal fever or others, all are treated in the beds in which they are placed after delivery.

The female staff performs its duty to all classes of cases.

Students entered upon the roll for midwifery practice are called into the wards from other parts of the establishment by signals placed in a window.

It is quite unnecessary to search for any more recondite causes of the past excessive mortality of this establishment than these simple facts.<sup>2</sup>

The above plan, taken from M Husson's "Étude sur les Hôpitaux," will show the arrangement of wards and beds in this place. (Dr Le

<sup>2</sup> The plan shows four wards with sixteen beds each, lined up in two rows and the windows at the long ends of the wards.



Fort says that the number of beds in each ward has since been reduced by a third.)

*Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, London.* Plate I [Fig. 2] shows a plan and section of Queen Charlotte's Hospital, as rebuilt in 1856. On each floor are six wards, containing three beds each, in which the patients are delivered, with an average of 1000 cubic feet to each patient. On each floor also is one convalescent ward, containing six beds. Two floors are devoted to patients: one for married and one for single women. As soon as three patients have been delivered in a ward, it remains vacant for eight or ten days and is cleansed. Patients are removed as soon as possible to the convalescent ward.

When a case of fever occurs the ward is freshly whitewashed and not occupied again for at least a month.

In this building we have three floors and a basement. A drain runs from back to front of the building, right across the basement—a most unsafe course for a drain in any inhabited building. (This drain was shown on the plan from which Plan I [Fig. 2] is taken.)

It will be seen that the rooms are placed on opposite sides of a main corridor running the lengthway of the building on each floor; that the corridors of the different floors communicate by the stairs; that the ventilation of each room communicates with the ventilation of every other room through the corridors; that none of the rooms have windows on opposite sides; and that there are water closets having a ventilation common to that of the building. Now every one of these structural arrangements is objectionable and would be considered so in any good hospital, and nobody nowadays would venture to include all of them in a general hospital plan. They are hence *a fortiori* altogether inadmissible in a building for the reception of lying-in women.

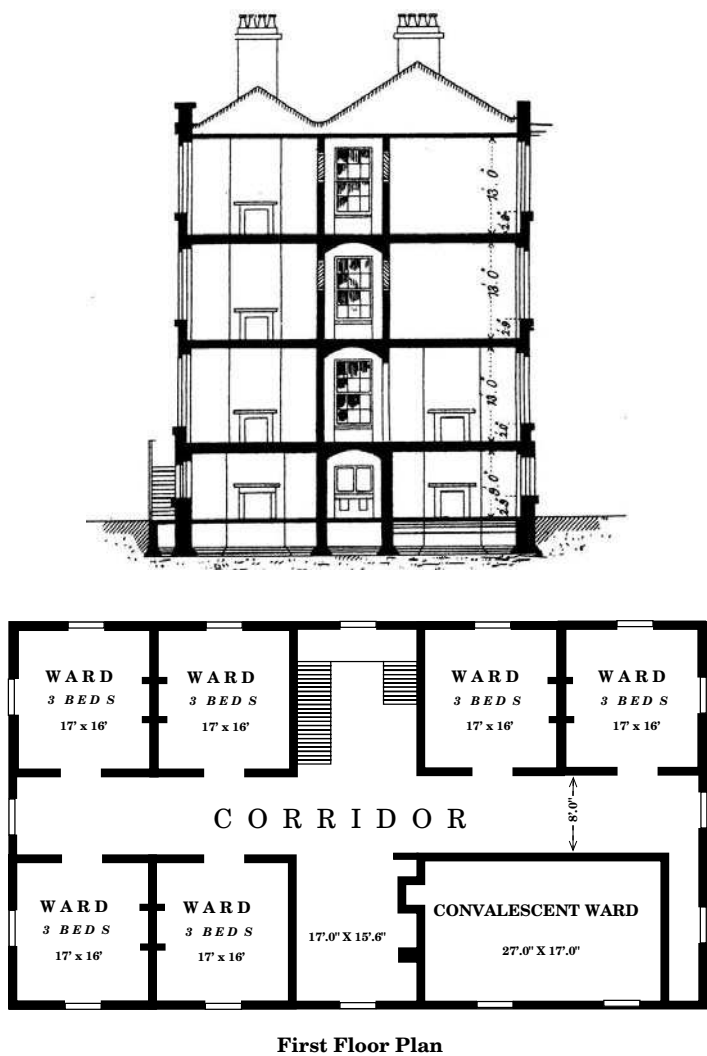
We have thus, in Queen Charlotte's Hospital, the following defects:

1. Agglomeration of a number of cases under the same roof;
2. A form of construction unsuited for hospital purposes;
3. No means of removing outside the building febrile or other cases of puerperal diseases from the vicinity of patients recovering after delivery.

Since 1856, notwithstanding the great improvements, the death rates per 1000 have been 12.2, 8.8, 81.2, 70.3, 54.2, 39.2, 15.5, and so on, in several years very considerably larger than the mortality which led to the closing of the lying-in wards in King's College Hospital. These varying deaths lead to the exercise of much caution in drawing conclusions as to their causes, but the main fact remains, namely,

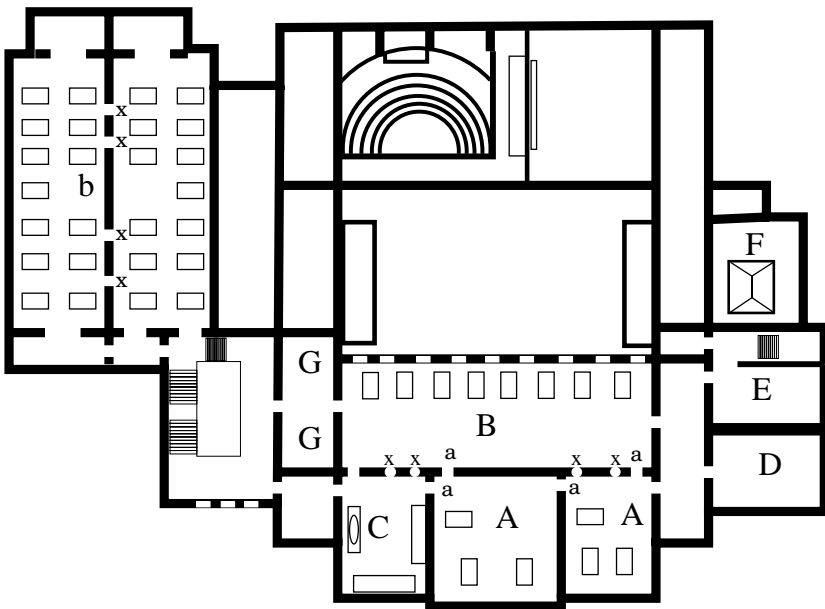
there are the death rates and they are many times greater than occur among London poor women delivered at home.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Plan I**  
**Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital**



*Midwifery Wards, King's College Hospital.* Figure 3 shows the provision which existed for training midwifery nurses at King's College Hospital.

**FIGURE 3**  
**Midwifery Wards, King's College Hospital (Plan of Third Floor)**



- A, A. Accouchement Wards, used alternately.  
B. Recovery Ward.  
C. Contains Linen Presses and Infants' Baths, etc., for Ward use.  
D. Superior's Bedroom.  
E. Midwife's Room.  
F. Post-mortem Theatre.  
G, G. General and Provisions Hoists.  
K. This roof is not higher than the basement.  
x. Ventilating openings on a level with upper part of opposite window.  
a, a, a, a. Doors cutting off communication with either Accouchement Ward when necessary.  
b. No. 4 Ward.

The plan shows the relation of the delivery wards to the recovery ward and to the other parts of the hospital, to the lecture room, post-mortem theatre, etc. The main defects in the construction are the back-to-back wards; proximity of these wards to the general wards of the hospital; the large staircase, common to both sets of wards, although its size and openness and the windows opposite each other and on each floor ensured ventilation and separated the respective blocks; the position of the post-mortem theatre, the smell from which, as stated on the best authority, could be distinctly detected in the

wards. As already stated, students were admitted from other parts of the hospital to the midwifery wards.

#### RESULTS OF IMPROVED LYING-IN WARD CONSTRUCTION

A few instances of improved lying-in ward construction, together with the death rates in these establishments will next be given.

*Military Female Hospitals.* These buildings vary in constructive arrangements. Some are much better than others, and during recent years lying-in wards of improved construction have been provided in connection with several newly erected military female hospitals. The earlier plans of the new female hospitals consist of a block formed of two pavilions joined end to end, with a passage across the block to separate the pavilions from each other. Each pavilion contains a single ward, with its own separate offices and nurses' rooms. It has windows on opposite sides, with one large end window, and abundant means of warming and ventilation. One pavilion is devoted to general cases, the other to lying-in cases. The midwifery ward has space for twelve beds. Each bed has a superficial area of ninety square feet and a cubic space of 1350 feet. The wards are fifteen feet high.

Two hospitals on this plan have been in use at Woolwich and Chatham for upwards of six years. During this period there have been at the two 1093 deliveries and eleven deaths. At Chatham there was one accidental death from removal of the patient to hospital, and out of 342 deliveries there have been no deaths from puerperal diseases. There were, however, two deaths from scarlet fever, occurring while this disease was prevalent in soldiers' families in the garrison. At Woolwich, among 751 deliveries, there have been eight deaths, of which five were from puerperal diseases, but of these five deaths one took place in a woman who had gastric fever at the time of admission, and in [an]other two women puerperal peritonitis came on after instrumental delivery. There was one death from embolism, one from exhaustion and one from dropsy. The total death rate in these two hospitals has been under 10 per 1000. The deaths due to diseases and accidents of childbirth have been six, or at the rate of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per 1000.

Of the other military hospitals, the statistics of which are given in Table 4, Devonport and Portsmouth are unsuitable adapted buildings. Aldershot Hospital consists of a number of huts joined together as a general female hospital, with accommodation for all kinds of cases, including lying-in cases. This arrangement is a very undesirable one and the results have been unsatisfactory.

Table 14 shows that the total mortality in this hospital has been 10.1 per 1000. Of the total deaths twenty-seven are attributed to dis-

eases and accidents of childbirth, affording a mortality of 8.8 per 1000, or double that of the healthy districts of England.

If we exclude Aldershot as being unfit for childbirth cases, we find that in the other seven hospitals the total mortality, as shown in Table 14, has been 7.4 per 1000. The mortality from puerperal diseases in these hospitals has been 2.7 per 1000, and from diseases and accidents of childbirth 5.4 per 1000.

TABLE 14

	Deaths per 1000 deliveries
<b>All Women's Hospitals (Military)</b>	
Puerperal Diseases	3.9
Accidents of Childbirth	3.4
Diseases and Accidents of Childbirth	7.3
Others	1.5
Total Mortality	8.8
<b>Aldershot Women's Hospitals</b>	
Puerperal Diseases	4.9
Accidents of Childbirth	3.9
Diseases and Accidents of Childbirth	8.8
Others	1.3
Total Mortality	10.1
<b>Other Women's Hospitals, Excluding Aldershot</b>	
Puerperal Diseases	2.7
Accidents of Childbirth	2.7
Diseases and Accidents of Childbirth	5.4
Others	2.0
Total Mortality	7.4

There are two camp hospitals for lying-in cases, consisting only of wooden huts appropriated for the purpose, which have yielded very important experience. One of these is at Colchester, the other at Shorncliffe.

The Shorncliffe Hospital is an old wooden hut of the simplest construction, with thorough ventilation. It is situated on a rising ground close to the sea, and, facing it, so that the sea breeze sweeps right through it. It is scarcely more than a makeshift. And here are the results. Table 4 shows that up to December 1869, there had been 702 deliveries in the hut, among which there was one death from scarlet

fever, and one from hemorrhage, besides two deaths following on craniotomy. There was not a single death from any puerperal disease.

Colchester Lying-in Hospital, of which a plan and section are given in Figure 4, is nothing more than an ordinary officer's wooden hut, divided by partitions into four compartments, with a transverse passage cutting them off from each other. This hut has been in use for a considerable number of years as a place of lying-in for soldiers' wives living in the camp, and there have been altogether between 500 and 600 deliveries in it. The matron states that, during the whole time the hut has been in use for its present purpose, no death has taken place in it. But as statistics have only been kept since 1865, we shall limit our attention to them. They show that, up to the end of October 1870, there had been 252 registered deliveries and no deaths.

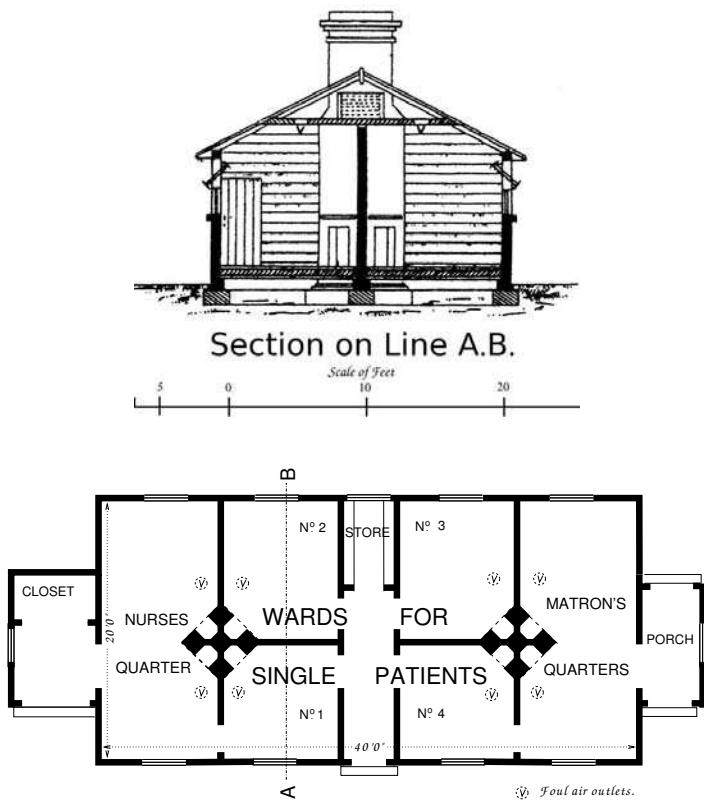
The results of these two makeshift hospitals, when compared with the figures already given for lying-in establishments generally, are certainly remarkable. They are both detached buildings, having no connection with any general hospital. Their construction ensures a plentiful supply of fresh air at all times. They contain very few beds, and these beds are occupied seldom or never all at one time. Indeed, it is stated that in the Colchester hut there is scarcely more than one, or at most two beds, constantly occupied throughout the year. Also, soldiers' wives lying-in rarely remain more than ten days, though sometimes twelve, in hospital. There is, therefore, no crowding; scrupulous cleanliness is observed; there are no sources of putrid miasm in or near the lying-in huts; and they have their own attendants. The data in Table 4 show that there have been 954 registered deliveries in the two huts, and four deaths, of which three were due to puerperal accidents and none to puerperal diseases.

*Proposed New Female Hospital at Portsmouth.* When military female hospitals were first designed it was intended that they should receive only lying-in and general cases from married soldiers' families, in separate pavilions. But at a subsequent date zymotic cases were admitted into the same pavilion with general cases. Very decided objections were, however, urged against this step by medical officers, and the next hospital planned was divided into three distinct pavilions. It was intended for Portsmouth Garrison, and is shown in the annexed figure [Fig. 5].

A female hospital on this plan has been erected at Dublin, with the two end wards built in the line of the corridor beyond the ends of it, in place of at right angles to the corridor as shown in the proposed Portsmouth plan. By this form of construction the cases received from

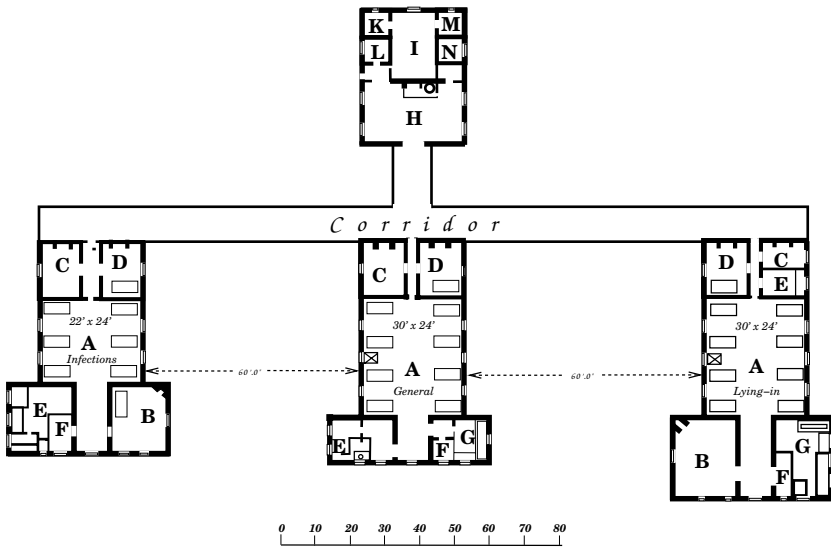
soldiers' families can be divided into three classes: general, infectious and midwifery—each class in its own separate building. Such, however, has been the feeling of medical officers as to the undesirableness of trusting even to this amount of separation, that at Dublin the “infectious” cases have been removed to another locality altogether. The same separation had been already effected at Chatham and Woolwich.

FIGURE 4  
Plan II



Close observation of lying-in cases has led to further change in the construction, and it is now proposed to adopt for lying-in wards in female hospitals a different form of arrangement altogether: namely, to divide the lying-in pavilion into separate one-bed rooms, as shown in Plan I [Fig. 7, see p 322 below].

**FIGURE 5**  
**Proposed Hospital for Women, Portsmouth**



A. Wards  
 B. Spare Wards  
 C. Sculleries  
 D. Nurses  
 E. Lavatories

F. Linen  
 G. Baths  
 H. Kitchen  
 I. Cook's Room  
 K. Store

L. Medical Comforts  
 M. Store  
 N. Coals

The experience of these small military female lying-in hospitals has shown the favourable effect of simplicity of construction, plenty of space, light and fresh air, perfect cleanliness, a small number of lying-in beds, not by any means constantly occupied, administration separate from that of general hospitals, and allowing the lying-in women to return to quarters in as few days after delivery as their recovery admits.

But there is one remarkable instance in which a plan of construction, on the principle of the earlier British military female hospitals described above, has been adopted without having led to equally satisfactory results. The new "Maternité" belonging to the Hôpital Cochin at Paris has been constructed on a ground plan similar to that at Woolwich, viz., with two pavilions projecting in line from a centre and containing two ten-bed wards. It is in two floors, with small wards on the upper floor. Part of its sanitary arrangements are certainly not what we should adopt in this country, but there are many hospitals in



which there are worse defects. Puerperal fever appeared in this hospital within a month of its being opened.

Where so much attention had been paid to construction, the causes of the fever must be looked for somewhere else than in the ward plan. Dr Le Fort has stated that puerperal fever cases had been retained temporarily in the wards after the development of the disease; that the same nurses took charge not only of cases of disease in the isolated wards but also of women making healthy recoveries; and that there is nothing to prevent the medical attendant passing almost directly from the autopsy of a puerperal fever case to render assistance to a healthy woman.

This experience is very important. It shows how much the safety of lying-in hospitals depends on common-sense management, and that it would be disastrous to trust to improved construction alone, while everything else is left to take its own course.

We now arrive at the consideration of an elementary point:

SHOULD MEDICAL STUDENTS BE ADMITTED TO  
LYING-IN HOSPITAL PRACTICE?

This is a very grave question. Medical students were admitted to the lying-in wards at King's College Hospital. Was this one cause of the occurrence of puerperal diseases there?

There are facts, it is true, such as those supplied by the *Maternité* and *Clinique* at Paris (the latter only admitting medical students), in both of which establishments the mortality is excessive, which on first sight appear to show that the presence of medical students in a lying-in hospital is not necessarily a cause of adding to a mortality already excessive. But on the other hand there are facts, such as those given by Dr Le Fort, admitting of a comparison being made between the mortality in lying-in wards to which medical students are admitted with the mortality in other wards of the same establishment not admitting students, which appear to establish the point conclusively. The special case he cites is the following:

At Vienna there are two lying-in clinics, one for students and one for midwives. They are both situated in the same hospital and their external conditions are insufficient in themselves to explain the facts now to be noted. Puerperal fever prevailed in the hospital during the same months in ten separate years, from 1838 to 1862, and the following table [Table C] gives the mortality per 1000 in each set of clinical wards.

Is it not quite clear that some bad influence was at work in this case on the students' side which was not in force on the pupil midwives' side? That there was something else in operation besides epidemic influence

is shown by the much greater frequency and severity of puerperal diseases in the one clinique than in the other. We may assume the fact without attempting to explain it, as a proof of the necessity of separating midwifery instruction altogether from ordinary hospital clinical instruction and does not this Vienna history throw fresh light on the experience already alluded to of our midwives' school in King's College Hospital?

TABLE C\*

Years	Months	Mortality per 1000	
		1st Clinique Students	2nd Clinique Midwives
1838	June	9	247
1839	July	150	34
1840	October	293	58
1842	December	313	37
1844	November	170	33
1844	March	110	7
1845	October	148	13
1846	May	134	4
1847	April	179	7
1856	September	13	105
1862	December	63	2

\* In Le Fort, *Des maternités* 98, but with July and June in reverse order.

#### INFLUENCE OF TIME SPENT IN A LYING-IN WARD ON THE DEATH RATE

This very important element in the question of mortality has been already referred to. There appear to be no extant statistics to show the relation of the death rate to the period of residence. This much, however, is known—that in the establishments where the death rate is highest the probable effect of length of residence appears not to be considered, while in the cases cited where the death rates are lowest the women leave the hospital as soon as they are able to do so.

Dr Le Fort, however, quotes Tarnier and Lasserre of Paris, and Späth of Vienna, as holding that the death rate is lower among women admitted some time before labour. "They become acclimatized" (an odd expression, when applied to the foul air of an establishment where there should be no foul air). He also says that puerperal fever is very rare among women brought into hospital *after* delivery, and he asks whether "contamination does not take place principally and almost solely at the moment of accouchement." One can only repeat,

what indeed Le Fort states, that in these most important points of inquiry, the very elements are yet wanting to us.

Some hospitals have rather plumed themselves on their humanity in giving shelter to poor lying-in women as long as possible, while in military lying-in hospitals soldiers' wives are obliged to go home as soon as they can, to help the domestic earnings. In the first class the death rate is high, in the last it is low.

The low death rates in workhouse lying-in wards appear to support this conclusion also. These do not retain together women not yet in labour, women in labour, women delivered and convalescent women. Their principle, on the contrary, is to receive women when labour is imminent and to send them out of the ward as speedily as possible.

A moment's consideration will be sufficient to show how important a point in management this is. If there is any danger at all to puerperal women in a lying-in institution (a fact which has been proved), is it not clear that the danger must become cumulative? It will increase in a certain ratio as the length of residence increases.

Blood poisoning, if once begun, will not stop of itself unless the subject of it be removed from the cause, or the cause from the subject, if it stop even then. To retain both subject and cause together is simply to render certain that which under better management might have been evanescent. The more this question is considered the more important does it appear as involving an element exercising a very considerable influence on the ultimate fate of inmates of lying-in institutions. The institution, by retaining its inmates, becomes a hospital, and, as such, subjects its inmates to hospital influences while in the most susceptible of all conditions.

The absence of information in almost all published statistics on the point would be grotesque, if it were not alarming, from the carelessness it shows. With some difficulty the following few meagre data have been scraped together as to the average number of days lying-in women spend in the under-mentioned institutions:

Soldier's Wives' Hospitals	10 to 12 days
Liverpool Workhouse Lying-in Wards	14 "
London Workhouse Lying-in Wards	14, 18, 21 "
Paris Maternité	17, 18 "
Paris Clinique	18, 20 "
King's College Hospital	16 "

This involves the question of management, which is next to be considered.

EFFECT OF GOOD MANAGEMENT ON THE SUCCESS OF  
LYING-IN ESTABLISHMENTS

The most important experience which can be had as to the effect of good management in preventing the development of puerperal diseases is afforded by the results of midwifery cases in workhouse infirmaries. In none of these institutions is there any great refinement of construction or of sanitary appliances, and nevertheless their death rates have been much lower than those of maternity institutions generally.

In Table 5 are given the statistics of the lying-in wards of Liverpool Workhouse for thirteen years. During this period there were an approximate number of 6396 deliveries and fifty-eight deaths, giving a total death rate of 9.06 per 1000.

Of these deaths twenty-two were from puerperal diseases—equal to a death rate of 3.4 per 1000. There were fourteen deaths from accidents of childbirth—equal to a death rate of 2.2 per 1000. The aggregate death rate from puerperal diseases and accidents of childbirth was 5.6 per 1000.

These deaths are said to include all among puerperal women delivered in these lying-in wards, whether occurring within or without the maternity division. Mr Barnes, the medical officer of the establishment, states that he can “answer for this with certainty” during the last five years. Also, that no lying-in woman is discharged out of the workhouse unless in perfect health, so that no puerperal death can have happened after discharge. Mr Barnes has farther been kind enough to supply data for the following three years’ statistics, to show the general character of the cases which have furnished these low death rates [see Table D].

Subjoined is also a table of the deaths and causes of death year by year for thirteen years [see Table E].<sup>3</sup>

Let us now see what the arrangements are for this class of cases. The lying-in department of Liverpool Workhouse is situated in a wing of the female general hospital, contiguous to the surgical wards. The wing has windows along the two opposite sides and at one end, but the space is so divided off by partitions as to form five wards, each of which has windows along one side only. The wards are allotted in the

---

<sup>3</sup> There was extensive correspondence with J.H. Barnes on all these points (see pp 213, 215 and 223). The use of the material was discussed with Dr Sutherland (see pp 239-41, 244 and 246).

**TABLE D**  
**Summary of Cases Delivered in the Lying-in Wards of**  
**Liverpool Workhouse 1868-69-70**

	Years			Total
	1868	1869	1870	
Number of women attended in labour:				
natural	511	443	442	1396
premature	4	1	15*	20
married	164	159	142	465
single	351	285	300	936
Males born	295	223	228	746
Females born	216	225	223	664
Mothers who died in or from labour	2 <sup>†</sup>	2 <sup>‡</sup>	2 <sup>§</sup>	6
Children born dead	79	58	58	195
Women confined at or above 40 years of age	8	4	9	21
Women confined at or below 20 years of age	105	98	81	284
Greatest age at delivery	46	42	44	—
Youngest age at delivery	17	16	15	—
Number of first confinements	223	207	105	535
Twin births	1	5	7	13
Triplets	0	0	1	1
Labours followed by flooding	3	0	0	3
Labours accompanied by convulsions	2	1	2	5
Labours accompanied by retained placenta	3	0	3	6
Forceps cases	7	4	4	15
Craniotomy cases	1	0	0	1
Version cases	2	0	1	3
Presentations:				
head	484	426	425	1335
breech	22	12	15	49
feet	4	10	11	25
arm	1	0	0	1

\* Premature births: Seven months: 8, deaths: 5; six months: 6; deaths: 6; five months: 1; death: 1

<sup>†</sup> 1 puerperal convulsions, 1 bowel disease

<sup>‡</sup> 1 after instrumental labour, 1 metritis

<sup>§</sup> 1 heart disease, 1 dropsy

following manner: two of them, opening into each other and facing the same way, contain each twelve double beds, affording accommodation for twenty-four inmates per ward, forty-eight in all, at 345 cubic feet per inmate. These two wards are devoted to the reception of pregnant women before delivery. The opposite half of the wing is divided into two wards corresponding to the two pregnant wards; one

**TABLE E**  
**Summary of Deaths and Causes of Death in the Lying-in Wards of Liverpool Workhouse for Years 1858-70**

	1858	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870
Morbus cordis	2	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Pneumonia	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Puerperal peritonitis	1	1	—	1	6	—	2	2	3	—	—	—	—
Phthisis	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Debility	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Epileptic convulsions	—	1	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Puerperal fever	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jaundice	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Phlegmasia dolens	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Exhaustion	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Relapsing fever	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Inquest	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Laryngitis	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Obstructed labour	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Typhus, post partum	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hemorrhage	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Uremia	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rupture of uterus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Bright's disease	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Invaginated bowel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Instrumental labour (fever)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Metritis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Dropsy	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Deaths	7	5	9	7	7	2	5	3	4	3	2	2	2
Approximate deliveries:* Average estimated at 500 per ann.									450	625	511	443	442

\* The approximate number of deliveries, 6396, given elsewhere, is rather under the mark than over, as will be seen by this table, and is taken in order to be on the safe side. For, up to the three last years, the numbers are rather estimated than reckoned from the records. The total annual average deliveries calculated from different monthly records, i.e., 10 years of months = 300 in round numbers—1858-67. The three years 1868-69-70, for which only there are accurate records, speak for themselves and they show that the death rate is marvellously low, not higher than in the healthy districts of England.

of these is the delivery ward and contains seven beds, at nearly 1200 cubic feet per bed.

Entering from this delivery ward is the lying-in ward, lighted by windows at the end. This ward contains fourteen beds at 900 cubic feet per bed. The other ward, entering from the delivery ward in the same line, is for convalescents and contains eleven beds, at 762 cubic feet per bed. The W.C.s, etc., are between the wards in the wing, in a very objectionable position. For these and the following details I am indebted to the kindness of Mr Barnes, who also supplied me with the statistics abstracted on Table 5.

The following is the routine management of this establishment: all the wards are limewashed three or four times a year. They are shut up and fumigated after the occurrence of any serious case of illness. The floors are washed daily. The beds in the pregnant, lying-in and convalescent wards are generally all or most of them occupied, but the number of occupied beds in the delivery ward rarely exceeds four or five. The bedclothes are changed after each delivery, and the beds, which are of straw, after every third delivery.

The patients consist for the most part of unmarried women. (An attempt has been made in certain cases to account for the high death rates of lying-in hospitals from the large proportion of unmarried women admitted. This opinion is directly contradicted by the experience of Liverpool Workhouse, where out of 1401 deliveries of women, 936 of whom, or two thirds, were unmarried, there were only six deaths = 4.2 per 1000 death rate.)

They are admitted into the pregnant wards, where they remain for a varying interval of from days to months, from whence they are removed to the delivery ward; about a fifth part of the women are admitted directly from the town to the delivery ward. They remain on an average eight hours in the delivery room, whence they are removed to the lying-in ward, where they remain five or six days. They are then admitted to the convalescent ward and are finally discharged fourteen days after labour, one half to the town, the other half into other parts of the workhouse.

An important part of the management is that the inmates of the pregnant wards only inhabit those wards at night, being engaged during the day in various occupations within the workhouse, but not about the lying-in women, as in the Paris Maternité. Cases are not taken into the lying-in division unless labour has begun or is supposed to be

imminent. Any case of illness occurring in the lying-in department is at once removed to the "class sick nursery," to the lock or other division. The nurses engaged in the lying-in division attend also cases in the "class sick nursery" and are periodically changed. Any case which they cannot manage is referred to the resident medical officer on duty.

There are three of these officers, who relieve each other every eight hours day and night. The officer on duty is liable to be called on to visit any part of the workhouse or hospital during his turn of duty, so that it might happen occasionally that the medical officer might be called from the hospital to the lying-in division.

If feverish symptoms show themselves in any patient in the lying-in division the practice is to isolate the case or to transfer it to some other division of the workhouse. The ward is then closed, fumigated, cleansed and limewashed before being again used. This proceeding has only been necessary twice within the last four years.

Until recently, the whole of the deliveries, which amounted to an average of about 500 a year, were under the charge of one paid officer and a pauper who, without any payment or extra diet, delivered nearly every case and worked both night and day.

There are several points in this procedure which are of great importance as bearing on the general question of successful management of lying-in establishments:

1. The building, although situated in a large commercial town, is on a high, isolated and freely ventilated locality.
2. It is not connected with a general hospital or medical school, or with any of their risks.
3. There is a constant change of wards: pregnant ward, delivery ward, lying-in ward, recovery ward, body of the house. There is, in short, as little risk as possible of the cumulative blood-poisoning process already referred to.
4. Frequent cleansing and limewashing.
5. Passing women who have been delivered as speedily as possible out of the division altogether, either into the house or outside.
6. The deliveries being conducted by a woman specially attached to the delivery ward, and no part of whose duty it is to attend sick.
7. The immediate isolation or removal of all cases exhibiting feverish symptoms and their treatment out of the division.
8. The reduction of intercommunication between the lying-in and hospital divisions to the smallest possible degree on the part of medical officers and nurses.



The practical result of this system of management has been, as we have seen, that the lying-in division of this workhouse, although working under many singular disadvantages, has escaped the usual fatality of special lying-in hospitals. During the thirteen years included in the tables there has been no epidemic and the deaths have almost always been single and disconnected. The experience of lying-in wards in London workhouses somewhat resembles the experience of Liverpool Workhouse.

In the report of the committee appointed to consider the cubic space of metropolitan workhouses, 1867, is given a table, No. 11, showing the number of deliveries and deaths after delivery during five years in forty metropolitan workhouses. The leading facts are abstracted in Table 6. Workhouses in which deaths after delivery took place during the five years are separated in the abstract from workhouses in which no deaths took place.

There were during these five years in all the workhouses 11,870 deliveries and ninety-three deaths, giving a death rate of 7.8 per 1000. The deaths from puerperal diseases amounted to thirty-nine, giving a death rate of 3.3 per 1000. There were twenty deaths from accidents of childbirth, being a death rate of 1.7 per 1000. The total death rate due to both classes was 5 per 1000.

The largest number of deliveries took place in Marylebone and in St Pancras. In the former, on an average of 243 deliveries per annum, the death rate was 8.2 per 1000. One half of this, however, was due to consumption. Of the remaining deaths three were due to puerperal diseases (2.4 per 1000) and two to accidents. The death rate due to puerperal diseases and accidents of childbirth was thus 4.1 per 1000.

In St Pancras Workhouse, on an average of 200 deliveries per annum, the death rate was 11 per 1000, of which 9 per 1000 were due to puerperal diseases. Recent disclosures with regard to St Pancras Workhouse may to some extent account for this high death rate. The number of deliveries in these two workhouses bring them almost within the category of lying-in hospitals.

There are four other workhouses in which the annual deliveries are respectively 171, 120, and two of them 111, while in all the others the numbers fall much below 100.

In one such instance (Holborn), where the deliveries have averaged fifty a year, the death rate was exceptionally high, 24 per 1000, one half of which was due to puerperal disease. In another instance, St Mary's, Islington, with seventy-five deliveries per annum, the death rate averaged 29 per 1000. But the causes are not stated and cannot

now be ascertained. In Whitechapel, where there were 111 deliveries per annum, the death rate was 10.8 per 1000, one half being due to puerperal diseases.

It is possible that local inquiry might elucidate the causes of this mortality. The cases are, however, exceptional to the experience of London workhouses, viz., that the death rates from puerperal diseases and accidents of childbirth are scarcely higher than they are in all England, town and country. Let us try to ascertain how far the management adopted may have led to these comparatively favourable results.

The conditions for recovery in a great majority of the London workhouse lying-in wards are at least as favourable as they are in the Liverpool Workhouse; in most cases undoubtedly more so, as will immediately be seen when we consider that the average annual number of deliveries in Liverpool Workhouse is more than twice that of the two largest London workhouses, and from five to ten times most of the others; that in the London workhouses the rule is to have many unoccupied beds, while this is the exception in the Liverpool Workhouse.

The cardinal principle in the management of these London workhouse lying-in wards appears to be this: their occupants are a fluctuating number; often the wards have but one woman at a time, and the cubic space for each of these women is "in fact the cubic space of the whole ward." (In Lambeth and St Pancras the wards are generally full.) Sometimes, but only for brief periods, all the lying-in beds may be occupied. For much longer intervals the occupants are very few in number, so that each has a large proportion of cubic space, and sometimes the wards in some of the workhouses are empty. There are no medical schools attached to the institutions, and no medical students who may have passed from a case of erysipelas or from the post-mortem theatre to the lying-in bedside; there is the possibility of removing immediately any case of febrile or other disease which may occur in the lying-in ward into the general sick wards of the workhouse; there is discharge of convalescent cases at the earliest possible period, either to their own homes or to other parts of the establishment. These conditions, together with the paucity of numbers and the occasional vacating and rest of the wards, appear to constitute the main difference between a workhouse lying-in ward and a lying-in hospital. In both classes of establishments the same attention is doubtless bestowed on ventilation, cleanliness and frequent change of bedding.

## MANAGEMENT OF MILITARY LYING-IN WARDS

The lying-in arrangements provided for soldiers' wives are as follows: the rule is that women shall be delivered in quarters, provided there be decent accommodation. At a number of the larger stations, where suitable married quarters have not yet been fully provided, there are female hospitals, attached to which, as we have already seen, is a delivery and lying-in ward, with the usual offices. In the specially constructed hospitals the wards are of a good size, well lighted, warmed and ventilated. If all the beds were occupied, the space would be 1300 cubic feet per patient. But this is an event which rarely or never happens, so that there is always plenty of room and good ventilation.

If a woman requires admission, her husband applies to the medical authorities for a ticket. (These arrangements are commonly the same in civil lying-in institutions.) No woman with a disease considered to be infectious is admitted. The women usually follow their ordinary avocations until obliged to proceed to hospital by imminent labour. They are taken there in cabs, all the necessary arrangements for the lying-in having been made, if possible, by previous intimation. The woman is delivered in the delivery ward and is thence transferred to the lying-in ward. As a rule, the lying-in pavilion in these female hospitals is distinct in all its arrangements for nursing from the pavilion for general cases. Infectious cases are not received into the same hospital, except at Aldershot. In these hospitals for soldiers' wives the time which elapses from the admission to the discharge of the women is usually ten, and in some cases twelve days.

At Aldershot four "sisters" are now at work in the soldiers' wives' hospital. One was trained as midwife and took charge of the midwifery cases early in 1867. The sister midwife has sole charge of the lying-in women for five or six days. They are then passed into a third ward and are nursed by the sisters who attend the ordinary cases (which are, however, of course in a separate ward). The sisters do not help the midwife, as a rule. Only the superior, on an emergency, and one for scrubbing floors periodically, enter the midwifery wards (i.e., the delivery and lying-in wards).

In 1869 Aldershot had no fatal case among the lying-in women. (The "infection wards" are nursed by ordinary nurses and, in cases of children, by the parents.) It will be seen, therefore, that at Aldershot the midwife has nothing to do with the general cases and the matron is not now the midwife. Both there and at Woolwich the lying-in nursing is quite separate from the general nursing.

The medical officer remarks as to the two deaths in 1869 at Woolwich: "Two cases of puerperal peritonitis after bad labours, requiring instrumental and other assistance, died, but the disease did not extend. My opinion is that the coldness of the wards, though objectionable, has a great deal to do with the comparative immunity hitherto enjoyed as regards the germination and extension of contagious diseases."

It need scarcely be said that these new hospitals are models of cleanliness.

In the Colchester Hut the patient is received into a separate compartment, of which there are four, where she is delivered and remains until discharged to quarters. It is very rarely indeed, if ever, that all the four compartments are occupied simultaneously. The average stay is ten days; the average number of deliveries a year under fifty. This hut does not form part of a hospital. It is a separate establishment solely for lying-in women, as such accommodation should always be.

*Note.* There is another reason, though it may be termed a fanciful one, for altogether disconnecting lying-in institutions with general hospitals and even with the name and idea of hospital. It is this: there must be a certain death rate in a general hospital, receiving as it does fatal diseases and fatal accidents, as long as men and women have fatal diseases and fatal accidents. But lying-in is not a fatal disease, nor a disease at all. It is not a fatal accident, nor an accident at all. Unless from causes unconnected with the puerperal state, no woman ought to die in her lying-in; and there ought, in a lying-in institution, to be no death rate at all.

It is dangerously deadening our senses to this fact—viz., that there ought to be *no* deaths in a lying-in institution—if we connect it in the least degree with the name of hospital, so long as a hospital means a place for the reception of diseases and accidents.

In French statistics this confusion of ideas, were it not ghastly, would be ludicrous. "Admissions," under the head "malades," include not only the lying-in women, but the newborn infants, which appear to be "admitted" to life and to hospital together, as if life were synonymous with disease, so that, e.g., 4000 "admissions," in such a year, to the Paris Maternité would mean 2000 deliveries, 2000 births (and how many deaths?).

#### RECAPITULATION

In summing up the evidence regarding excessive mortality in lying-in institutions and its causes, it appears:

1. That, making every allowance for unavoidable inaccuracies in statistics of midwifery practice, there is sufficient evidence to show

that in lying-in wards there reigns a death rate many times the amount of that which takes place in home deliveries.

2. That a great cause of mortality in these establishments is “blood poisoning,” and that this arises from the greater susceptibility of lying-in women to diseases connected with this cause. From whence it follows that in many lying-in wards, as at present arranged and managed, there must be conditions and circumstances apart from those belonging to the inmates personally, which aid in the development of this morbid state.

3. That the risks to which lying-in women are exposed from puerperal diseases are increased by crowding cases in all stages into the same room or under the same roof; by retaining them for too long a period in the same room; by using the same room for too long a period without cleansing, evacuation, rest and thorough airing; but that the death rate is not always in proportion to the number of lying-in cases which have passed through the hospital. It follows from this that, other things being equal, a high death rate may take place in a small hospital constantly used up to its capacity as well as in a large hospital constantly used up to its capacity.

4. That there are superadded causes in some establishments which add greatly to their dangers. Among these may be reckoned the following:

- (a) Prevalence of puerperal fever as an epidemic outside the hospital;
- (b) Including midwifery wards within general hospitals, thereby incurring the risk of contaminating the air in midwifery wards with hospital emanations;
- (c) Proximity to midwifery wards of post-mortem theatres or other external sources of putrescence;
- (d) Admitting medical students from general hospitals or from anatomical schools to practise or even to visit in midwifery wards without special precautions for avoiding injury;
- (e) Treating cases of puerperal disease in the same ward, or under the same roof, with midwifery cases;
- (f) Permitting the same attendants to act in infirmary wards and in lying-in wards, and using the same bedding, clothing, utensils, etc., in both;
- (g) Most probably also—especially in certain foreign hospitals—want of scrupulous attention to ventilation and to cleanliness in wards, bedding, clothing, utensils and patients, and in the clothing and personal habits of attendants.

In short, the entire result of this inquiry may be summed up in a very few words as follows: A woman in ordinary health, and subject to the ordinary social conditions of her station, will not, if delivered at home, be exposed to any special disadvantages likely to diminish materially her chance of recovery. But this same woman, if received into an ordinary lying-in ward, together with others in the puerperal state, will from that very fact become subject to risks not necessarily incident to this state. These risks in lying-in institutions may no doubt be materially diminished by providing proper hospital accommodation and by care, common sense and good management. And hence the real practical question is, whether it is possible to ensure at all times the observance of these conditions.

The great mortality in lying-in hospitals everywhere is no doubt a strong argument against such a result being attainable, so much so that, in the absence of this security, the evidence in the preceding pages appears sufficient to warrant the question being raised: whether lying-in hospitals, arranged and managed as they are at present, should not be forthwith closed? Can any supposed advantages to individual cases of destitution counterbalance the enormous destruction of human life shown by the statistics?

**TABLE 15**  
**Comparative Mortality among Lying-in Women in Hospitals**  
**and at Home (Abstracted from Tables 3 and 10)**

	Deliveries	Deaths	Deaths per Thousand
Total for all hospitals	888,312	30,394	34
Total delivered at home	934,781	4,405	4.7
Excess of deaths per thousand delivered in hospitals			29.3

Without vouching for the entire accuracy of Le Fort's data, they may still be taken generally as showing approximately the penalty which is being paid for the supposed advantages of these institutions. It is this (see Table 15) for every two women who would die if delivered at home, fifteen must die if delivered in lying-in hospitals. Any reasonable deduction from this death rate for supposed inaccuracy will not materially influence the result.

The evidence is entirely in favour of home delivery and of making better provision in future for this arrangement among the destitute poor.

CAN THE ARRANGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF  
LYING-IN INSTITUTIONS BE IMPROVED?

Must we, then, surrender the principle of lying-in institutions altogether, and limit the teaching of midwifery nurses solely to bedside cases at home, notwithstanding the well-known difficulties of teaching pupils at the beginning of their course elsewhere than in an institution? We will try to reply to this question and, in doing so, perhaps some light may be thrown on another question, viz., how to improve existing lying-in establishments so as to reduce the mortality in them.

Evidence sufficient has been collected to show that no one panacea will enable us either to possess a perfectly healthy building or to improve existing hospitals. Much has been written about the saving effect of small hospitals, but it is certain from what has been already said that the small-hospital idea is not sufficient of itself. It is, however, a very important idea, because all hospital problems are simplified by subdivision of the buildings. So far as we know, everyone who has carefully studied the subject has given a preference to small lying-in establishments over large ones, but we should certainly be disappointed if we trusted to smallness of size alone for reducing the mortality.

The evidence further shows that, in any new plan, infirmary wards must be kept quite detached from lying-in wards. They should be in another part of the ground and should be provided with their own furniture, bedding, utensils, stores, kitchen and attendants. The same arrangement, at least in principle, should be carried out at all existing lying-in establishments, and every case of disease should at once be removed from the lying-in wards to the infirmary and be separately attended there.

In our proposed midwifery school the whole attendance would be supplied by midwives and pupil midwives, with a physician accoucheur to make his visit twice a day, to be sent for in time of need and to give instruction to the pupil midwives by lectures and otherwise; and in this way we should escape the dangers of introducing medical students.

Applying the same principle to lying-in wards to which medical students are admitted, there can be no doubt that a responsibility of the very gravest kind attaches to all teachers and managers of lying-in hospitals who do not satisfy themselves that students admitted as pupils have nothing to do either with general hospital practice, or with

anatomical schools, during the period. Midwifery instruction should be treated as a matter quite apart.

What has been already said need scarcely be repeated about the dangers of connecting midwifery wards with general hospitals. The simple facts are sufficient to show that all midwifery wards of this class should be at once closed.

As a general result of this inquiry, applicable to all lying-in wards, the evidence shows that very much indeed of the success depends on good and intelligent administration and management.

Suppose that all these precautions could be carried out, will the cost and difficulty of giving effect to them necessarily lead to the abolition of all accommodation for midwifery cases or for teaching midwifery? We reply, No. The facts already adduced clearly show what may be done in this matter. They prove, in the first place, that lying-in women should, as a rule, be delivered at home. And, as a consequence, that whatever provision may be made for cases of special destitution, or for midwifery teaching, such provision should be assimilated as far as practicable to the conditions which surround lying-in women in fairly comfortable homes.

These conditions are realized, and in some instances no doubt improved on, in the better class of workhouse lying-in wards and of lying-in huts for soldiers' wives. The favourable results arrived at in many of these institutions appear to show that a little more care would lower the death rate still further. In every instance where it is considered necessary to organize lying-in accommodation by voluntary effort, the same principles should be kept in view.

The success which has attended Waterford Lying-in Hospital, already mentioned, shows how much may be done in rendering such accommodation a real boon to the poor.

A single hut, like the Colchester Hut, erected in a needy locality, would supply, and that safely, all the accommodation wanted. But for a training school of midwives and midwifery nurses other accommodation is required, and of a far more costly character. It is true that any sort of building may be leased or bought and altered or added to, and told off as a training school, but, after what has been said, to take such a course would be to ensure killing a certain number of mothers for the sake of training a certain number of midwives. If we are to have a training school at all, we must, before all things, make it as safe for lying-in women to enter it as to be delivered at home, and having made up our minds what is necessary for this purpose, we must pay for it.



## CHAPTER II

### CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT OF A LYING-IN INSTITUTION AND TRAINING SCHOOL FOR MIDWIVES AND MIDWIFERY NURSES

To apply all this experience to the construction and organization of a school for midwives and midwifery nurses is the next thing. (I call a midwife a woman who has received such a training, scientific and practical, as that she can undertake all cases of parturition, normal and abnormal, subject only to consultations, like any other accoucheur. Such a training could not be given in less than two years.

I call a midwifery nurse a woman who has received such a training as will enable her to undertake all normal cases of parturition, and to know when the case is of that abnormal character that she must call in an accoucheur. No training of six months could enable a woman to be more than a midwifery nurse.)

Everybody must be born, and every woman, at least in this kingdom, is attended at the birth of her child by somebody, skillful or unskillful. Except in the case of multiple births, there are therefore as many attendances as there are births in the returns of the Registrar-General. This it is which makes the subject of midwifery nursing of such paramount importance.

Lying-in is an operation which occurs in England to seven women out of a hundred annually. In 1868 there were 786,858 children born alive in this country, wherefore for the midwives and midwifery nurses to be trained there will always be occupation and custom enough; whereas the occupation and custom for a surgical operator is, it is to be hoped, comparatively small, except in Franco-German wars. Even there we may trust that seven out of 100 had not to undergo an operation. Certainly to seven out of every 100 annually a surgical operation in England does not occur.

Between midwifery nursing and all other hospital nursing there is this distinction, viz., the operator is herself the nurse and the head-operator (or midwife) ought to be a woman, and *is*, in Paris and Vienna, and elsewhere.

Lying-in patients are to be compared to surgical (or operation) patients, *not* to medical patients, and *should* be perfectly well in health. Since lying-in is not an illness and lying-in cases are not *sick* cases, it would be well, as already said, to get rid of the word "hospital" altogether and never use the word in juxtaposition with lying-in women, as lying-in women should never be in juxtaposition with any infirmary

cases. As to amount of work, necessary administrative conveniences and the like, a lying-in institution is to be compared to a surgical, *not* medical, hospital, or rather to a hospital for operations.

It has been already shown that great improvements are required in the manner of keeping midwifery statistics and that many data are wanting for this purpose. It would be altogether wrong to deal with these statistics on the same principles as if they were general hospital statistics. Lying-in is neither a disease nor an accident, and any fatality attending it is not to be counted as so much percent of inevitable loss. On the contrary, a death in childbed is almost a subject for an inquest. It is nothing short of a calamity which it is right that we should know all about, to avoid it in future. A form of record is appended (Table 16) which appears to afford the means of registering the required information.

## I CONSTRUCTION OF A LYING-IN INSTITUTION

What then, first, should be the principles of construction for a lying-in institution in order to combine safety for the lying-in women with opportunity of training for the pupil midwives? And,

1. *How many beds to a ward?* Not more than four. Or single-bed wards might be arranged in groups of four. Also, it must always be borne in mind that four beds mean eight patients. There are two patients to each bed (unless it is meant to kill the infants) to use up the air, which is besides used up by a necessarily far larger number of attendants than in any general hospital. For, during the time the mother is incapable of attending to the infant, the infant is incapable of attending to itself. Also, an exhausted mother, and feeble almost lifeless infant, cannot ring a bell or make themselves heard. Indeed, an infant which cannot cry is in the greatest danger.

For all this provision must be made. There are scarcely two points in common between a lying-in institution and a general hospital.

2. *How many wards to a floor?* Only one four-bed ward, or four one-bed wards in a group.

3. *How many floors to a pavilion (hut or cottage)?* Two, at most. In every alternate pavilion better only one floor, unless the pavilions be so far apart as to cover an extent of ground which would make administration almost impossible, and cost fabulous.

*How many beds to a pavilion or hut?* There would therefore be no more than eight beds, and in each alternate pavilion no more than four beds.

TABLE 16  
Proposed Registry of Midwifery Cases

Name
Age
Residence
Married or Single
No. of Pregnancy
Date When Last Child Was Born
Date of Admission
Period of Gestation
Date of Commencement of Labour
Duration of Labour, in hours
Nature of Delivery
Presentations
Complications of Delivery
Operation, if Any
Accidents or Diseases if Any, after Delivery
Nature of Accident or Disease
Date of Attack
Duration
Result and Date
Births: Single, Twins, or Triplets
Infant Born Living or Dead
Sex of Child
If Infant Dead after Birth, Cause of Death, and Date
Date of Removal from Lying-in Department
No. of Days in Lying-in Department
Date of Discharge from Institution
Remarks

Note. Should any death take place in a woman discharged from the institution within a month from the time of her delivery, a record of this death, its date and cause, to be entered in the column of Remarks. In the same column should be entered remarks on abnormal configuration, or on abnormal conditions of health which might influence the result of the delivery.

*How many pavilions or huts to a lying-in institution?* Not more than two-floored pavilions, two one-floored pavilions, and two two-floored delivery pavilions, unless, indeed, building space can be given, with all its cost and administrative difficulties.

4. *How much space to the bed?* The *minimum* of ward cubic space for a lying-in woman, even where the delivery ward is, as it ought always to be, separate, is 2300 cubic feet in a single-bed ward, and 1900 cubic feet in a four-bed ward. (In ordinary army wooden huts, where the air comes in at every seam, this space may be less.)

As it is a principle that superficial area signifies more than cubic space, the surface of floor for each bed should not be less than 150 square feet per bed in a four-bed ward, and in a single-bed ward not less than 190 square feet, because this is the total available space for all purposes in a single-bed ward. This space has to be occupied not only by the lying-in woman and her infant, and perhaps a pupil midwife washing and dressing it at the fire, but often by the midwife, an assistant, possibly the medical officer, and pupil midwives. In a four-bed ward there is space common to all the beds.

*The Delivery Ward.* Ought to be separate in every lying-in institution, *must* be separate in an institution of more than four or five beds, though in separate compartments. Every delivery bed should have a superficial area of not less than 200 square feet and a cubic space of not less than 2400 cubic feet.

5. *How many windows to a bed?* One at least to each bed, two beds and two windows on each side of the four-bed ward. In a single-bed ward the bed should not be placed directly between window and door. And it must never be in an angle. There must be room for attendants on both sides the bed. This is still more essential in a delivery ward. Each bed should be lighted on *both* sides by windows and should have at least five feet of passage room on either side.

6. *What are healthy walls and ceilings and floors?* Oak floors, polished; furniture also; impervious glazed walls and ceilings, or frequent lime-washing. All that has been so justly said as to the necessity of impervious polished floors and walls for hospitals applies tenfold to lying-in institutions, where the decomposition of dead organic matter and the recomposition of new organic matter must be constantly going on. It is this, in fact, which makes lying-in institutions so dangerous to the inmates. And it may literally be said that the danger increases as the square of the number of in-cases.

Lying-in “infection” is a very good illustration of what “infection” really means, since *parturition* is not infectious or “contagious.” The excessive susceptibility of lying-in women to poisonous emanations, the excessively poisonous emanations from lying-in women—these constitute a hospital influence on lying-in cases brought together in institutions second to no influence we know of exercised by the most “infectious” or “contagious” disease.

The death rate is not much higher among women lying-in at home in large towns than in healthy districts. Therefore the agglomeration of cases together and want of management required to meet it must bear the blame.

As to floors, the well-laid polished floor is a *sine qua non* in a lying-in institution, where, with every care, slops, blood and the like must frequently be spilt on the floor.

7. *What is a healthy and well-lighted delivery ward?* There must be two separate delivery wards for each floor of the whole lying-in institution, so arranged and connected *under cover* that the lying-in women may be removed after delivery to their own ward. And for this purpose the corridors must admit of being warmed during winter, especially at night, so as to be of a tolerably equable temperature. Unlimited hot and cold water laid on, day and night, W.C. sink, bath-sink, clean linen, must be close at hand.

In a pavilion hospital one single-bed ward should be attached to each delivery ward, for an exhausted case after delivery, till she is able to be moved to her own ward.

The delivery ward should be so lighted and arranged that it can be divided, by curtains only, into three if not four compartments. No woman being delivered should see another delivery going on at the same time. The delivery bedsteads stand in their compartments.

Each delivery bed should have window light on either side, and also ample passage room all round and on both sides the bed. Care should be taken that no bed should stand exactly between door and window, on account of draughts. The curtains, of washing material, are only just high enough to exclude sight, not high enough to exclude light or air, and are made so as to pull entirely back when not wanted. Each area enclosed by the curtains should of course be sufficiently ample for pupils, attendants and patient; also for a low truck on broad wheels covered with india-rubber to be brought in, on which the bedstead with the clean warm bedclothes is placed, and the newly delivered woman conveyed to her own ward. (A woman very much exhausted

would be carried in the delivery bed to the bye-ward attached to each delivery ward.)

The reason why there must be two delivery wards for each floor of a lying-in institution, to be used alternately, one "off," one "on," is that one delivery ward on each floor must be always vacant for thorough cleansing, limewashing and rest for a given period, say month and month about.

It is understood that newly delivered women cannot be removed from one floor to another. And it is quite necessary to have the means of keeping a corridor, along which a newly delivered woman is to be moved, at a proper temperature. The position of the delivery wards should be as nearly as possible equidistant from the lying-in wards, and should be such that the women in labour, on their way to the delivery ward, need not to pass the doors of other wards.

A separate scullery to each delivery ward is indispensable, such scullery to be on at least an equal scale to that of ward sculleries. Hot and cold water to be constantly at hand, night and day. A sink-bath is desirable for immediately putting in water soiled linen from the beds and the like.

The scullery should contain a linen-press, small range with oven, hot closet at side of the fireplace, sink with hot and cold water, etc. A small compartment should contain a slop sink for emptying and cleansing bedpans, and a sink about six inches deep and sunk below the floor, which is intended for filling and emptying a portable bath, and which, when not required for this, might be used for soaking linen, etc.

Beyond the scullery, so as to be as far removed as may be from the traffic of the main corridor and the noises of the delivery ward, should be the bye-ward, with not less than 2100 cubic feet of contents.

8. *Scullery, lavatory, W.C.* The necessary consumption of hot and cold water is at least double or triple that of any general hospital. Sinks and W.C. sinks must be everywhere conveniently situated. There must be a scullery to each four beds; the scullery must needs be much larger and more convenient than in a general hospital. There is often more work to be done by night than by day in a lying-in institution.

All the ward appurtenances, scullery, lavatory, etc., must stand empty for thorough cleansing when the ward to which they belong stands empty in rotation for this purpose and must not be used for any other ward. For each four-bed ward, or group of four one-bed wards, or for each floor of each pavilion, there must therefore be one scullery, with a plentiful unfailing supply of hot and cold water, with

sinks and every convenience. The reason for this is twofold: (1) To allow each scullery, with the other ward offices, to be thoroughly cleansed and whitewashed with its own group of four beds. (2) The work in a scullery and in all the other ward appurtenances day and night, night and day, is manifold that which it is in a general hospital scullery. Besides this, general hospital patients ought never to be allowed to enter the scullery.

In a lying-in scullery the infants, most exacting of all patients, must frequently be in the scullery. Even under the very best circumstances there are many lying-in cases among weakly women where the mother's state is such as to render it necessary for a "crying" infant to be washed and dressed elsewhere than in its mother's ward. These infants are best washed, in that case, in the scullery, which must be so arranged that infants can be washed and dressed without being exposed to a thorough draught, and that nurses and babies may not be hustling one another.

There must be a good press in each scullery. A supply of clean linen and other necessities will have to be kept in each press in each scullery. The slop-sink and other appurtenances must be arranged so as to make allowance for the fact that the going backwards and forwards for water, hot and cold, or to empty slops in a lying-in institution—where half the patients can do nothing for themselves, and the other half (the mothers) are supposed to be ready for discharge when they can go to the ward offices for themselves—is more than it is in general hospitals.

Fixed baths are not necessary. But there must be means for filling with hot water moveable infants' baths at all hours at a moment's notice, since an infant's life often depends on immediate facility of hot-water bathing. And this besides the daily regular night and morning washing of infants.

There must be also a moveable bath for each ward for the lying-in women, with the means for supplying it with hot and cold water and for emptying it. Lying-in patients are not able to use either fixed baths or lavatory. Glazed earthenware sinks should alone be used, as being by far the safest and cleanest.

9. *How to ventilate lying-in wards.* The best ventilation is from opposite windows. Each window should be in three parts, the third or uppermost to consist of a flap hung on hinges to open inwards and throw the air from without upwards. Inlet valves to admit fresh air, and outlet shafts to emit foul air, must be added to complete the natural ventilation.

10. *Furniture, bedding, linen.* As little ward furniture as possible, as much clean linen as possible. A very large and convenient clean linen-store, light and dry, must be assigned to the matron: very much larger than would be required for a general hospital, but no general hospital in London supplies a good standard for such.

There must be in each scullery, besides, a clean linen-press. There should be a very ample and convenient place for bedding. Mattresses, blankets and the like have to be renewed, taken to pieces and washed—especially those used in the delivery ward—many times oftener than in any general hospital. The rack for linen should be along the middle of the linen-store. There should be space for a bedding-rack along one end, taking about three feet six inches from the length of the room for linen. Space for some spare mattresses and bolsters will be necessary; and they should be stowed near to a lift. A linen-store requires thorough lighting, ventilating and warming. Three windows are better than one. The linen must of course be kept dry and aired.

11. *Water supply, drainage, washing.* Unlimited hot and cold water supply, day and night, should be laid on all over the buildings. All drains and sewers must be kept outside the walls of the buildings, and great care should be bestowed on trapping and ventilating them to prevent foul air passing into the institution.

The washing in a lying-in institution is, it need not be said, very large, and should be conducted quite at a distance. Sink-baths, for immediately putting in water soiled linen, are necessary.

12. *Medical officer's room and waiting room.* No dispensary, especially no dispenser, is needed in a lying-in institution. A medical officer's room is necessary. The medical officer is not resident. He makes his morning and evening visit and is called in by the head midwife for any difficult case. He gives instruction, scientific and practical, to the pupil midwives. (These lectures are given in the pupil midwives' mess room.)

In the medical officer's room should be kept the instruments, to which a fully qualified head midwife also has a key. The medical officer keeps the notes of cases, etc., and of instruction to the pupil midwives in this room. The few, very few, drugs needed in a good lying-in institution are kept here, or in the head midwife's sitting room.

A waiting room is necessary. There must be a room where the head midwife can examine a woman, to know if labour is imminent. This might be done in the medical officer's room or the waiting room.

13. *Segregation ward.* A ward is unfortunately necessary, completely isolated, where a sick case, brought in with smallpox or erysipelas or



the like, could be delivered and entirely separated from the others, or where a case of puerperal fever or peritonitis (though such ought never to arise after delivery in a properly constructed and managed institution) could be transferred. But if, unfortunately, puerperal fever should appear in the hospital, no new admissions should be allowed until the buildings have been thoroughly cleansed, lime-washed and aired. The segregation ward must have a nurse's room, and a provision of sink, slop-sink, etc.

14. *Kitchen.* The kitchen should be well placed, conveniently near, yet sufficiently cut off from the main corridor by a neck of passage and intermediate offices.

#### SITE

The site of a lying-in institution must be open, airy, surrounded with its own grounds, not adjoining or near to any other building, still less to any hospital or any nuisance or source of miasm. But it must be in the immediate vicinity of any large centre of population from which the lying-in women come. And this involves the question of receiving rooms.

Should there be a receiving room, as well as a waiting room? The lying-in woman's name is put down for admission some time beforehand. Lying-in hospitals differ as to their rules whether or no to admit women any time before labour is imminent. If they are not so admitted, they often have to be sent back again home.

It is now believed to be the soundest principle that the fewer days a lying-in woman spends in a lying-in institution, beyond the time she is actually under treatment, the better; and this involves that she should not be admitted till labour is imminent—even at the risk of the infant being born in cab or lift (which *has* happened).

Lying-in institutions must (unfortunately) be, therefore, in the immediate neighbourhood of great towns or centres of population. (Even those London boards which are building their excellent new workhouse infirmaries in the country are forced to keep their lying-in wards in the old workhouses in the town.) The difference, however, as has been shown by our statistics, is not so great between the mortality of women lying-in at home in the country and in the town as should make us pronounce against lying-in institutions in great centres of population—provided they have a large and entirely isolated area completely to themselves, perhaps a proportion of two acres to fifty beds. But this involves another question.

A large proportion, alas! of workhouse lying-in women (we have seen two thirds at Liverpool) are unmarried. (In some London workhouses it is yet larger.) Of these many have no home. It is difficult to send these women back again, even if labour is not actually imminent. And it is impossible to send them out after delivery, till recovery is fairly confirmed.

In workhouses the question is solved by women being admitted into the body of the house during pregnancy and discharged into the body of the house, if not to their own homes, when quite convalescent. In Liverpool Workhouse fourteen days after labour the lying-in women are thus discharged. Fourteen, eighteen, twenty-one days, are the average of a woman's stay in the lying-in division in London workhouses.

A soldiers' wives' hospital takes in no unmarried women to lie-in. Civil lying-in institutions almost invariably have to make exceptions and take in unmarried women. In workhouses they are not the exception; they are the rule. Married women are the exception.

It is to be observed that married women will rarely come in an hour before or stay an hour after it is necessary in any lying-in institution. Ten to twelve days is "the average period of hospital treatment" in Colchester, Woolwich and other soldiers' wives' lying-in hospitals. "Women of this station of life cannot, as a rule, be prevailed upon to submit to longer detention," it is added.

The average number of days in King's College Hospital lying-in ward was sixteen. None were permitted to leave under fourteen days. Twenty-one days were *allowed*, in ordinary cases. It is feared this might be too long, but so very many weakly, half-starved women sought admission that to send some away sooner was "to ensure a breakdown," it is stated.

In a civil lying-in institution it would not be by any means desirable absolutely to exclude single young women *primiparae*; it would be grievous to some of these poor things to be sent among the (often hardened) wretched women of the workhouse. The whole question of these poor young women—unmarried mothers of a first child—is full of difficulty. It would never do, morally, to make special provision for them. And for this very reason we seem bound to receive such, conditionally, into well-regulated lying-in institutions, and afford some kindly care to prevent, at the very least, their sinking lower. But it would not be right to leave any admissions for single women in the hands of any young assistant or morally inexperienced person.

The principle appears to be that, if pregnant women are to be received some time before and kept some time after delivery, the excess of time should not be passed in the lying-in wards but in separate accommodation.

## II MANAGEMENT

Construction, however, in a lying-in institution, holds only the second place to good management in determining whether the lying-in patients shall live or die. And, without such management, no construction, however perfect, will avail.

The first elementary principle of good management is to have always one pavilion of four or eight beds, according as it is of one floor or of two, standing empty in rotation for purposes of thorough cleansing. *A fortiori*—one delivery pavilion on each floor is always to be vacant alternately.

The pavilion to be in rotation unoccupied for the purposes of cleansing must necessarily be the *whole* pavilion, with all its sculleries and ward offices, since the process of cleansing is turning out all the little furniture a lying-in ward ought ever to possess, bringing in lime-washers, possibly scrapers and painters, leaving doors and windows open all day, and even all night.

Every reason for having each ordinary pavilion ward completely separate, and individually *pavilionized*, applies with tenfold force to the delivery ward. Each must be complete in itself, with all its appurtenances and bye-ward for extreme cases, as a little pavilion. There is no possibility for properly cleansing and limewashing the delivery ward *not* in use unless this be the case. *One* delivery ward, however spacious and well arranged *constantly* used, would be a centre of deplorable mischief for the whole institution. This makes *two* delivery wards for each floor of the institution indispensable, to be used alternately for the whole floor at given periods.

N.B. Liverpool Workhouse, with twenty-five lying-in beds exclusive of delivery beds, has had an average of 500 deliveries *a year* for eleven years. A civil lying-in hospital in or near a large town is generally *just as full as it is permitted* to be. Five or six hundred deliveries or more *a year* might be reckoned upon, occasionally three or four deliveries a night. Sculleries will be *always* in use, *day and night*. All this renders it imperative that an inexorable rule should be made and kept to, viz., that every lying-in pavilion should be vacant in rotation, each delivery pavilion alternately, for thorough cleansing.

2. The second elementary principle of good management is to remove every case of *illness* arising in the institution, and every such case admitted to the institution, at once, to an isolated sick ward or infirmary ward. This is *must*, not may.

Though we should have no puerperal fever or peritonitis in a building of this *make*, yet unfortunately other institutions will send in (say) erysipelas or smallpox patients seized with labour. Sad experience tells that this unprincipled practice has often proved fatal to many other inmates of the lying-in institution, turning an institution into a hospital.<sup>4</sup>

Every sick case should therefore be completely isolated in a separate sick ward from the lying-in women. And if admitted before delivery, her delivery should take place in this separate ward. N.B. The nurse's dinner and meals may be prepared in the general kitchen and sent to her. The patient's arrowroot, gruel, etc., must be made, and her beef-tea warmed, in the "sick or segregation" building, and all linen must be sent to the ward well aired.

Is it desirable to connect the "segregation" ward by any covered passage with the rest of the lying-in institution? There is much to be said for and against. The ward, it is to be hoped, will not often have to be used at all. But smallpox has appeared after labour.

There might be danger in taking a patient from the institution to this ward through the open air, in all weathers, unprotected by any covered passage. On the other hand, when once the patient is in the ward, complete isolation is by far the best for the sake of all the others. And there is by no means the same necessity for a passage as in the other parts of the institution, where any night there may be three or four ordinary delivery cases to be conveyed through the passages.

A covered ambulance for sick cases is not, however, a nice thing, though often suggested. (The only difficulty is as to protecting the patient—a lying-in woman—during the transit in cold or wet weather, but perhaps some cover might be contrived for the bed or litter on which she is carried, which would be light, easily removable and which could be exposed to the free action of the open air when not in use.)

3. The first two may be called universal and essential principles of good management in every lying-in institution, large or small, however perfectly constructed. Here is a third, hardly less essential, wherever there is more than one bed to a ward, viz., to remove a lying-in

---

4 This, Nightingale thought, was the reason for the several deaths of patients at the King's College ward.

woman three times during her stay in the institution. The average course of an ordinary case may be reckoned thus: seven or eight hours in the delivery ward; five or six days in the lying-in ward; nine or ten days in the convalescent ward. The nearer wards to the delivery ward in use should always be made the wards for women immediately after delivery; the farther wards for the same women when removed for their convalescent stage.

In a single-bed ward the woman may remain in her own ward from after her delivery till her discharge, that is, no further removal after her delivery is necessary.

4. Cases of extreme exhaustion after delivery, which are better out of the delivery ward yet cannot be moved many yards, should be carried *in their beds* to the bye-ward adjoining the delivery ward till they are somewhat recovered. These must have a constant watcher by them.

5. In a lying-in institution about three times the quantity of linen and bedding for each patient is necessary of what is used at a general hospital.

The day's and night's provision of linen is kept in each ward scullery and in the scullery of each delivery ward in use. The linen-store in the storeroom and the bedding-store need to be very complete and ample. The bedding, that is, the mattress and blankets, of any one bed in the delivery ward should not be used for more than three or four delivery cases in succession without undergoing some process of purification—and this quite independent of any accident, the mattress of course being protected by Macintosh sheeting.

### III TRAINING SCHOOL FOR MIDWIVES

The few words which will here be added on the management of a midwifery training school are not at all to be understood as a manual for practical instruction, which it is quite impossible to introduce here, but as simply treating of the management, insofar as this determines some constructive arrangements as imperative and others as to be avoided.

No charity or institution, I believe, could possibly bear the expense of a single-bed ward, or even of a four-bed ward lying-in establishment, for a pretty constant succession of thirty-two patients unless there were a training school. (Thirty-two single-bed wards, an administrator would say, would require sixteen nurses, independently of midwives!!)

Even with a training school, the first year would be one of great difficulty, since all well-managed training schools “take in” pupils as

much as possible at only two periods of the year, so as never to have the whole of the pupils fresh hands at once. But the *first* batch must necessarily be all fresh hands. A raw girl cannot be turned in to sit up with a newly delivered woman and newborn infant. And a midwife cannot be spared to each girl all to herself to teach her how to handle an infant. (That is, in each single-bed ward.)

The whole nursing service of a large four-bed or one-bed ward lying-in institution is so complicated, so different from that of a general hospital with its twenty or thirty-two-bed wards, that it is difficult to provide for.

In even guessing at what the nursing accommodation should be for so completely new an experiment as a lying-in institution of forty beds in single-bed or four-bed pavilions, we must begin by stating the probable requirements, the whole being tentative. The staff would have to be at least as follows:

- one matron;
- one head midwife;
- one assistant midwife;
- one deputy-assistant midwife (for the first year).

To establish a really good training school thirty pupil midwives (two experienced good nurses in addition might be necessary for the first year);

- one cook;
- one housemaid;
- one or two other female servants, such as scourers—or more (number required depending on the flooring used).

Though this staff appears enormous, it is calculated upon the plan of giving only one night nurse to every four beds, upon the supposition that thirty-two occupied beds will give a constant succession of cases, enough to provide instruction for almost as many pupil midwives; upon the principle that for systematic instruction there must be a fair number of pupils; as, if every moment of their time is occupied in active duties, they cannot be well trained; and also upon the obvious fact that it would be impossible, from its extravagance, to nurse such a construction without pupils.

(For the *second* year, if a portion of the pupils are to be made thorough midwives, and their time of training two years, possibly the deputy-assistant midwife, and probably both the nurses, might be dispensed with. The second-year pupil midwives ought to be quite competent, each to be in charge of two or three first-year's pupils and sev-

eral patients, taking these patients from the beginning and teaching pupils to handle newborn infants, look after ordinary lying-in cases and the like; and most excellent practice it is for the young teachers.)

As to scourers, the nature of the floors decided upon will determine what are wanted. Also, none of the midwives can be expected to be housemaids, even in their own rooms. They have too much to do. The pupil midwives would be expected to clean their own bedrooms, but not to scour, either for the patients or for themselves.

There must be a common room for pupil midwives. Here they take their meals in detachments, head midwife, as a rule, with first detachment, matron carving. Here they receive lectures and instruction from the physician accoucheur.

The matron must have two rooms. The head midwife may have two rooms. She will expect to have her tea in her own room. The head midwife, her assistants and all her staff should be lodged in a central position, and there should be ready means of communication with these quarters, both by bells and speaking tubes, from each pavilion and delivery ward.

A regular night service in a lying-in institution being impossible, the head midwife, when she goes her last round at night, say between eleven and twelve P.M., stations other watchers for any emergency arising besides those now to be mentioned, who are for the night nursing of ordinary cases.

For this, one pupil would probably be told off for each four wards or beds, and one extra for the whole floor, who must not be an inexperienced pupil. Her duty would be to visit each pavilion on her floor and to have all in readiness in the delivery ward for cases coming in at night—a not infrequent occurrence. The head midwife would also arrange for the special care of any critical case at once, on the patient being conveyed to her own ward or to that adjacent to the delivery ward.

In so large and therefore busy a lying-in institution, it would not be desirable to call up all the pupil midwives to every case coming in the night. They would be appointed day by day alternately, and the number told off for the purpose would be called to any case coming *that* night. It is therefore most desirable that the sleeping rooms or compartments (each with its own window) of the pupil midwives should be arranged in at least three reliefs, so that the occupants of one dormitory, or relief, could be called by a bell from the delivery ward ringing into that dormitory without needlessly disturbing others.

In so large an institution the head midwife even cannot attend every night case. The assistant must be a well-qualified midwife who can take her turn in attending night cases, calling the head midwife if necessary. Through all this organization, however, as far as possible, each pupil is told off to be in charge of a mother and infant from beginning to end. And there will always be unfortunately a certain number of cases, each requiring a nurse constantly by her side day and night. It is obvious that the same woman cannot do this for a succession of days and nights. But the number of severe cases requiring it would unquestionably be much smaller in a single-bed ward hospital, or in a four-bed ward hut hospital, because of its superior immunity from puerperal disease, though, from the single-bed ward condition, every such case will require a nurse all to itself. And the same nurse cannot be always sitting up day and night.

N.B. Repetitions may possibly here be pardoned. The pupil midwife appointed as night watcher for the whole floor cannot be depended upon to attend the bell of any individual watcher. She may be absent at a delivery. Yet the life of an infant, *e.g.*, in convulsions, depends on minutes—on the watcher being able to summon immediate help, hot water for a bath and the like. Those appointed to be called in such emergency should therefore be readily communicated with by bells or otherwise, without disturbing others, either nurses or patients. As there are no sleeping rooms for any midwife or pupil in the ward pavilions, it is necessary to insist upon this—that there should be every facility for their being rung up or called up at night.

Every pupil midwife ought to have a little bedroom to herself, or at least a compartment with half a window, or better a whole window, to itself. There should be a bathroom and W.C. on each floor in the pupil nurses' quarters, and a back staircase.

If a small sickroom could be managed for pupil midwives, it would be advisable. Where there are so many, one may be attacked with bronchitis or with scarlatina. She could not, of course, be "warded" with the lying-in women, and it might be undesirable to leave her in her own little room, though this is quite sufficient for any slight illness. The top floor, as securing greater quiet and a certain degree of isolation, might be the best for this sickroom.

The whole of the pupil midwives' quarters should have direct and ready means of communication with the hospital proper. Each relief should be independent of the other two, and under the immediate supervision of the official woman, whose quarters are attached to its own.



It need scarcely be stated that an essential part of a pupil midwife's training is to attend lying-in women at their own homes, with the conveniences or rather the inconveniences of those homes. Otherwise the pupil will be the less fit for her afterwork. The last two months of every six might well be given to this. But, as above-said, these *Notes* about management, for they are nothing more, simply treat of it as regards construction, and do not refer to the necessary training, either indoor or outdoor, at all.

(For a great part of the foregoing details of management I am indebted to the valuable experience of her [Mary Jones], who, as then superior of the nursing at King's College Hospital, conducted our Training School for Midwifery Nurses there, so kindly, so wisely and so well that its necessary breaking up was the more to be deplored by all.)

#### DESCRIPTION OF SKETCH-PLANS OF PROPOSED INSTITUTION

I know of no single building which requires more ingenuity to plan, and has hitherto received less, than a lying-in institution, especially with a training school for midwives attached.

Lieutenant Ommanney, R.E., has been kind enough to give his time and mind to the subject—having previously had considerable experience at the War Office in planning female hospitals—and to embody the whole of the working accommodation required for both lying-in institution and school in the thoughtfully arranged sketch-plans, Nos. III, IV and V.

The estimated cost of these plans is large, but if we must have lying-in institutions at all, it is only “penny wise and pound foolish” to cripple either space or necessary appliances, or the means of regularly and periodically vacating every ward and every ward office destined for the use of lying-in women.

Plan III [see Fig. 6]. This plan shows a lying-in ward unit for the institution, together with its scullery and separate offices, and the relation which these bear to the corridor of communication joining all parts of the hospital on each floor together. The measurements and other details shown on this plan are the result of repeated and careful consideration of the requirements already described, and it is believed that in practice they would be found sufficient for every purpose. The four beds shown on it are not the *minimum*, but the *maximum*, number which, judging from all past experience, could be safely placed together.

Plan IV [see Fig. 7] shows a floor of one of the lying-in ward pavilions divided into four separate one-bed rooms. This plan also repre-

sents a unit, but of another construction. The great advantage of the arrangement is complete separation of cases from each other, so that each room is as far as possible assimilated to a room in a private dwelling house. To obtain this advantage the rooms are arranged in pairs on each side of a nine-foot passage, having a window at one end and a corridor window opposite the other end.

**FIGURE 6**  
**Plan III**

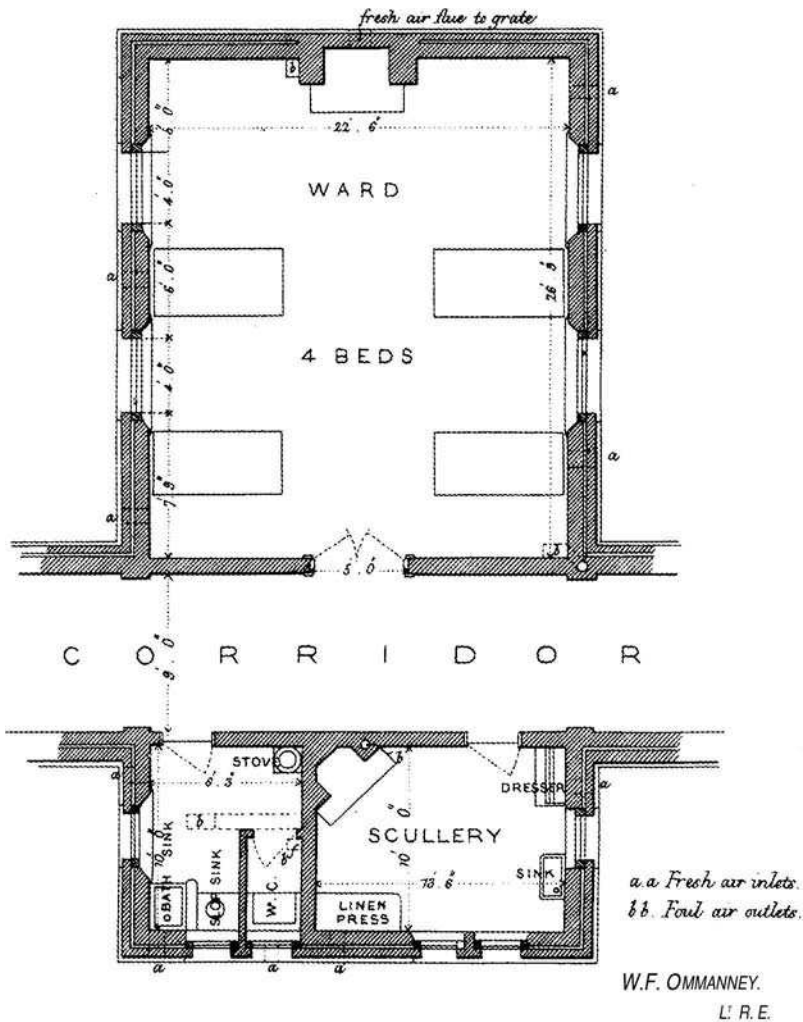
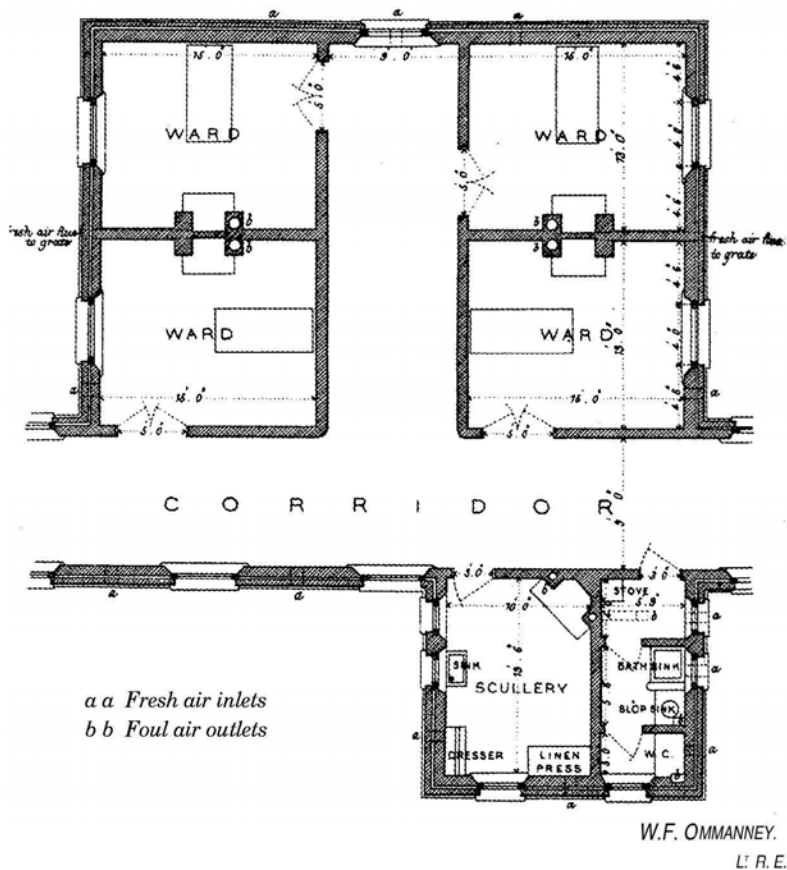


FIGURE 7  
Plan IV



Two of the rooms open from the corridor and two rooms from the passage, but the doors are not opposite each other. In this, as in the four-bed ward plan, the scullery and offices are completely isolated from the rooms by a nine-feet corridor. In this case, also, the measurements and other details have been arrived at after full consideration. This plan would be somewhat more costly than the previous one (Plan III). The justification of it is found in the fact that it reproduces, in a permanent form, the conditions in Colchester Lying-in Hut, already described. And in this hut there has, as yet, been no death after delivery.

Plan V [see Figs. 8 and 9]. This plan gives a sketch of an arrangement of pavilions, offices, quarters, etc., forming a complete lying-in

**FIGURE 8**  
**Plan V, Part 1**  
**Plan of a Lying-in Institution for Forty Beds (32 to 36 Occupied),**  
**with Training School for Thirty Pupil Midwives**

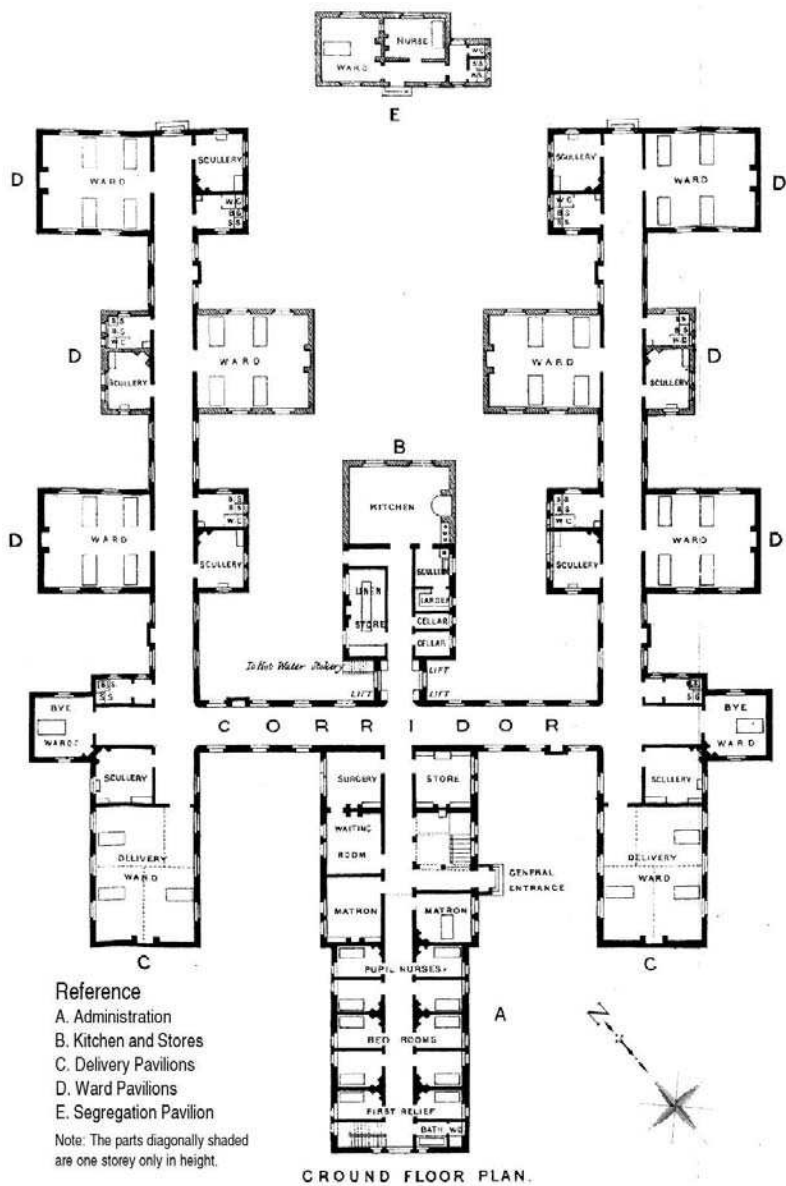
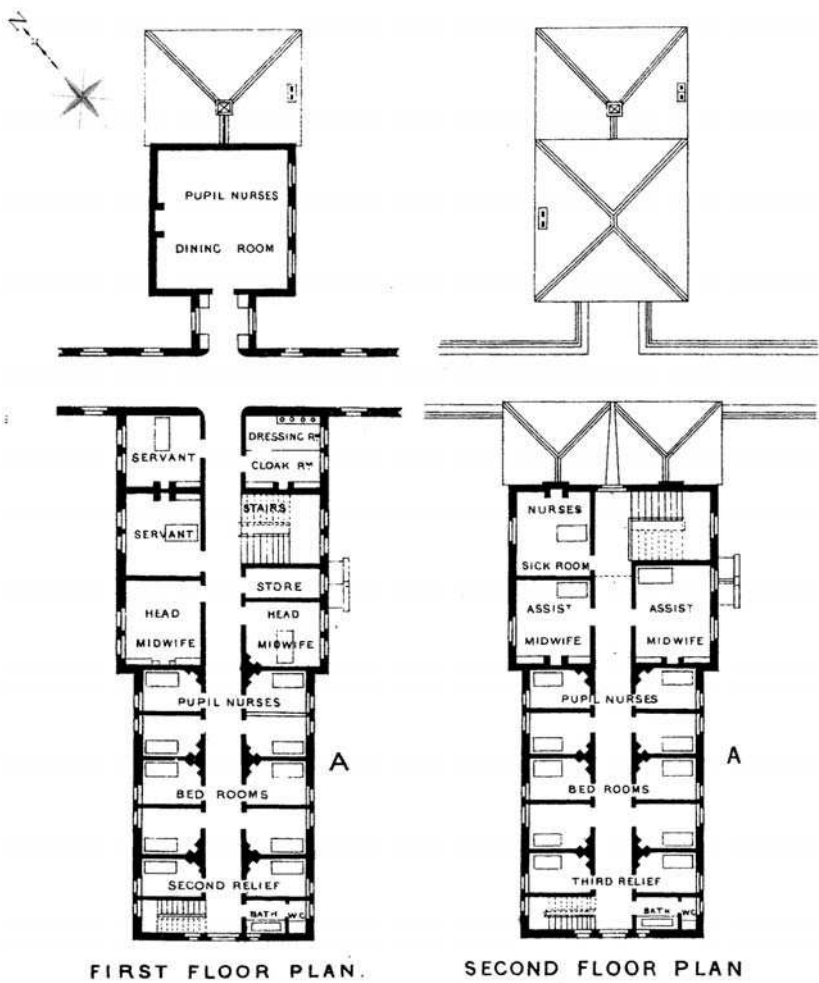


FIGURE 9  
Plan V, Part 2



institution and training school. As already stated, such an institution must, from its very objects, be situated in a town where land is scarce and valuable, and this is a chief difficulty in erecting it. Hence it has been necessary to keep the different parts as close together as possible, and yet not to crowd them so as to interfere injuriously with the external ventilation. The mere architecture, as will be seen, has been subordinated to this necessity, but it must be borne in mind that utility, and not architectural effect, is to be sought for.

In the centre of the plan project the quarters for pupils, on three floors, ten quarters on each floor. They are arranged in this way to enable the reliefs to be taken from one floor at a time. Behind these in the same block are quarters for matron and midwives, waiting room, surgery, stores, kitchen and pupils' dining room. The general entrance is in one side of the centre block. The two front pavilions, on either side the centre, contain the delivery wards, two on each floor. Each delivery pavilion contains a ward for three beds on each floor, with its bye-ward and offices. Only one delivery pavilion will be in use at one time. While one pavilion is in use the other will be vacant and undergoing ventilation and cleansing. These delivery wards are connected with the centre and with all the pavilions on each floor by a nine-feet corridor, with cross light and ventilation. Fire-places are shown for warming in winter. On the ground floor are three four-bed wards, with offices, on each side, on the construction shown on Plan III. There will thus be twenty-four lying-in beds and six delivery beds (but three delivery beds and twenty lying-in beds only in use at the same time) on the ground floor. The second pavilion from the front, on each side, is only one storey in height, so as to afford a freer circulation of air among the pavilions in the space within which it might be necessary to place them.

As a consequence of this arrangement there would be only four lying-in wards, of four beds each, on the upper floor, together with a delivery ward at each side (one delivery ward to be used at a time). A special detached ward for febrile cases is shown behind the building.

The total accommodation in an establishment of this size would be sufficient for six simultaneous deliveries and thirty-two to thirty-six lying-in women. There would be six delivery beds always resting, and four or eight lying-in beds always unoccupied. There would be training accommodation and facilities for thirty pupils.

## APPENDIX

### MIDWIFERY AS A CAREER FOR EDUCATED WOMEN

My dear sisters (or rather, *chers et très-honorés confrères*),  
While all that we women think about is to have the same education as men in medicine, must we not feel the women's medical movement to be rather barren when it might be so fruitful? But public opinion in England is not free enough for a coward to dare to say what she thinks, unless at the risk of having her head (figuratively) broken.

Is there not a much better thing for women than to be “medical men,” and that is to be *medical women*? Has not the cart been put before the horse in this women’s medical movement? Here is a branch so entirely their own that we may safely say that no lying-in would be attended but by a woman if a woman were as skillful as a man—a physician accoucheur.

Yet, instead of the ladies turning all their attention to this, and organizing a midwifery school of the highest efficiency in both science and practice, they enter men’s classes, lectures and examinations, which don’t wish to have them, and say they want the same education as men.

Then, is there not an immense confusion as to whether they are ever to be called in as medical attendants to men? “No,” say those lady doctors who have at all thought out the question. “We wish to be educated as if we were going to attend men, but we should think it an insult to be called in to attend men.”

Why not adjourn for a century, or for half a century, the question whether *all* branches of medical and surgical practice shall be exercised by women, even upon women? It is a question which may safely be left to settle itself.

But here is a matter so pressing, so universal, so universally recognized, viz., the preferable attendance of women upon women in midwifery, that it may really be summed up thus: although every woman would prefer a woman to attend upon her in her lying-in and in diseases peculiar to her and her children, yet the woman does not exist, or hardly exists, to do it. Midwives are so ignorant that it is almost a term of contempt.

The rich woman cannot find fully qualified women, but only men, to attend her, and the poor woman only takes unqualified women because she cannot afford to pay well-qualified men. But why should the midwives be ignorant? And why (in the great movement that there is now to make women into medical men) should not this branch, midwifery, which they will find no one to contest against them—not at least in the estimation of the patients—be the first ambition of cultivated women? Is there any rational doubt that, suppose there were a man and a woman, both equally versed in midwifery art and science, the woman would be the one sent for by all lying-in women?

There is a better thing than making women into medical men, and that is making them into medical *women*. Surely it is the first object to

enable women, by the most thorough training, practical and scientific, to practise that branch of the art of medicine which all are agreed should be theirs, *not* “like men”—for nearly all the best men are agreed how deficient are the practical training and opportunities of medical students, especially in midwifery, which deficiency yet does not prevent them from obtaining diploma, licence, all they want, in order to practise—*not* “like men” then, but like *women*, like women who wish to be real physician accoucheuses; that is, to attend and to be consulted in all deliveries, abnormal as well as normal, in diseases of women and children, as the best accoucheurs attend and are consulted.

Sensible women say, “But the only means to obtain a scientific education *is* to enter men’s classes.” *Is* that the case? Is the student’s scientific and practical education all that could be wished? Could there not be given (and *is* there not given, in some Continental schools?) a far more thorough and complete scientific education, as well as practical, where there are none but women, in a midwifery school, without all this struggle and contest, which raises questions so disagreeable and ridiculous that a woman of delicate feeling shuns the indelicacy of the contest—*not* the indelicacy of the occupation?

The parody, the *qui pro quo*, is a curious one. The indelicacy of a man attending a woman in her lying-in is by necessity overlooked. The indelicacy of a woman attending with men in medical classes is made much of. Would it not be far better to get rid of both at once? to have women—trained with women, by women, to attend women—trained in all branches of a scientific and practical midwifery education?

But let no one think that real midwifery education can be less complete and thorough for a woman than it ought to be for a man, if women are really to be physician accoucheuses. And let no one think that two or three courses of lectures—a month, three months, six months, at a lying-in institution, conducting twenty, thirty or one hundred labours—will make a woman into a (real) midwife. One hundred labours may be normal, requiring no interference but that which a good midwifery nurse can give. The one hundred and first may be abnormal and may cost the patient her life or health, the attendant her reputation and peace, if her education has been nothing but the few lectures, the few weeks, the few labours.

Let us suppose for a moment that, leaving aside the ordinary talk of giving a woman a “man’s medical education,” good or bad, we imagine what a college might be to give the whole necessary train-



ing—medical, scientific and practical—to make real midwives, real physician accoucheuses. There must be first, of course, the lying-in institution, the deliveries conducted by fully qualified head midwives, of whom enough perhaps exist already for this purpose, who will give practical instruction to the pupil midwives at the bedside. There must be a staff of professors to give scientific instruction in midwifery, but also in anatomy, physiology and the like, in pathology and pathological branches, above all, in *sanitary* science and practice.

Dissections and post-mortem examinations will have to be practised. It need not be said that these must be at a quite different time and place in the “course of education” from the training about the lying-in patients. Probably all these professors, or nearly all, must at first be men. Probably in time all these professors, or nearly all, will come to be women. The course of education, before the end of which no pupil can receive the certificate of a fully qualified midwife, must certainly not be less than two years.

*Is this merely an ideal? Is it a utopia? Have we never seen it in practice? Could it not be put in practice in practical England? Seen it in practice we have—save and except the sanitary practice, which is woefully deficient—on the Continent of Europe. And lady professors there have been in midwifery on the Continent quite equal to the most distinguished physician accoucheurs in this or in any other country, who took their place among these, among the Sir James Simpsens and the Sir Charles Lococks, as of them, and not outside of them, in all midwifery matters, scientific as well as practical.*

The names of Mme Boivin and Mme Lachapelle<sup>5</sup> of Paris are known to all Europe. And there are many other names of lady professors in midwifery and midwives, not known in England at all, who take their uncontested places on the Continent in practice, in consultation, in teaching, as a Sir James Simpson here. They teach in midwives’ colleges, and imperial and royal ladies *are* sometimes, and often wish to be always, attended by them.

*Note.* A society has already existed for several years, the object of which, according to its program, is “to provide educated women with proper facilities for learning the theory and practice of midwifery and the accessory branches of medical science.” The program states most justly that, for want of these, for want of “proper means of study,” of

---

5 Marie-Anne Boivin (1773-1841), inventor of the vaginal speculum, and Marie-Louise Lachapelle (1773-1841), author, *Pratique des accouchemens*, 1821.

“any public examination,” “any person may undertake the duties of a midwife.” Let us look what the “proper means of study” are which it provides.

They are (1) attendance upon lectures during two winter sessions; (2) attendance “during the intervening summer” upon clinical practice at “a” lying-in hospital or maternity charity, with personal attendance upon at least *twenty-five* deliveries! (It is easy to make a rough calculation how many cases of abnormal parturition occur to how many normal. Is it likely that among “*twenty-five* deliveries” there will be abnormal cases enough to practise the pupil-judgment, the pupil-hand?)

These ladies have not even the advantages which the idlest student can hardly help availing himself of—and *his* minimum is “three years.” Yet this is the course proposed to enable a woman to “practise midwifery,” even in the sense in which we understand a man to “practise midwifery,” to enable a woman to become a midwife.

### **After Publication of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions***

**Editor:** It was Nightingale’s practice to send out gift copies of each book she published to people who had assisted her with information in its preparation and to influential people who, she thought, should read it and might do something useful with it. With *Introductory Notes* she also sent out copies “for criticism,” with a view to the much-discussed second edition. The helpful J.H. Barnes of the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary was duly sent an inscribed copy of the book 10 October 1871.<sup>6</sup>

Nightingale asked Emily Verney where to send copies of “my book on *Lying-in Institutions*, just out, one to present to the crown princess at whose instigation very much it was written, one to Professor Virchow at Berlin?”<sup>7</sup> She wrote again regarding sending the parcels via Sir Harry Verney, who was at Berlin: “So I think I shall send mine direct to the C.P. by Queen’s Bag, as she desired.” In this letter she also considered how to get the lying-in book to the minister of public education in Malta.<sup>8</sup>

---

6 Note, Add Mss 45802 f253.

7 Letter 11 October 1871, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/97; to Dr Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow (1821-1902).

8 Letter 12 October 1871, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/98.

Nightingale sent, at Dr Sutherland's suggestion, a copy of the book to the science journal, *Nature*.<sup>9</sup> To a close nursing colleague Nightingale inscribed a gift copy:

For my dear warrior friend Florence Lees<sup>10</sup> adjuring her to mark, learn and inwardly digest<sup>11</sup> (none can do it better) from all her experience: what proportions (1) practical teaching; (2) scientific teaching and from lectures should bear in the training of: (a) nurses; (b) midwives (a very different proportion), from her devoted friend, Florence Nightingale London 10 October 1871.<sup>12</sup>

Copies also went to friends, for example, Mrs Truelove.<sup>13</sup>

Source: From a letter to C.J.B. Williams, Boston University 2/9

19 October 1871

Remembering how actively you interested yourself in the testimonial to Sir James Simpson, I venture to think that I may send you a copy of my little book on lying-in institutions,<sup>14</sup> and that I may beg for your criticism. You cannot do me a greater service than to criticize it, for the little book is put forth merely to collect opinions.

If I might hope that you would note on the margin with the first word you read—if you are kind enough to read at all—the wants, omissions to be supplied, the alterations, additions required to be made—for a future and (it *is* to be hoped) better edition—I should trust to be able to bring out something better worth offering to you. If you could lay your hand on a letter to me from Sir James Simpson which I lent you (last year, I think), I should be rather glad to have it back. But do not trouble yourself to hunt for it. In great press of business and illness,

but always sincerely yours

Florence Nightingale

9 Note 23 October 1871, Add Mss 45756 f36.

10 Florence Sarah Lees (1840-1922), St Thomas' trained, who nursed in the Franco-Prussian War and was later a leader of district nursing.

11 From the collect for the second Sunday in Advent, Book of Common Prayer.

12 Annotation in copy, Florence Nightingale Museum.

13 Note 21 December 1871, Add Mss 45802 f270.

14 The copy is dedicated "To Dr C.J.B. Williams this little book is offered by an old friend and grateful patient, Florence Nightingale, *begging* for criticism London Oct 10/71" (Boston University).

Source: From a letter to Julius Mohl, ADD Mss 46385 f17

23 October 1871

I have just published a book on Socrates' mothers (not that it will interest you). But could you please tell me Dr Charles Shrimpton's address? You told me it before: rue d'Anjou St Honoré. But how can I tell that they are not all burnt? Also, I want to send a copy to Mme Ida, not at all for her delectation, but to get out of her and her friend ("Otto August,"<sup>15</sup> a lady who sends me booklings) the course of training of Socrates' mothers at Vienna, which is very good. Shall I send book and questions to you (for Madame Ida) or would you kindly send me her name and address in full? unless it is still Villa Czartoryski, near Vienna.

Source: From a letter to Dr J. Braxton Hicks,<sup>16</sup> Boston University 1/5/61

28 November 1871

I trust that the earnest interest I feel in the work which you have been successfully conducting for so long at Guy's Hospital may excuse me, a stranger, in your eyes, for venturing to offer you a little book of mine on lying-in institutions. It is put forward simply as a beggar for criticism and for information. And I should, if I dared, ask you with the first word you read (if you do honour me by reading any part of it) to note on the margin wants, omissions, to be supplied, alterations, additions required for a future and (it *is* to be hoped) better edition. I shall hope at least that you will be kind enough to send me your current annual reports and any larger report, containing your valuable rules and experience at Guy's Hospital—if you would kindly indicate to me where to procure it and by what title, I should instantly begin its study, especially as to the causes of puerperal fever in dwellings, also as to your wise exclusion of students from anatomy rooms and general hospital wards while attending midwifery cases at home, or if a woman has puerperal fever, from *any* attendance for a time.

Your experience has been so very valuable that I trust, Sir, you will pardon this intrusive note from,

your ever faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

---

15 Pseudonym of Viennese feminist Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff, author of books on women's issues.

16 J. Braxton Hicks, lecturer on midwifery at Guy's Hospital.

Source: From a letter to Robert Rawlinson,<sup>17</sup> Wayne State University (8)

Xmas Day 1871

I must thank you for all your kind hints and suggestions and valuable papers on the subject of my *Lying-in Institutions*. All will be carefully considered when I come to my second edition, please God.

### **Response to *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions***

**Editor:** The *British Medical Journal* listed Nightingale's *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions* in Books Received 28 October 1871:516. It published a brief, one-page, anonymous review two weeks later in which Nightingale's findings were given little attention. The reviewer instead gave his own views, complimenting the "authoress" as "a great woman truly, and yet a woman," even one with a "kind womanly heart." Her analysis was "free and easy . . . perfunctory," showing "sublime simplicity" in establishing the "knotty point" of a normal mortality rate for childbirth. The reviewer found her "weakest argument" to be one we would see as being at the heart of her analysis, her non-medical treatment of childbirth as an entirely natural condition. He objected strenuously to her call for an inquiry into the high death rate at births attended by medical professionals. Here he condemned her argument as "purely sentimental . . . yet ingenuously urged as if it were a logical thunderbolt." He also belittled her extensive proposals for hospital reforms<sup>18</sup>

The review in the *Lancet*, however, was enormously favourable, forcefully setting out Nightingale's core facts, arguments and conclusions.<sup>19</sup> It takes exception only with her known antipathy to germ theory: although "far from excluding the influence of 'infection' as a cause of mortality among parturient women, [she] always appears to us to fail to estimate the influence of infection and contagion, as understood by medical men, aright" (641).

Another anonymous review, "Miss Nightingale on 'Lying-in Institutions,'" appeared in the *Medical Times and Gazette* and prompted letters in response from experts: James Matthews Duncan, "The Influence of Aggregation on the Mortality of Lying-in Women," and J. Braxton Hicks, "The Education of Women in Midwifery."<sup>20</sup> Nightingale in fact

---

17 Robert Rawlinson (1810-98), later Sir; civil engineer, a close collaborator from the Crimean War on.

18 *British Medical Journal* 11 November 1871:559.

19 *Lancet* 4 November 1871:640-41.

20 *Medical Times and Gazette* 18 November 1871:625-27 and 25 November 1871: 658-59 respectively. Hicks must have been someone to take very seriously on

had just sent Dr Hicks a copy of the book and asked for advice for a second edition when the review appeared (see p 331 above).

Dr Hicks's letter to the editor in the *Medical Times and Gazette* takes issue with Nightingale's proposal for educating women as "physicians-accoucheuses and not as medical practitioners." While he took neither side as to the desirability of allowing women to learn and practise medicine itself, he objected to Nightingale's solution, while deferring politely to her. The diseases of women, from his experience, require "a still greater knowledge of general medicine than midwifery proper." Nightingale we will see took issue in turn with his construing her proposal to imply allowing women "half educated" to practise. He did, however, make a good point on the expertise required for a woman practitioner to be expert in midwifery and the diseases of women and children (the great majority of the population!).

Nightingale drafted a letter in response to the *Medical Times and Gazette* (6 December 1871), but did not send it. Dr Sutherland in fact suggested that it might be better "to say nothing; if you answer one you might answer all." She should "reply to all in the second edition."<sup>21</sup> Her draft letter is published here (see p 339 below). The day of the unhappy review's appearance she annotated her Bible in two places: Job 38:2 (Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?) and Ecclesiastes 12:8 (Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher), Nightingale added: "The very vanity of vanities—the idolatry of our fellow mortals."<sup>22</sup> Later, at Jeremiah 15:15 ("O Lord, thou knowest: remember me and visit me and revenge me of my persecutors") she added: "O Lord, Thou knowest. 2 December 1871." She added the same date at Jeremiah 20:12 ("But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause").<sup>23</sup>

There are also more consoling annotations. At Zechariah 12:5 ("The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God") Nightingale wrote: "The nurses shall be her strength in the Lord their God. 4 December 1871." At Zechariah 12:10, which refers to pouring on "the spirit of grace and of supplications," she added: "The Spirit of grace and of supplications can alone give us

---

the subject as Guy's Hospital midwifery work, home deliveries, had a very low death rate.

21 Note of Dr Sutherland 6 December 1871, Add Mss 45756 f84.

22 *Spiritual Journal* (2:136 and 166).

23 *Spiritual Journey* (2:217-18).

that desire after holiness, which will ensure our earnest help in prayer for it. 4 December 1871.”<sup>24</sup>

Source: From an exchange with Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 ff55-58

16 November 1871

**FN:** *Notes on Lying-in Institutions*. I have received a great many letters about this book of which I mean to send you a selection—none of them however is much to the purpose—I mean that I had hoped for a good many suggestions, criticisms and informations and have not found them. The enclosed, from a Birmingham man, whom I do *not* know<sup>25</sup> and to whom I had *not* sent a copy, gives some information of the kind of which I had hoped for much more. You see he offers more and in answering I will say anything you might suggest. I will not write to Dr Farr (or send him the *B.M. Journal*) in the sense you propose till you see his letters and others, which I hope to be able to send you when sorted—in a day or two.

**JS:** This is very curious: the reform appears to date from the discussion about the King’s College ward. The chief thing to get now from Birmingham is a carefully kept record. I would suggest that your table be modified to meet their case. It would require only to take out the lines about lying-in wards and substitute a column: state of health thirty days after delivery. I would suggest that they draw up a form of register and ask him to send the form (alluding to the required changes indicated above) and you will look over it for them.

This Birmingham case if well worked will do much good. You might ask for a return showing:

1. the total deliveries up to the present date since the home practice was instituted;
2. the deaths and causes of death with dates;
3. the number of midwives employed.

This would give you a grasp over the immediate facts. Besides, in future statistics, we have yet to decide what deaths are to stand on the puerperal register.

**FN:** Mr Chadwick appears to me to make the most valuable suggestion, which is get out the rate of mortality among *rich* lying-in women, mortality among *poor* lying-in women. (N.B. It is well known that the death rate is higher among the rich; as it is *only* the poor who go to lying-in institutions, this makes *their high death rate the more* atrocious.

---

<sup>24</sup> *Spiritual Journey* (2:228).

<sup>25</sup> Archivist: J.D. Goodman: see his letters.

**JS:** Mr Chadwick, yes! but how can you distinguish *rich* from comfortable, from upper-class workmen from lower class? The only way you could do would be for Dr Farr to take London and run through the births and deaths, taking out empirically the streets of good name in the west end. But what can be done when ladies with London homes are confined in the country? If a few of the west end accoucheurs would send a list of deliveries among the class and the deaths, this might do. We must consult Farr. The thing now to get is the real normal death rate and the class death rate if possible.

**FN:** (N.B. again. A rough calculation of wrong presentations, forceps cases, craniotomy and instrumental cases shows that these vary from two in 100 to three in 100 in most lying-in institutions which keep any statistics at all. How wicked then it is to assign “*twenty-five* deliveries” as the *education* of a midwife, for from ninety-seven to ninety-eight deliveries out of 100 are natural and give her no real practice.)

**JS:** The book will cause great wrath and will do an immense deal of good. It will seal the fate of lying-in hospitals and will prepare for the funerais of some other benevolent idiots.

The Birmingham report leads to the following results. First, that you can work such a charity with ordinary midwives and skilled surgical aid when required. This is really the method in use among the paying working people over a large part of Europe. It is of course specially applicable to towns, but I know it is also in use in English country districts and I have also heard of frightful consequences before the surgeon was called in. The whole argument is in favour of fully training the women to fit them for emergencies.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Dr Farr, Private Collection of Susan Teagle, copy Add Mss 43400 ff266-69

27 November 1871

*Lying-in Statistics.* How long I have been in thanking you for your two kind notes and (in anticipation) for the information which you say you are calling for, anent [regarding] *lying-in death rates*. I want also to consult you about the information which I ought to have for my second edition (if, please God, I do one) and about the most glaring wants which your “expert” eye detects in the first—because the subject is one of everyday importance all over England.

Would it not be desirable in the first place to have much more information about *private practice*? e.g., about the comparative death rate among lying-in women of the upper classes, of the comfortable classes, of the working classes? It is commonly supposed that the death



rate among the first (the rich) is highest.<sup>26</sup> Possibly the great difference between published statistics of private practice may arise partly from this: no kind of data are ever given one of this kind by which one can form even a guess.

One may remark, by the way, that, as it is exclusively women of the poorest class (whose death rate is commonly supposed to be the lowest) who go to the lying-in institutions, this makes *their* high death rate the more inexcusable. But it also partially accounts for the very low death rate of lying-in charities which deliver women *at home*, since these also are of course all hardworking women.

Some few charities have sent me their statistics since my book came out and asked me to advise—especially about keeping records. (One of these, the “Birmingham Lying-in Charity,” which has delivered women *at home* since 1868 with trained midwives, has an astonishingly low puerperal death rate—lower than in the “healthy districts.”)

I dare say that you have already obtained through your registrars a stricter account of the home death rate. Perhaps a circular to the medical profession sent out by you might obtain much information as to such points as these:

1. the cause of death in all cases where a woman has died after delivery;
2. the date up to a month after delivery;
3. the medical attendant to state whether the death was in any way connected with the delivery.

I enclose you a critique in the *British Medical Journal* on the book. To ask your advice about the points for statistics which I have put generally is now my main desire—as no one but you could fix once for all the normal death rate at home—including all deaths and the causes within a month.

Mr Villiers (I wish he were still at the Poor Law Board) has written to me about my little book. It has been suggested to me to get from the present president of the Local Government Board something of the following data (but you know I trust no one but my Patron Saint, which is you): nos. of births, no. of deaths in childbirth for one year amongst the classes following: wives of

1. gentry and professional persons;
2. shopkeepers and middle-class persons;
3. wages classes (a) artisans, (b) labourers;
4. unmarried women;

---

26 Statistics indeed long showed this to be the case.

obtaining (1) total number of births, no. (2) of which were in hospital, no. also [of] deaths from puerperal diseases (a) at home, (b) in hospital, and thus obtaining the proportion of deaths of each class to births of each class, the proportion of deaths at home to deaths in hospital and various other information.

But you know I am like a little boy writing to Aristotle<sup>27</sup> when I write to you and I only put down a few of the data I want in order to ask (and HAVE) from you and also to ask for your opinion how best to obtain (and *improve* the heads of) what I ought to have in order to go on and make progress. (The thing I want now is the *real normal death rate* and the *CLASS death rate* (if possible).

N.B. The analysis of *classes* MAY show that both Mr Rigden of Canterbury and Dr Matthews Duncan are correct. But what an argument for simplicity of life! if women who have servants are not “saved in childbearing.”<sup>28</sup>

2. I think a “soldiers’ hut” for lying-in women as you propose would do good in the metropolitan districts (a “naturary”). And I suggested that Queen Charlotte’s people should try one in their grounds as *against their hospital*. [breaks off]

Source: From two letters to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 ff79-80 and 83-84, the second with his response

1 December 1871

*Notes on Lying-in.* I am now going to collect accounts of the *course of training* at Paris, Vienna and elsewhere chiefly from ladies who have been “extra pupils” at those places. Will you propose a set of questions? I send you a sketch of the sort of questions I wish to ask (not that these will do, for some are leading questions). I do not wish to put *sanitary* questions, of which they know nothing, nor *statistical questions*, of which we know more than they. Nor of course *technical* questions as to the *surgery* of the midwifery—but simply to get a plain simple account of the training and officers.

I have been told that the midwives’ training at Paris, Vienna and Berlin is far better than anything students can get in England in midwifery. Le Fort’s account of the midwives’ training at Paris is defective. At one time all the professors but one were ladies and the “second year’s pupil midwives” became first-rate accoucheuses at Paris.

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle (384-22 BCE), Greek philosopher and scientist.

<sup>28</sup> An allusion to 1 Tim 2:15.

The crown princess, while detesting the unsanitary practices, of which some were on her own person—she has been attended by a midwife of German midwives, says that *our* “Wissenschaft” [knowledge] is their “Unwissenschaft” [un-knowledge] their *midwifery* is so good.

6 December 1871

*Notes on Lying in Institutions.* I send you three critiques: how one does wish for real criticism, for either blame or praise, from someone who knows anything at all about the subject or who at least has read the book, so very defective in so many places as it is.

I do not understand whether you intend the draft or hints for answer to Dr Hicks for the *Medical Times* or not. It appears that my own answer was better. Does not yours seem to say “I don’t wish for a specialty, because I wish for a specialty”?

F.N.

**JS:** *Critiques.* Two are mere notes; the third is, in my view, written by some pupil of Matthews Duncan and is a paying off for your notice of him. The man who wrote it does not understand either the book or the points at issue or the method. I would keep it with the others because there are some ignorances which may be dealt with in a second edition. . . .

As regards the draft letter—I feel with you about it. And after reconsidering the subject, it has occurred to me to suggest whether it would not be better to say nothing. If you answer one you might answer all. The thing is to collect as many facts and opinions as possible with the view of improving the next edition. You see what we want are more facts regarding home practice. If you agree nothing more may be said.

The book is defective just at the point where the criticisms tell, namely, in the scheme of midwifery teaching, and if you can get together good information, as you propose, this point will be met. In short I would reply to all in the second edition.

Dr Hicks’s reports are very good and very interesting and the points you have marked may be safely used afterwards. They are herewith returned.

Source: From a draft letter to the Editor of the *Medical Times*, Add Mss 45802 f259

London

6 December 1871

Dr Braxton Hicks was himself kind enough to point out to me his letter in your no. of 25 November, in which he has with the careful and conscientious wisdom, for which he is so remarkable, found fault with a proposal made for the education of women in midwifery in a little book on lying-in institutions by me.

As far as my proposal was concerned it was intended to provide against that “imperfect education” to which Dr Hicks so very properly takes exception—and in the concluding passages of the Appendix I tried to show clearly what my view was.

It is impossible for anyone to agree more entirely than I do with Dr Hicks, since we hold the same, viz., that the knowledge necessary for the practice of midwifery comprehends many things besides the attendance. My real object was to point out midwifery (including under this term everything required to make women proficient in the department of practice) as the real key to the deadlock to which women and men together seem to be bringing the whole problem of medicine as a career for women—a problem which certainly will not allow itself to be shelved, which will solve itself in spite of if not by means of the authorities, but which now seems drifting into a rather unseemly and unworthy controversy or personal struggle, a *Batrachyomachia*<sup>29</sup> of 1870-89.

In writing as I did I, for one, had not the most remote idea of recommending another “specialty,” to which we have an equal objection, Dr Hicks and I, if he will allow me thus to use the brotherly pronoun “we.”

**Editor:** One can only surmise that Dr Hicks’s criticism had its intended impact on Nightingale. She continued to show a preference in principle for a woman-led midwifery profession but she never campaigned openly for it. She never sent the response she drafted to the *Medical Times and Gazette*. She of course continued to consider that women needed as thorough training as men for medical practice. Support for women to be admitted to medical schools and be permitted to practise was the obvious solution and we shall see Nightingale increasingly

---

29 A mythical battle between the frogs and mice in a mock epic poem of ancient Greece.

coming on side. Private remarks favouring midwifery as a woman's profession continue to appear, but she did not go back to the very odd idea of letting the matter settle itself in at least "a century" (see p 56 above).

Source: From a letter to Dr Farr, Private Collection of Susan Teagle, copy ADD Mss 43400 f270

11 December 1871

*F.N.'s Notes on Lying-in Institutions. Private.*

I am always so sorry to trouble you when it is merely to trouble you that I do not write, especially when I fear that you are not quite well. On this occasion, when everything seems so sad, may I write just to ask you (and no more) whether you might not call someone's attention to the statement in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, which I enclose, p 550, as to the "inaccuracy" or "fallaciousness" of the Registrar-General's returns, with the view to notice being taken of this in the *Lancet*?

An attempt is made in Matthews Duncan's book to impugn the truthfulness of the Registrar-General's returns. But in the present article the man talks of "well-known" "fallaciousness." If you would just deal with this point, though of course you *may* think it quite unnecessary to notice it, it might do good. I mean to reserve my answer to all the attacks which have been made for my second edition.

Source: From a note and a letter to Dr Sutherland with his response, ADD Mss 45756 f97 and 103

12 December 1871

*Notes on Lying-in Institutions. Dr Farr.* You will probably like to see these extremely interesting papers of Dr Farr's just as they are. You will see *he asks for remarks.*

**JS:** These papers are very interesting, but I should say to Farr that they appear not altogether to reach the points at issue.

17 December 1871

*Dr Snow Beck.* I send you his curious letter and two papers. *What shall I answer?* (I don't know him.)

Is it not curious that a man who has evidently got hold of some good points of observation should have come to this conclusion from them all, that a dose of ergot of rye (which midwives are justly blamed for giving and which I believe it is an invariable rule in all lying-in charities that neither midwife nor student shall ever give without the physician's

order<sup>30</sup>) that a dose of ergot of rye should be the real preservative from all puerperal diseases, all hospital influence even King's College's?

**Editor:** A letter by H. Beigel of Vienna asked Nightingale for a paper on her hospital work, which they would translate, a request she passed on to Dr Sutherland.<sup>31</sup>

The following excerpt from a letter to Jane Senior, the first woman inspector, on whom see p 784 below, is difficult to place as it takes up the issues of registration, training and opportunities for girls in workhouses.

Source: From a letter to Jane Senior, Clendening History of Medicine Library, Kansas University Medical Center

28 January 1873

*Training school for midwives* (a suggestion made by the kind permission of Mr Stansfeld)

The "Medical General Council" recommend that a system of registration of midwives should be adopted—hence the idea (Mr Ernest Hart and Co.'s idea) that the Privy Council under which the General Medical Council stands should be the department to initiate any scheme for educating midwives. But the question of registration cannot at present be entertained because there is *nobody to register*. For there are no proper means of training.

Have the Privy Council anything to do with medical training beyond the rules for examination? or any means for initiating such a plan as a school for midwives? What is wanted is a model training school for midwives (at present there is no ground for *examination* or *registration*.) Any opportunity that can be made available for introducing this to the public WITH AUTHORITY should be sought for.

The Local Government Board have—have not they? a distinct ground for requiring such a school, viz., the supply of midwives for workhouse infirmaries. (Could any other government department, such as the Privy Council, take up the subject except on the general score of public health—a *too* general score?) as I need not say to you. It would be the most conceited thing in the world, if it were not the one I am most disinclined to, for me to give *you* hints—you who have done so much for the boarding out in families—the greatest step of all in favour of these poor girls who are to be our future mothers.

---

30 Ergot of rye was sometimes used to induce miscarriages.

31 Letter 9 December 1871 to Nightingale, ADD Mss 45756 f128; her letter to Dr Sutherland 23 December 1871, ADD Mss 45756 f126.

I would think it a privilege to see you—if I thought I could be of the slightest use. But besides that I do not think so, I am at this moment engaged (not exactly in a similar inquiry but) in seeing all the nurses-and-matrons-in-training of our nurse training schools *every day* and am pretty nearly worn out—not having yet got a third through the whole. But, if any point arises in which you think I could be of the slightest use, please command me. Write to me first what it is and then command my best consideration and answer—either by word of mouth or letter I give you joy. Or rather I give Mr Stansfeld and the girls joy.

**Editor:** Nightingale and Sutherland continued to discuss how best to train midwives after publication of the book. Both saw more difficulties than conclusions. Sutherland considered that the Vienna, Berlin and Paris systems were all “just as good or bad as any other.” He thought it unlikely “that the present systems can be improved much. What they want is pulling down and rebuilding on another foundation.” Missing were “the element of conscience both in the training and management. Or it may be ignorance or uncivilization,” both in the case of young men, yet “(saving your presence) I fear a college of young women would fare rather worse than better.” Nightingale responded: “At least it is *less* easy to educate a woman out of a man than a woman out of a woman. I therefore think women physicians will not come out of men physicians so likely as out of accoucheuses or midwives.”<sup>32</sup>

Sutherland, however, did see merit in Elizabeth Blackwell’s proposal,<sup>33</sup> which Nightingale did not, as the following correspondence and exchanges show.

Source: Letter of Dr Sutherland to Nightingale, Add Mss 45756 ff132-33

War Office  
6 January 1872

What a very interesting paper this of Miss Blackwell’s is! It was worth all the trouble to bring out the information. I must say that I agree with her. After reading this the idea of a specialty must be given up unless it is connected by law with the aid of male practice as in France.

They simply propose to train women to do with comparative safety what they would otherwise do most dangerously, and their education

---

32 Exchange with Sutherland c1872, Add Mss 45756 f179.

33 See her letter 31 December 1871, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC2/V30/71.

has for one of its objects to let women know when there is danger, and then the law holds them responsible if they do not call in male aid. Practically, the bearing of the information on your school is very important.

The law will not compel any women you may train to call in male aid, and hence you must either confine your work solely to nursing at the bedside where the patient is delivered by a man, or else you must make provision for training in midwifery on a basis of previous medical education laid either by your institution or in a medical school. If you adopt this latter course you will have to require certificates of medical competency before you admit women to your midwifery training.

The additional questions Miss B. proposes are important but I believe the reply will be that half a century ago or more there was less difference in knowledge between female and male accoucheurs than now, and this simply because medical training has been making great strides among men, and women have been kept simply to midwifery work.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, with his response, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/1

23 January 1872

*Dr Braxton Hicks.* I wish you would have made some observation on the enclosed<sup>34</sup> when I sent it you. It is the first attempt to prevent any drunken old female from practising as midwife, though absolutely ignorant—but what an attempt! They call a “*skilled midwife*” a person who can conduct “*natural labours*” as if *any* EDUCATED *midwife* would come to be examined for such a certificate!! e.g., what good would it be to *us*?

F.N.

**JS:** I did not sanction this for the reason that it was carried and that it made no difference in your proposals for training. I should just go on and let this and all similar things take their course. If we are to contend against proposals like this we must have a double allotment of life.

Source: From a letter to Dr Braxton Hicks, Wellcome Ms 5482/93

27 January 1872

Again I must say: I cannot thank you enough for your never-to-be-forgotten kindness in supplying me with invaluable information upon this subject of home lying-in statistics and in so generously offering to

---

34 Obstetrical Society of London, Plan for the Examination of Midwives Recommended by the Council for the Adoption of the Society, 27 December 1871, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/2.



procure more which, but for you, would be unattainable. I do most eagerly close with your kind offer out of your “consulting practice” to obtain “privately the amount of deaths during the *past year*.” Suppose “I could” (you kindly say) “before three months are over obtain those of twenty, probably equalling 100 each, in town and country—this would be an instalment.” It would indeed—I do not know whether I anyway should bring out a “second edition” of my little book on “lying-in institutions” (which you are good enough to inquire) “before three months hence,” but I know that it would be quite worthwhile for me to wait even a longer time for so precious an “instalment.”

I will therefore most thankfully *snatch* at your offer. I have carefully studied the most useful packet you were kind enough to send me. Do you think that this form (the Ms one I reinclose) would be better for having the *date* of death, although that would appear in the “result-date” certainly, and also some provision for registering the state of the lying-in woman thirty days after delivery? I see however that you think this test insufficient. I beg to enclose a printed form of registry which the Birmingham Lying-in Charity have adopted at my instance and to ask you whether you would think well of this?

I am certainly grateful to you for your remarks on the first part of my little book. Doubtless you are right as to the general pathology of puerperal fever. But this may be almost an impertinent thing for *me* to agree with you—since I do not of course consider mine a competent opinion on the *medical* aspects of childbirth. I am the more obliged to you for giving me yours, the experience and ability brought to bear upon your practice being so very large. If I could make your conclusions more *popularly* known in any new edition of my little book this in itself would be a thing worth doing.

I must again apologize, though I will not weary you with repeating this, for the unavoidable causes which have delayed my answer and beg you to believe me,

ever your faithful and grateful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: Summary from a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/2

9 February 1872

I can scarcely help alluding to what you once said as to your regret at ever having had lying-in women at K.C.H. If there was fault, it was mine—because I was supposed to know more about hospital statistics.

And bitterly have I repented it. Had I known then M Husson's general hospital lying-in ward statistics at Paris, I never would have done it. But these very statistics were only brought out at our request. And so with a great many others. I believe it is morbid, now the thing is done (though of course evil should never be done knowingly that good might come) not to see the good that has come. Thousands of lives of poor lying-in women will be saved by the attention that has been aroused—just as, we will be assured, good sanitary legislation will proceed this session, preventing typhoid fever from sewer gas out of the prince of Wales having been all but killed by it.<sup>35</sup>

**Editor:** Mary Jones, in response to Nightingale's sending her a copy of the book:

I must not let you imagine that I have forgotten all about your *Notes on Lying-in Hospitals* and your request that I would note in the margin anything which would be desirable to mention in another edition, though it is most improbable that anything of any value will occur to me now I am quite out of the way of the actual working, and so not likely to add to any practical knowledge I had of the work.<sup>36</sup>

### Questionnaire on Midwifery Training on the Continent

**Editor:** Probably early in 1872 Nightingale set out to obtain further information on midwifery practices on the Continent, certainly Paris, Vienna and Berlin, if not also St Petersburg. Nightingale used women contacts, Ida Schmidt-Zabierow (Julius Mohl's niece) and feminist author Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff to get through to practising midwives in Vienna. It seems Nightingale asked Elizabeth Blackwell for assistance with Paris material (her letter to Blackwell is missing but Blackwell's reply has survived). Differences with Dr Sutherland as to Blackwell's proposal indeed crisscross the correspondence on the Continental material.

Nightingale perhaps wrote Dr Shrimpton in Paris for a letter of his told her that he had no knowledge of the present state of the Maternité, but doubted that there had been any more improvement than in other hospitals. The training of midwives, sages-femmes, "laisse beaucoup à désirer [leaves much to be desired]." He congratulated her on

35 The prince of Wales (1841-1910), later Edward VII, in 1871 nearly died of typhoid fever from sewer gas while staying at a friend's country house.

36 Letter of Mary Jones 13 February 1872, ADD Mss 47744 f204.

“the invaluable service” rendered by “your last condensed and powerful work on *Lying-in Institutions*,” which he had read with “avidity.”<sup>37</sup>

Two slightly different versions of the questionnaire exist, one with answers given, for Berlin, the third item below; the other, questions only and numbered differently, is ADD Mss 45802 ff260-65. The intention of the data collection of course was the projected second, more comprehensive, edition of the lying-in book, which Nightingale never produced.

Source: From a letter to Auguste von Littrow-Bischoff, Wellcome Ms 5482/95

Madam

9 March 1872

I should scarcely have ventured to hope that you would have remembered one to whom you were so kind as to send, rather more than three years ago, your valuable sketch on the domain of women,<sup>38</sup> but Mme Ida Schmidt-Zabierow encourages me to do so. And she also thinks that you will not disdain a copy of a little book of mine on *Lying-in Institutions*, which I hasten to lay at your feet—by no means thinking that the midwifery part of it will interest you—but only hoping that, as your great subject is how to raise and educate and employ women, you may find some attraction in the object we have in England to make midwifery a career for educated women. In this the instruction given at Vienna and Berlin used to be far before that of England. Indeed there is not now at this moment any recognized course in London which a woman must go through before she can act as midwife. And I have hoped that you would perhaps kindly furnish me with a simple sketch (in answer to questions) to be obtained from the authorities of the Midwives’ Clinique at Vienna of the instruction and examinations required there.

But I have not ventured to send these alarming questions to you. If you are graciously disposed toward a view of our necessities, I refer you to Mme Ida Schmidt-Zabierow, to whom I have sent them, knowing that from her hand may be acceptable that which I could not presume would be tolerable from mine, though I am aware of your great kindness in permitting applications to you.

Mme Schmidt-Zabierow has been good enough to send me the compte rendu [review] of last year of your *Frauen Erwerb Verein*, which,

---

37 Letter 24 February 1872, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC2/V6/72.

38 This dedicated copy of her 1868 *Die Sociale Bewegung auf dem Gebiete der Frauen* was given to the British Library.

I need not say—and its great usefulness—have interested me extremely. I wish it all the progress in prosperity it deserves—which is saying a great deal!

And now, trusting, Madam, that you will favourably receive my very humble little book, nor think me too presumptuous, permit me to call myself (though in great press of business and illness)

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: Translated summary of Frau von Littrow's letter, not in Nightingale's hand, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/8

April 1872

You will receive in the appendix written answers to your questions from the celebrated practising ladies' doctor (of Vienna) Professor Späth, professor at the university here, and clinical lecturer in his department of midwifery.

She is however sorry to say that she does not consider him a competent judge in the matter as he has no idea of the intellectual advance of the women of the present generation, etc., and considers the dependent condition of woman as one of the essential conditions of social life. She considers these remarks necessary because she has introduced him to you as her guarantee *Gewährsmann* and thinks his unfavourable opinion ought to be put in its proper light.

Besides conversations with several physicians, she questioned the midwife of the empress, Frau Gruber, celebrated as a practitioner on whose information she can rely, who expressed herself very strongly as to the insufficiency, *Armseligkeit* [wretchedness] of the instruction which the midwives obtain, and the lot of useless women, bad work-women and raw girls who, accordingly, turn to a profession which was to be learnt in five months. That naturally nothing was to be learnt in so short a time, even to perform the smallest operation or to make use of any instrument, was not allowed, but the thing would be different if women were permitted the opportunity of obtaining greater knowledge, etc.

Then she cites as an example "that the states of Siebenbürgen at the request of one of their communes sent an educated woman to Vienna who had obtained the right to attend the complete course of *assistant accoucheurs*, Geburtshelfer, and had shown herself capable of performing even the difficult operations in the most satisfactory manner." As another example that the necessary physical power is not wanting to women, she cites the cases of Mary Safford from Chicago

and Susan Dimmock from Boston, the female physicians,<sup>39</sup> acquaintances of hers, who had resided in Vienna for some years. After some further remarks she says she cannot recommend that a midwives' institute, such as it exists in Deutschland, should be transplanted to England. What is wanted is a model school for real accoucheuses in addition to an institute for monthly nurses. She refers to the institute of Geburtshelfer, which gives a medico-surgical teaching based upon less knowledge than is required for the medical profession and entitling the students to the degree only of Magister and not to that of Doctor. She would send you the regulations and statutes of the institution, if useful, as well as the prescribed "Lehrbuch" [manual] for midwives.

She sends you an original certificate which Frau Gruber has begged her to place in your hands in order to testify her respect for you, hopes you have received her letter of the 19th of March. She ends with some general sentiments.

Source: Questionnaire on midwifery training, with answers for Berlin, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/4

April 1872

*Training of Midwives.* Would you be so very good as to furnish me with a general account of the midwifery instruction at the Midwives' Clinique, Berlin (or at any other midwives' school) including as full information as you may be pleased to give on the following points. The answers were kindly given by *Dr Gottwald*, assistant of the Lying-in Station of the *Charité* in Berlin [inserted].

1. Duration of training before certificates of competency are granted? [Answer:] The course of instruction takes five months from 1st October to the end of February. Then the midwives have to pass an examination before three examiners (two from government and the teacher of the midwives) and a certificate of competency is given to those who pass.

2. If, e.g., there be a two years' course for first-class midwives, a one year's course for second-class midwives, please state differences and tests, by examination or otherwise, for the two courses.

[Answer:] In Prussia there is but *one* class of midwives.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Jane Safford (1834-91), graduate of the New York Medical College for Women, first woman to perform an ovariectomy after training at Breslau, professor of women's diseases at Boston University; Susan Dimmock (1847-75), resident physician at the New England Hospital for Women and Children until her death by shipwreck at age twenty-eight.

3. Whether during training instruction is given in anatomy? If so, how? by models? by drawings? by dissections? by lectures?

[Answer:] A short abregé of anatomy and physiology is taught, first theoretically, afterwards with skeletons, with [illeg] alcohol and with models. The pupils have to assist at two or three dissections of lying in-women and children.

4. Also, if this instruction be given, by whom? by a professor? (a) a man? (b) a woman? by an assistant? (a) a man? (b) a woman?

[Answer:] A professor gives one hour lecture a day; besides two hours' practical instruction are given every week by him and his assistant in the examination of pregnant women, and presentations on models—the operations are shown on models too. The midwives have one hour's repetition every day.

5. Are there oral examinations? or written reports or exercises?

6. By what method is efficiency in this anatomical knowledge estimated? By marks? or otherwise?

[Answer (5 and 6):] When the professor has explained a paragraph of the Hebammen Lehrbuch [Midwifery Manual] and the head midwife has repeated it to and with the pupils, the teacher himself examines them orally to see if they have understood and retained his lecture. The same is done with the practical performances.

7. What instruction in the elements of midwifery is given before pupil midwife is allowed to deliver a case herself? by the bedside? by lectures? by models? by drawings?

[Answer:] 7 is best answered by the here-joined *Lehrbuch*, which is the law for the midwives. As long as they act according to the ordinances given in it, they cannot be accused in *any* case.

8. By whom is this instruction given? by a head midwife? by an assistant? by second-year's pupil midwives? by a professor (a) man? (b) woman? or assistant professor?

[Answer:] 3 and 4 will answer questions 7 and 8.

9. How long does this instruction continue before pupil is admitted to deliver a lying-in woman herself?

[Answer:] Five months.

10. What instruction is given respecting accidents of labour? and how to deal with them?—respecting unnatural or unusual presentations, including performance of operations?

[Answer:] As soon as an anomaly is noticed with a woman in labour the accoucheur (or the assistant) is called in and he will make use of

the occasion to explain to the pupils the anomaly, tell them what is to be done and let them be his assistants if an operation is necessary.

11. Also, on diseases of childbed and of infants?

[Answer:] The lying-in woman and the infants receive three medical visits a day. They are nursed by the pupils according to the ordinances of the medical man. The pupils are instructed how to discern cases of illness and to decide when the doctor is to be called in or not.

12. State, please, what, if any, are the other branches of study?

[Answer:] None.

13. What opportunities are given for post-mortem examinations?—for dissections?—whether at the same or at different times and places (from or as midwifery practice?)

[Answer:] During last year's course pupils had to assist *three* dissections of lying-in women and *one* of an infant. The assistant explained the anatomical circumstances to them.

14. In what manner and where is the pupil first allowed to practise? and under whose direction? whether allowed at once to take charge of a case, or only partially and under superintendence?

[Answer:] Every pupil has to give the necessary assistance in the institution at seven (during last winter's course at nine and eleven) births, first under direction, later only in the presence of the midwives of the institution, and has to learn and practise the nursing of these mothers and infants under the direction and control of the doctor and the midwives of the house.

15. Suppose a case of difficulty to arise in the pupil's hands, how, by whom, is she instructed to deal with it?

16. How is the use of instruments in such cases taught at the bedside? and by whom?

17. During the practical training of pupils how is oral instruction by lectures given on the cases?

18. What is the practical instruction at the bedside given (a) in midwifery wards, (b) at lying-in women's own homes?

19. In what manner is an estimate formed of fitness of pupil to undertake midwifery practice? including length of course? nature of oral and written examinations? number of examinations? by whom conducted?

20. Likewise what personal attendance is required on what number of labours? what number of these must have been difficult or complicated in character? What is the number of labours (a) normal, (b) abnormal, a pupil midwife must conduct to obtain a certificate (a) first-class, (b) second-class?

21. Please state the nature and extent of general education in medical science and practice required of candidates for midwifery certificates with the kind and number of lectures and instructions which have to be followed?

22. Please append copy of rules for training midwives, also, if possible, of diploma or certificate.

23. Where do pupil midwives reside? (a) in the institution? (b) in private lodgings? What disciplinary rules are in use? and by whom administered? what fees paid, etc.

[Answer:] All the pupil midwives reside in the institution where they have their board and lodging. Their number is thirty-two. They pay 50 Thaler including the fees for the course of instruction. They are not allowed without leave of absence to quit the house or to miss the lectures, especially the hours of repetition. The discipline is managed by the director, in his absence by his assistant, and in his absence by the head midwife.

24. Please state of what the teaching staff consists: head midwives, assistant midwives, professors (a) men, (b) women, or lecturers. Is the head midwife also a lecturer?

[Answer:] The staff consist of the director (professor-man), his assistant (accoucheur-man), two midwives who have to carry on the repetitions and to direct in cases of normal labour. The head midwife does not give lectures.

25. If possible, please give approximately number of abnormal deliveries, e.g., wrong presentations and versions, forceps, craniotomy and other instrumental cases, accidents, e.g., hemorrhage, rupture of uterus, etc., percent of total deliveries?

26. What has been the relative proportion of midwifery cases attended by (a) men, (b) women each year during the last ten years?

27. Has the course of instruction been *enlarged* or *curtailed* within the last twenty years? In what directions?

28. If you would be kind enough to state any improvements which in your opinion might be effected in the training course any points in which in your opinion it fails, you would be greatly adding to our obligation to you for answering these questions.

Florence Nightingale



Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 ff184-87

13 May 1872

*Berlin and Vienna Midwives' Cliniques.* I was at a loss to understand your critique on these papers, till I perceived (1) that you had not read them, (2) that you had forgotten the purpose for which they had been procured and the previous correspondence. You say: "is it possible to build up a real training school" with "religion and conscience as a basis, etc.?" "This is the question." This is *not* the "question" *at all*. You do not think that I should go to Austria and Prussia for "questions" of "religion and conscience." We *had* "religion and conscience" at K.C.H. under Miss Jones. And if I form a new midwives' training school, I shall be thankful if I obtain as much "religion and conscience" as she did.

You do not think that *I* am trying to reform the *Vienna and Berlin* training schools for midwives on a "basis of religion and conscience" or on any "basis." I should be only fit for a lunatic asylum if I did. And they never asked me. They asked me to give them an organization for a *nurses'* training school and I did so and have been thanked. And as Ida (née Mohl) is to take it in hand, I have some faint hopes. As to *midwives'* training, I asked, *in accordance with what you and I settled together*, for information, merely for information, as to the Berlin and Vienna *midwives'* training, in the form of answers to *questions prepared by you and me together*, to be published in the second edition of my book—for us or any to gain practical knowledge from as to the training necessary, if we (or any) formed a school. These I sent you.

2. The method at Berlin appears to me slightly better than that at Vienna. But in this point I should not venture to give an opinion. But I cannot conceive what you mean by classing *Paris* with Vienna and Berlin as to *training*, since I have your own letter on Miss Blackwell's last January.

3. I have not the least idea of "improving the present systems" at Vienna and Berlin—still less at Paris. Is it likely?

N.B. I cannot conceive the extent of deterioration which, as Miss Blackwell hinted, must have taken place. Since none, not even the Paris school, *as they are* could possibly produce midwives such as we know have existed at Berlin and Vienna as well as at Paris, quite rivalling men, both in skill, in theory and in extent of their practice.

This continues a mystery. And it is rather awkward for me after I have said—no more than the truth as to German and French accoucheuses—in my book—*then* to put forward these miserable abortions of schools at Vienna and Berlin.

Source: From two letters to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 ff194-95, and Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/6

16 May 1872

*Midwives' Cliniques.* I understood your second note as little as I did the first, but I suppose that you wish to have the papers again (as you said you would) now increased by the *Berlin* Midwives' Manual, which is come, also by a *Vienna* lady's letter which I did not send you (Frau v. Littrow) in which she mentions the "empress's midwife," who sends a message to me and does not approve of the Vienna Midwives' Clinique. Now what I want to know is, where did *that* "empress midwife" get her education?

For she and a number of high-class midwives like her, whom we know to exist on the Continent, are just the sort of women I mean, whom I wish to exist here (with improvements), not these wretched Späth midwives. Do you wish to see the papers?

**Editor:** Dr Sutherland's reply, written on the page with the same date, argued that the quality of the women trained came not from the training itself, but "natural qualification and character."

24 May 1872

*Midwives' Cliniques.* So far from thinking with you that we have got all the information in our power, I have written to my three correspondents, Frau von Littrow, Vienna; Frau von Schmidt-Zabierow, Vienna; Mme Helmholtz, Berlin, begging them to obtain for me an account of where the empress of midwives was educated, Vienna, an account of the "Geburtshelfer" Institute where it seems they do receive educated women to train, Vienna, and of similar institutions at Berlin. I enclose Frau v. Littrow's letter and an abridgment in English.

She clearly shows that there *are* high-class midwives in Austria. I also enclose the Berlin "Lehrbuch" which you have not seen and other letters and papers for reference, some of which you have not seen. And I have others still, which I will send you, if you like.

Source: Exchanges with Dr Sutherland on Dr Blackwell's proposal, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/172/18

27 June 1872

**FN:** *Please return to F.N. Dr Sutherland*, you will probably wish to go much deeper into the question than these generalia. Nevertheless do not destroy *this*—but return it to me with the rest, when you write your final opinion.

F.N.

I have “written on the margin,” as you desired, “returning the paper to you for further consideration,” as you desired.

It appears that midwives in France, Prussia and Austria occupy a legal position, having privileges and responsibilities. This is not the case in England. Any woman may get instruction how she can, may, practise to the extent to which people will employ her and any accidents which might arise in her hands would be judged of by a jury.

2. Unless our law were altered to provide instruction for midwives and to bring them under some kind of rule it would not be possible to introduce such a system as prevails in Prussia.

**FN:** Nor desirable.

**JS:** 3. Sole question, therefore, related to training for free practice in England. And to do this it would be necessary to teach the pupil the whole breadth not only of her professional but of her moral responsibilities, the latter of which are only recalled to the foreign midwife by the laws of her country.

4. Professional training must depend of course on the kind of mind. I prefer the French method described by Miss Blackwell, but it is not clear to me that it would answer for German women. . . .

8. Bearing these points in mind, it appears to me that an English midwifery school must differ from either of those for which you have obtained information.

**FN:** Certainly this is *nem con* [nothing against].

**JS:** You *can* give some instruction to a woman of ordinary ability in five or six months. But you could not depend on her for any but simple cases.

**FN:** Natural labours. This is what we did at K.C.H. but we scrupulously certified them as midwifery *nurses* only (because of the deficiency of “the law.” We would not call them midwives ever (unlike Q. Charlotte’s certificate).

**JS:** You might get women who after six months’ ordinary teaching would make first-rate practitioners without any close college at all. And on the other hand you might be obliged to take material out of which very little could be made. . . .

**FN:** If by “first-rate practitioners” you mean real accoucheuses. I do not believe that “six months” of *any* teaching could make a heaven-born genius into one. I thought we agreed on this. Paris gives two years—though a portion go away after one year.

**JS:** As you could not undertake to make women first doctors and then midwives you would have to hitch your instruction as high as

your time would admit. I should feel disposed to take twelve months as the teaching period.

**FN:** *Two years*, if for anything more than the midwifery *nurse*. . . .

(I believe *this*, to make women “first doctors and then midwives,” is Miss Blackwell’s view.)

**FN:** This is not a practical difficulty if we are to judge from our experience at K.C.H. We were, if you call *this* being “*sought after*” beset with *ladies* applying to enter for *one!* three, four months!! to practise afterwards as physician-accoucheuses!! upon our certificate. Of course we declined, not only to certify but even to admit on these terms. These *ladies* then went to Queen Charlotte’s. And one at least I know who, upon a *one* month’s certificate from Q.C., *without* any other education, went out to practise in India as physician-accoucheuse!! But there were others too—I believe the average time is *three months* on which Q. Charlotte’s certificate is granted as midwife!!!

Certainly. But I should not undertake, even by asking a professional person, to compile a midwifery manual—I don’t think that this comes within my sphere—much less to put a manual into the hands of “ordinary English midwives.”

**JS:** How would it do in order to arrive at a practical result to ask Miss Blackwell who has undergone the training to draw up the heads of a *method* and then to get opinions and experience on it from accoucheurs?

**FN:** Dr Braxton Hicks has already given a similar opinion. Give the woman a man’s general medical education, he says. Or don’t let her practise midwifery at all.

11. The Hebammenbuch appears to be very complete. It would be almost too much for the ordinary English *midwife*. But a similar book would be absolutely necessary. . . .

**FN:** 12. I think Miss Blackwell has answered this question already. She gives as her opinion that the ordinary medical education given to *men* should be given to *women*—and that this is the only solution to the question—with or without a year at Paris—or some similar midwives’ school (which is what she gave herself). (I am not surprised—I only state her case). . . .

*We could always have had as many “ladies” as we liked.* (I believe Miss Blackwell would say the converse of your expression. Make the woman “first a doctor and then a midwife.”) Miss Jones—Miss Jones could say nothing but “Do as I do.” You can’t write down what is to be done in moral training. It is a matter of -- *training*. Miss Jones and Miss Tor-

rance<sup>40</sup> (perhaps the last the best), are *accomplished moral* trainers. Either of these would *make* a school by being *at its head personally*.

(It would make some moral difficulty but not much, if “ladies” were admitted. We only admitted one, Miss Osburn, at our midwifery school at K.C.H. and did not certify her of course. But Miss Torrance has ladies under her and will have more, that is, as nurses. And it makes no difficulty under such a head as she is.)

**JS:** 14. Could you by your Trust devote the interest of the Fund to anything besides nurse training? You could no doubt train midwifery nurses but could you train midwives? I mentioned this point when your book was passing through the press, which then struck me that the changes you had made in the Ms really involved the establishment of a midwifery college. . . .

**FN:** 13. 14. 15. We do not even dream of building—either by means of the N. Fund—or by collecting subscriptions—or in any other way. Nothing would induce me to such an undertaking, were I as well as I am ill. (If we did begin a school, it would be by taking the healthiest of the London workhouse lying-in wards—probably Marylebone; St Pancras’ was pressed upon us. But we *certainly* should not build.)

**FN:** 14. The Trust Deed, drawn up by us, prevents building. As for its preventing us from “training midwives,” I take it it could do no such thing. England willfully persists in ignoring the difference between *midwifery nursing* and *midwifery*. All her lying-in hospitals do so in their certificates. It was I who established the difference. Therefore, if I were able to establish a school and have two certificates, one for midwifery nurses, one for midwives (who would *pay*), I take it, there could be no legal difficulty on the part of the Trust.

**JS:** But as you can no longer add a midwifery ward to a general hospital, thereby avoiding separate costs, it appears to me that the fundamental question is really a money one.

**FN:** No, but we could (and should) take a *workhouse* lying-in ward. (I thought we agreed on this.)

**JS:** 15. If you had £50,000 subscribed to buy land and build and furnish (not a sufficient sum I fear) then you could out of these papers, Hebammen Buch, etc., frame a very efficient scheme. . . .

**JS:** It would be better to affiliate such a school to the Medical Council for registration and certificates and eventually the council

---

40 Elizabeth Anne Torrance, later Dowse (c1836-?), matron at the Highgate Infirmary.

might deem it desirable to get an act passed to regulate the practice of midwifery, as it has been done with pharmacists.

**FN:** 15. *Answered above.* I would not undertake to have an English midwives' manual drawn up. That must be done by the *medical heads*, if we ever have a school, or if anyone else sets up a school.

**JS:** As a practical conclusion and by way of seeing how the land lies, you might if you think well of it ask *Miss Blackwell* by way of information *for her views* on this training question.

16. Very likely. But need we discuss this now?

**FN:** 17. *Answered above.* *Miss Blackwell's "views,"* as I understand them, are that the ordinary male medical education should be given to women. And this is what I should expect of her. I have never known her enter in the least into any idea that there could be reform. I believe she would say London medical student (*female*) = physician-acoucheuse. Paris élève sage femme = midwife (not accoucheuse). If you wish to combine the two educations I, *Miss Blackwell*, can think of no better education than *the one* engrafted *on the other*.

17. I can ask *Miss Blackwell*, if you like, But I believe what I have stated is *her "view."*

**JS:** You would have to explain the arrangement with King's College and St John's House and get them to admit a somewhat similar disciplinary system into their lying-in department. . . .

3 July 1872

Is not this merely saying: do just as was done so well at K.C.H. *minus* the K.C.H. ward. Or in other words leave out what is to be left out and put in what is to be put in (which is just what we intended). Put your hat on your head and your shoes on your feet.

**FN:** Of course. We would never undertake, at least during my life, any training of any, "ladies" or others, for midwifery or any nursing, without their *residing* under our matron, in our quarters, under our Rules. Is not his merely saying that Mr H. Bonham Carter who has made all our agreements so well—whether with K.C.H., St T.'s, Poor Law infirmary at Highgate, or elsewhere, should do the same again? Make your agreement, *mutatis mutandis*, is all that is here said, is it not?

You might expect as a rule a succession of trained midwifery nurses competent without dash or flourish or brass plates on their door to undertake to nurse any midwifery case in charge of an accoucheur or to decline *secundum artem* the usual run of uncomplicated cases.

**FN:** Certainly, but this is merely saying: *do what you did do*, is it not?

4 July 1872

I see in today's *Times* an advertisement: "Nurses for private cases properly trained in midwifery *at a moment's notice*." *That* is the institution for me. It beats Vienna and Berlin hollow with their six months and even Q. Charlotte's with its one month.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45757 ff58-59

24 January 1873

*Queen Charlotte's Hospital*. It is singularly unfortunate, I think, that the answer should have been put off so long—I have only just received the enclosed from Henry B.C. and think it better to forward the whole to you.

Certainly it seems as if the *W.C.s* were different from those in the plan of Q.C.'s in my *Notes* and outside the wall. In their printed paper, which I enclose, you will see that they carefully omit "mortality." But, since the reconstruction, some of the highest mortalities: 81.2, 70.3, 54.2, have been recorded. See p 40 of my *Notes*, i.e., *since* "1857, when the new hospital was built" (see their printed paper). That is, I have given, though incidentally, as one reason a reason which no longer exists and still the high mortality exists. They had better have let it alone.

Please return the whole to me *with your suggestions*.

### **Proposal for the Registration (Certification) of Midwives**

**Editor:** The issue of the registration of midwives seems to have emerged first in 1872. It reappeared in 1876 and continued to be considered at various stages until 1902 when legislation was adopted, well after Nightingale's last involvement on the subject. Nightingale was opposed to the various proposals made, although not opposed to registration in principle. She understood that there was much subject material on which midwives could be properly examined, which was not, in her view, the case for nursing. Here the obstacle lay in the need to bring women into an institution for giving birth in order to train midwives.

In the material below we see Nightingale's fear that legislation to register midwives might proceed without provision for the necessary training. Yet there was no apparent way to ensure adequate training without establishing lying-in institutions. Throughout all the time that proposals for registration were being considered, there was as yet no safe way of providing midwifery services without risking excessive maternal mortality.

We have here, but only in part, a foreshadowing of the conflict over the registration of nurses in the 1890s, a subject of the second nursing volume. Unnecessarily high mortality was a risk in providing midwifery services, but there was no comparable risk in the provision of nursing training.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Acland, Bodleian Library, Oxford University

Embley, Romsey  
27 February 1872

*Private.* Your note with its enclosure addressed to me at my brother-in-law's, Sir Harry Verney's, has only just reached me here where I am come to be with my mother during my father's absence—she being somewhat infirm, though I may really say with joy not so much so as I am. I fear that this delay may be inconvenient to you, though I hope, by writing for the early post, this answer may still reach you in time to be of use.

NURSING: You will perhaps remember that you asked me this question as far as NURSING is concerned about two years ago—I *think* in the autumn of 1869—and that I answered at a length which must have been tedious to you, endeavouring to show that nursing does not come within the category of those arts (or sciences) which may be usefully “examined” or “certified” by the agency proposed. In other words, that the worst nurse might often obtain the best “qualification” and that an examination in *nursing* is that which no council or committee could make. (I have often laboured and often in vain to show *ladies* the essential difference between the medical and the nursing art.) There is nothing in my experience since 1869 but what has only confirmed this view, viz., that the proposed examination as far as *nursing* is concerned would be not only useless but mischievous (MIDWIFERY is in quite a different category).

If I am obliged again to give my reasons, I will ask to be allowed, leaving aside minor ones, to give only two:

1. It is generally admitted now that examinations on clinical subjects cannot be made from books. The pupil must be at the bedside and his acquirements must be judged of by bedside physicians or surgeons. Now of all things nursing is the most clinical of all arts. The “doctor” is a judge no doubt of the results, but he is no judge, indeed he has no knowledge of the processes by which the result is arrived at. (Ask any really eminent clinical physician like yourself. You all say this and most justly.)



Only the long practised, *trained* and *training* matron (superintendent) can do this and even she cannot certify with confidence, except after farther long years of experience of each individual nurse, whether the nurse can so comport herself as to meet the many emergencies incident to her calling, or whether she has the patience, judgment, firmness, gentleness under all troubles and oppositions essential for the recovery of patients. (And this will bring me to my second reason.)

Hence it happens, alas! but too often, that the (apparently) best nurse sometimes does not succeed—even after having been certified—on sufficient after trial. A really good but diffident nurse might fail in being placed on the register at all, while a forward glib bad nurse might stand high in the examination. How can any mere examination tell what even patients, matrons, physicians learn of their nurses only by experience?

The parallel between nursing and art will stand: a woman applying for the office of music teacher might be examined on the principles of harmony and if she knew them thoroughly be certified. But only a judge of music and of musical tuition could tell whether she was fit, *even after hearing her performance*. The same in painting—no academician was ever elected except *on his work*—never on his *technical verbal* knowledge.

2. I come now to my second reason, which I must pray to be allowed to give very shortly: nursing is not only an art *but a character*. And how can this be arrived at by examination? It cannot. Nursing depends more than any other occupation (except the charge of teaching children—perhaps even more than *that*) on the *woman as a CHARACTER*, not merely on her learning the technical details of her trade. This is so obvious that, to one like yourself, I feel it would be presumptuous to insist on it further.

Rather, I would ask you to insist upon it with the Poor Law authorities, with whom the question is now becoming one of such importance. These reasons appear to be final, do not they? as against any *examination* and registration by the Medical Council. There might possibly arise the question: suppose any nurse training committee, *after sufficient experience*, should decide that such and such women had really the nurse's calling. It might become a question whether these should not be placed on the register merely on certificate? i.e., without examination by the Council?

RULES FOR TRAINING. It is scarcely possible, is it? for these to be made by a Medical Council. They might adopt the rules of the best training institution they know. But I speak for ourselves—we have to

alter, I hope *improve*, our rules from time to time as we gather more and more experience and as *we* improve ourselves. (I should be very much shocked at *us*, if we did not.) Besides which, no rules could tell a training matron whether a woman would make a good nurse. This is a matter of penetration of insight—the result of personal ability and experience. Hence the only registration, such as the one contemplated, of any use would be on certificate of training competence at the bedside, qualities of character.

MIDWIFERY. This stands, for obvious reasons, on a different ground from nursing. But, as midwifery training for women is still in its infancy, and has never yet been properly introduced into this country, would you not think it well to defer your question from coming on just at present? The babe (midwives' training) is yet unborn or hardly born in England. (You doubtless know that, last month, at the "Obstetrical Society" in London, a resolution was carried upon the *examination* of "midwives." I will only say that, even with such experience as I have in training midwives, it tells me that a woman might answer all those questions and conditions and be in no sense that a *lying-in woman* (the *true examiner*) would recognize, a "midwife")

MEDICAL DEGREES. I have taken for granted that the contemplated "Rules for Female Education" do not relate to *medical* degrees. If the "rules" contemplate such a purpose, the COUNCIL can best decide for themselves what the *curricula* ought to be.

*Last line but one of proposed motion:* I do not quite understand what is here contemplated. The "superintendence" of a "medical institution," as conducted by a woman, includes sanitary knowledge, knowledge of management, administration, housekeeping—above all training and management of women, both as to character and skill. To propose to examine on these things can scarcely come within the province of a medical council.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Acland, Bodleian Library, Oxford University

26 March 1873

Your letter has just reached me with its draft sketch of report enclosed ("Women's Education"). I very much regret that, as you are good enough to ask my opinion, and declare yourself desirous "to try the issue" tomorrow, I should have only the odd moments of an already overweighted day given me to answer (as well as I am able). One can't make a "ten minutes' Reform Bill," like Lord Derby. However, here is my poor and hurried best. It occurs to me:

1. That you ought to separate entirely MIDWIFERY, *dispensing* (which are matters for examination) from *nursing*, *superintending* of nursing (which must, as matters of *examination*, be dealt with, if at all, much more circumspectly).

2. There cannot be a doubt that *midwives* ought to be brought under some examining and licensing system. (But how can we in such a hurry give a judgment?) There cannot be a doubt that a most effective impulse might be given by you to the *education of midwives*, if only there be time and patience to consider and consult—that as to a mere *license* to *midwives*, acting as a prohibition rather to the non-licensed than as a certificate of competency to the licensed, some steps appear desirable—also as to *dispensing*. But that in the existing void of proper means of enabling women to obtain the requisite experience it requires great care and consideration.

3. (The future however is of far more importance.) I could fancy you, if you were asked, giving the following wise advice, or something like it, with regard especially to the *midwifery* subject: “You are not yet in a position to move at all. You have no feet. What you ought to report to the council is simply the information which you have collected and the information collected is not sufficient to enable any steps to be taken. If you attempt to walk without feet, either you will stand still or fall over.” *So far Dr Acland.*

Would you not limit your report simply to a résumé of existing information: cut out all advice, ask the council to continue the powers of the committee? There are so many important considerations in the draft report that no one would, would he? be justified in adopting it without long time for consideration. If you decide to take this course, I will gladly try to do my very (poor though) best to meet your wishes expressed in your note as to advising on practical steps, etc.

And, before your report is (?) printed or adopted, I shall be obliged to you to *give me full opportunity of looking it over*, as at present my “views” do not appear to be correctly represented. (You kindly say that I may “object to some of the statements in the draft.”) So I do.

4. I could have wished, to save you trouble and myself hurry, that Miss Lees had told me that you were considering those Russian regulations (which were procured for me by Dr von Arneth<sup>41</sup> of Vienna, who is now blind but, with his wife’s help, he translated them into

---

41 F.H. von Arneth, the physician at the Vienna General Hospital who brought Semmelweis’s methods to St Petersburg.

German for me, and which I lent to *Miss Lees*), which are now sent to me in print, ten minutes before I ought to be answering you.

As a matter of practical consideration, and as you do me the honour of quoting me in your private (official) document, I might possibly have saved you some trouble, had I been given as many days for this reply as I have now minutes.

5. Possibly you may like to glance at the enclosed note from Dr Shrimpton (late of Paris), which I have just received. Please return it to me, *with your remarks*, if possible.

**Editor:** A letter to Dr Acland the next day<sup>42</sup> noted that she had sent the “packet” to him at the Athenaeum Club at his “behest,” as needed for a meeting the same day, but it was returned with the explanation that he was not expected until the following evening. Dr Acland evidently did ask for and must have substantially accepted Nightingale’s revisions, as the next letters show.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Acland, Bodleian Library, Oxford University

31 March 1873

I have to thank you for your (four) kind notes and for a copy of the “first revise.” I had better not detain you except by an answer made as short as I can. Without seeing the *revised revise*, I have difficulty in adding anything further to mine of the 26th to you. I conclude from your two of 28 March, and that of 29 March, that you have omitted or altered all the passages I marked in the former revise, including the passage at *p 13* of *this* revise. I must ask you kindly to let me see the *final revise before* printed for the minutes. The essence of the criticism which you have kindly asked me to make would be that the report attempts to put—or at any rate throughout suggests the putting the cart before the horse—that instead of citing both as to *nursing* and *midwifery* what is merely being attempted in Germany and Russia (it is very useful to give an account of what is actually done as to teaching and licensing midwives in Germany. But nothing is said as to the midwifery school in *Paris*—an established government institution for seventy years.)

Would it not be better to show (1) *that means of* TRAINING do *not* exist in England; (2) what that training should consist of—whether *midwives*, *dispensers* or *nurses* (*not* merely of lectures, examinations,

---

42 Letter 27 March 1873, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

etc., and *not* merely of what is represented as “systematic” at Dublin, then to add what Dr Aveling<sup>43</sup> says so well, that “it is useless to provide for examination, licensing, registration and supervision *unless* you provide the means of EDUCATION, that therefore the time is not yet come for the council to consider whether *certificates and examinations* are desirable—that probably some licensing of *midwives* and *dispensers* might be desirable *after* the means of *instruction* had been provided—that possibly under the same conditions some certifying of *nurses* might be advantageously introduced—that *any certifying* of SUPERINTENDENTS of *nurses* appears *impracticable*, and this from the very nature of the thing—that “*superintendents of medical institutions*” is an unknown and undefinable profession.

Source: Letter to Dr Sutherland with his response, ADD Mss 45757 ff89-90

26 April 1873

*Dr Acland.* H.B.C. has restored to me the last note I had from Dr Acland and I think it worthwhile to send it to you because, you see, it involves the whole question raised by you in your note of yesterday, for which I thank you. You see *Mr Stansfeld*<sup>44</sup> wants “REGISTRATION.” Dr Aveling says so well (in fact it is the only truth in Dr Acland’s report): “*Unless this is done*” (i.e., *midwives* INSTRUCTED) “it is USELESS to provide for their (*midwives*) examination, licensing, REGISTRATION, and supervision.”

This seems to me a matter not of discussion but of *fact*. Suppose an Oxford professor were to go to Khiva and propose a system of “examination” and “registration” of graduates in classical literature and philosophy! *It is much the same thing.*

I will not answer Dr Acland till I have heard from you. Please return me *this*.

**JS:** [Nightingale’s underlining in italics] Dear Miss Nightingale, the reply to Dr A.’s note is given by the committee. After the reception of the report it does *not* appear to me that *the question of registration*, except in the case of lady physicians desirous of entering themselves as midwives, *can be entertained*. If Mr Stansfeld must have an answer it must be that, except in these cases, *there is nobody to register*. Sinclair is

43 James Hobson Aveling (1828-92), author, *English Midwives: Their History and Prospects*, 1871.

44 James Stansfeld (1820-98), later Sir, MP, a supporter on repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts.

the only man at all eloquent on the prowess of his uneducated women *and surely they would not advise Mr Stansfeld to register these.*

Now if they (the committee) will take the common-sense course of inquiring into the teaching capacities of the existing midwifery schools and will select from among them those who give a proper education (*if any*) then let the council on its own responsibility recommend a form of register to Mr Stansfeld, but up to the present time we have no knowledge, *and neither have they*, that there are any women, except lady doctors, *who ought to be on a midwifery register.* I will return the other barbs, etc., as I have gone over them.

Source: From a letter to Dr Acland, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/76/a

19 April 1876

6:30 A.M.

*Women's Diplomas, etc. Private.* I feel it such an immense question, the one you are so good as to ask me upon, and myself so unable to deal with it. I feel that I agree with you so entirely as to "would we could induce the women doctors to take up midwifery and nursing" while *they* are moving heaven and earth "to go in for the ordinary MEN'S EXAMINATION."

At the present moment, when you are so earnestly and kindly striving to maintain the Netley Medical School, *on the very ground* that this "*men's examination*" leaves (upon the showing of annual reports of examiners, etc.) "more than two thirds" of the men, e.g., unable to use the microscope, to apply practically any knowledge of chemistry, to make even the most important analyses of food and drink, as are in daily requisition and "more than nine tenths," e.g., incompetent to perform the most trifling operation. I confess that, having always striven to induce the women to take up *midwifery*, on this and other grounds, I feel them, if possible, more strongly than ever.

But may I venture to lay a few considerations before you? Can we force women to take up *midwifery and nursing* by legislation to prevent them from being *doctors*? anymore than we could force them to be *midwives* by passing an act to say that they shall not be *officers of the army*? Have we any right to shut women out? Give "free trade" in diplomas and I have a lurking idea (in which I may be quite wrong) that, as in many other things, women will no longer be so very eager to toil for the "fruit" which is no longer "forbidden." But, whether this idea be right or wrong, shall we not do more harm than good in shutting out the women?

Let them try. Once we have “free trade” supply and demand will, will they not? adjust themselves. It will be seen by the simple test of utility, of profit and loss, whether *women doctors* can *get practice* and *deserve practice*. Fortunately for them, they cannot make us legislate that the public *shall* employ *women doctors* any more than we can legislate that the public shall employ *men doctors* from what we think the best schools. Give us free trade *and let the public decide*.

2. But may I venture to lay what seems to me the root of the whole matter before you? Is it not “putting the cart before the horse” to say “we will legislate that *no woman shall practise as midwife* before she has successfully passed an *examination of competence*” and NOT *to provide such training, such instruction, and such institutions as shall enable her to pass such examination?*

If the “horse” were provided, i.e., if the state were to start a *model school for midwives*, would not this be much better *than any legislation for midwives?* might we not have had by this time a number of fully qualified *midwives* pointing the way to these aspiring women doctors, by the bye—who now will be satisfied with nothing but legislation to make them women doctors), these midwives training others again in new *private schools for midwives?*

And we might then never want the “cart,” viz., legislation to tell us that no woman shall practise as midwife but with, etc., because the public would itself have furnished the “cart.” (St Petersburg *has* founded such a school for midwives, a very admirable one, a four years’ course, as you are aware.) Anyhow, if not the state, those who are interested in the subject might have a *model school for midwives* started by a few rich men. (Attention of late years has been enough directed to it.) And how much better it is, is it not? to say to women: “show us what you can do,” furnishing them *with the means of learning* TO DO than all these fights and struggles about legislation, and might it not have saved us from the pressure of this legislation, now impending, to admit *women* to the *ordinary men’s examination?*

(It seems to me a sort of lazy, unenterprising, in short, stupid thing, of the women to say, “we will be *like men*,” instead of trying to work the immense field, *midwifery and nursing*, which is theirs by right. But, you see, Messrs Stansfeld, Cowper-Temple,<sup>45</sup> Lord Houghton,<sup>46</sup> etc.,

---

45 William Francis Cowper (1811-88), Baron Cowper-Temple, Liberal MP for South Hampshire and a progressive minister.

46 Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-85), Liberal MP, Nightingale’s favourite former suitor, friend and member of the Nightingale Fund Council.

“aid and abet” them in this and do nothing for the other.) As no school for midwives is provided for them, they seem to have no invention to do anything but what men do.

Of course what will be answered to Number 2 is, “that is a matter, like everything else in England, for *private* enterprise on a *self-supporting* basis to supply, viz., *schools for midwives*.” That is very true. But it will be a *long time first*. Meanwhile a vast field for women’s work is left untilled and a vast amount of suffering among the poor (and rich too) is left unremedied.

A *model school for midwives* started *now by government*, or by a *few rich individuals* with competent advice, would probably advance the matter by 100 years. (Almost everything of this kind of work in England has been done in this way. A wise philanthropy has started it, the public has taken it up when it has found the benefits in its own body or mind, and joint stock and commercial enterprise has then placed it on a *self-supporting* footing.)

I am afraid of overpassing all sensible and reasonable limits of language, and certainly all proper bounds to this letter, if I were to say what, if I am right, you will know far better than I of what *vital importance* it seems that a *model school for midwives*, in which the *course of practical and scientific instruction* should command the confidence of the public, should be started with as little delay as possible (instead of all these discussions about legislation). *Nothing but this* will show *women* panting *for a medical career* where their *true field* is to be found. No one but you would so command the confidence of the public if it were known that you were the promoter of such a start.

There is, I believe, but little doubt that women, so trained, would command half the ordinary midwifery practice in England—perhaps even *we* should live to see it. (It does not appear to me that *midwifery* is in the same category as *medicine and surgery* or that legislation, or anything else, concerning it, should necessarily follow in the same lines—if only for this reason, that childbearing is *not* a disease or an accident; it is *naturally* a *natural process of health*, which would happen, naturally, I suppose, with every properly constituted couple. This is not to say that *midwifery* should not be *thoroughly* taught. The midwife should have a sound medical as well as general education, which should comprise diseases of women and children and above all *hygiene of women and children*, and comprise everything obstetric.)

You are kind enough to wish to see me and “ask” my “opinion” on this subject (otherwise no apology would suffice for this letter)



and would “come up to London” “almost any day” “to see” me “at 4:30.” Possibly this letter may, as I wish it, save you this trouble at present; probably you will cry, “enough and too much.” But if at any time you *are* in London (*not* to come “on purpose”) and would let me know *the day beforehand* and fix any hour in the afternoon, there is scarcely any engagement I would not put off if you think me of the least service.

Source: From a letter to Helen Blower, Florence Nightingale (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/80/8

25 August 1880

The “turn” which ladies are now taking for a smattering in midwifery is so alarming that, as there is to be an “Employers’ Liability Bill,” so there must soon be a “Doctors’ Liability Bill” for granting midwifery certificates to ladies who know nothing or what is worse than nothing.

I have a friend in London [Mary Scharlieb], wife of the government secretary at Madras, who, after four years’ successful study at the Madras hospitals, is now taking three years in London, passing the examinations at London University. And this first-rate seven years’ education is *not too much*, she thinks, for midwifery practice in India. (I have known ladies think one month, many three months *not too little*).

**Editor:** In 1888 there was another proposal for the registration of midwives. Nightingale was only peripherally involved. There was correspondence with Elizabeth Malleeson, who sought information and Nightingale’s name. In declining to be president of it she asked: Could you be so very kind as to tell me *what* “the bill now before Parliament for the registration of certificated midwives” is?<sup>47</sup> A letter from Malleeson to Nightingale (17 July 1888) thanked her for her sympathy and kindness and provided the requested information.<sup>48</sup>

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Acland, Bodleian Library, Oxford University

[ca. 8 July 1888]

*Strictly Private.* You know that they, the B.N.A., are proposing to “register” “trained midwives,” an entirely different case from that of “trained nurses,” as is justly felt. A few days ago only it appeared a new

---

47 Letter to Mrs Malleeson 7 July 1888, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C186.

48 Letter to Nightingale, Add Mss 45808 f163.

idea to them that any knowledge was necessary of the present state of “education” and training (or no-training) given in the London and Edinburgh lying-in hospitals to women desiring to be midwives or midwifery nurses—or of the practical results of the Obstetrical Society’s examination and certificate in London—or of the similar process in Edinburgh—still less of any test of “character.”

They, the B.N.A., had then no intention of making any inquiry into these essentials before registering. But it now struck them that there was something desirable in knowing what *is* the present midwifery training for “trained”?! midwives. (How many rather trust to *words* and do not look into *things*!) *You* have looked into these things, *you* know what a dangerous quicksand they are treading.

Are they going to “register” incompetency or competency? Or if they are going to draw a line between those to be registered and those *not* to be registered, how can they do so without knowing what are the different midwifery trainings at present for women?

You say: “they propose to register x x *on adequate education and character*.” Have they even inquired whether the present (midwifery) “education” for women is “adequate”? And do they “propose” without inquiry to stereotype it as it is?

### Other Work on Midwifery

Source: Letter, Wellcome Ms 5482/100

16 April 1874

Sir [William Nightingale Esq<sup>49</sup>]

I feel very sorry that the constant pressure of overwork and illness makes it very difficult to reply to all those who have long-standing claims upon me, and almost impossible to give general answers, especially as it were miscellaneous answers in absence of all knowledge. The first question is: what is meant by the “medical profession” (for ladies)? I have given my view on this subject, though not as strongly as I *could*, after long consideration, in the appendix to my *Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, Longmans. My view is, generally, that ladies should devote themselves either to nursing or to *midwifery*, and that, if ultimately there is to be a female “medical profession” in this or any other country, the best, or rather the only, way to it is through ladies really making themselves accomplished midwives, i.e., physician accoucheuses. (Perhaps you contemplate a M.D. degree.)

---

49 It is not clear if this William Nightingale was any relation.

As your daughter is too young for a nurse, I suppose a good general education and household management would be the best preliminary. For midwifery, some Latin and French would be useful, but she should only enter on *professional* education after a certain age, of course. I wish her Godspeed in so noble an object, and pray believe me, Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Dr J.H. Barnes, Royal College of Nursing, Edinburgh RCN/FN1/7

5 June 1874

*Lying-in Statistics*. I have to thank you for your kind note of 28 March, enclosing your most valuable and satisfactory statistics of the lying-in wards of Liverpool Workhouse for 1873.

Will you not add to and improve these statistics by telling us the *state of the case for a month after delivery*? N.B: you have done yourself injustice by stating your “average mortality for the last six years” at “3.2 PERCENT.” It is of course 3.2 per *thousand* (mille). This is no doubt a mere slip of the pen.

I have no excuse to make for my long delay in thanking for and answering your valuable note, which was immediately made use of, except that I have a little more to do than can be done in the twenty-four hours with constant illness and this year heavy sorrows.<sup>50</sup>

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland with his response, Add Mss 45757 f256

Claydon

8 September 1874

*Mr Bright, Liverpool*. What should you say in answer to his three questions? (Dr Steele does not seem to have gone much farther than our book for his figures.)

**JS:** Dr Steele’s paper is simply a reproduction of our book, but we cannot help feeling the damaging nature of the blow the book has given. You see these opinions against lying-in hospitals would never have otherwise been given.

---

<sup>50</sup> Especially the deaths of her father and Mrs Bracebridge.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45757 ff282-83

13 March 1875

*Liverpool District Nurses.* Would you look at this sheet, prepared in accordance with our instructions? It is very curious that they should have so high a mortality from puerperal fever and childbirth *at their own homes* (N.B. the same nurse nurses fevers and childbirth) and so low mortality in the *workhouse*: the *number* of childbirth cases (400) being but a few less than what the WORKHOUSE has had of late years. Other figures are also unexpected. I suppose the “deaths” do NOT include those of cases “removed to hospital.”

Source: From a note, ADD Mss 45820 f4

[1875?]

De Chaumont: Report on General Lying-in Hospital, York Road, Lambeth: Cleansing, Disinfection and Preventive Measures

Essential that the old bedding and furniture should be renewed. Scraping and cleaning of walls, ceilings and floors necessary. Desirable to have the surfaces covered with impermeable material which would admit of frequent washing, such as silicate paint or varnish for walls and ceilings, and caulking and varnishing of the floors or the impregnation of the wood with melted paraffin.

Every ward to be thoroughly cleaned after being used and not used again for some time, and meanwhile freely flushed with air—real value of disinfectants for clothing and bedding. No efficient disinfect but heat applied in a special chamber for a room or ward, the setting free sulphurous acid, nitrous acid or chlorine so as to make the air for the time irrespirable. In almost every other case disinfectants (so-called) are little better than deodorants when applied in the ordinary way and their true disinfectant power is only obtained either when large quantities are used or when they are employed in a special way. In some cases a temporary effect of value may be obtained as, e.g., when a bedpan or close stool is used, when the receiving of the discharge into some disinfectant will not only deodorize but also for the time at least cause the arrest of emanations until it can be removed and got rid of. But disinfectants are to be considered only as aids and they must in no way take the place of thorough ventilation, proper conservancy and a scrupulous and unremitting attention to every detail of cleanliness and sanitation.

Any patient strong enough to scrub floors has no business in the institution. Every nurse, servant or attendant about the institution

ought to wear dresses of washing material which should be frequently washed at the expense of the institution.

Source: From a letter to Dr Heywood Smith,<sup>51</sup> Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology

10 May 1876

*Lying-in Institutions.* I trust that you will excuse me, under the severe pressure of business and illness, for not answering, as I should have wished, your long and valuable letter of 15 April before this. It was not from want of interest in it. I feel so (humbly) glad to find physicians of eminence interested in the subject of giving first-rate midwifery instruction and training to women, an object so very near my heart. *You* could do so much to induce the medical profession to turn their attention in the right direction, as regards the training of midwives.

1. I have always believed that the British Lying-in Hospital was on the whole a very much better specimen than others, especially in its management. To this I eagerly assent. My little book, which you are kind enough to notice, was simply a sort of guidepost based on melancholy experience—a sort of town crier inviting further consideration—begging and crying out for further statistics, especially from men of weight like yourself.

But, 2. are not the considerations which you bring forward to combat the conclusions in that little book as to lying-in death rates suppositions only, whereas those in the book are based upon facts?

3. More accurate statistics are *most* important; in fact one of the main objects of my *Notes* was *to invite* these as materials for further investigation and consideration. At present is there anything in what you allege sufficient to alter the general conclusion as to the inexpediency of the present system of lying-in hospitals?

4. With regard to severe abnormal cases being “sent in by medical men” and thus increasing the mortality, the effect, of course, can be proved by the facts, if properly recorded (and this, the urging that accurate and detailed statistics should be kept and published, so as that we should know whether these causes exist to swell the death rate, was again one of the main reasons for *publishing* the little book. It may be asked by some, but it is perhaps an insidious question: where is the use of bringing these cases in at all, if they are only to die?)

5. With regard to your valuable remarks as to the medical treatment of the patients in the British Lying-in Hospital, I can only thank

---

51 Heywood Smith (1838-1928).

you for these, for I have purposely for obvious reasons avoided entering into any discussion of medical questions.

6. May not the question as to whether women are to be allowed to operate, or whether women are ever likely to supersede men altogether in midwifery practice, be deferred *sine die*? Let “us,” I am so proud to be able to say “us” in a question of this kind, as including such a coadjutor or rather leader as yourself—let us first get the means of training women established on something like a common-sense footing. Ought there to be any difficulty in having, if need be, separate schools for women and men? At any rate, at present, need we trouble ourselves about the men, or about their means of training? For they have some and good; the women have none, none, that is, that *you* would condescend to call by that name.

Earnestly thanking you for your letter and most earnestly looking forward to your invaluable efforts and to your success in this cause, which it rejoices me beyond anything to find is yours, pray believe me, dear Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

I shall certainly keep your kind offer of an “interview” as a pledge that I may call upon your goodness for one at your convenience when I am a little less overwrought. May I venture to enclose a copy of my little book for your kind acceptance?

**Editor:** The lessons on how to avoid puerperal fever in midwifery were learned gradually. In the next letter, 1876, Nightingale stressed the need for visiting nurses to keep midwifery cases separate from sick cases: “One should never take the other’s cases.” It would be better to keep the two bodies organizing this nursing at home apart, although “the use of antiseptics has greatly modified the practice.”

So also were improvements gradually made on the Continent. The Paris Maternité began to isolate ill from other birthing women. Antiseptic measures were gradually brought in everywhere, bringing down death rates. Yet “epidemics” or “spikes” in the rates continued to recur periodically, indeed until the 1930s.

A review of these developments can be seen in Robert Boxall’s *The Use of Antiseptics in Midwifery*, 1894, where he notably gives the death rate (from all causes, not just puerperal fever) at the General Lying-in Hospital (York Road) “for many years” exceeding 3 percent, and in 1877 was 1/7: “it seems almost incredible” (5). He explained that

between 1861 and 1877 money was spent for structural improvements, and the mortality fell to nearly half the previous amount. The hospital was closed for three years on the 1/7 death rate and reopened in 1879 “upon aseptic principles.” The “adaptation of Listerian measures to obstetric practice” resulted in even sharper declines. His table shows death rates (again from all causes) of 3.1 percent for 1833-60, down to 1.7 percent with the structural changes 1861-77, then to .6 percent 1880-87 and .4 percent 1888-92 (5).

In 1889 Nightingale asked Ellen Pirrie of the Belfast Workhouse Infirmary if doctors went from the medical and surgical wards to the lying-in ward (see p 395 below). But by then Nightingale feared that her early work was out of date and that her questions would betray her “ignorance.” “Also, terms have changed,” she noted (see p 392 below).

Source: Excerpt from a letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle,<sup>52</sup> Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/28

24 June 1876

I cannot refrain from saying (remember upon the printed paper) that experience shows the extreme danger of mixing up *midwifery* nursing with general district nursing and therefore of ever giving *a midwifery three months' training* to a general nurse. The nurse should be an entirely separate nurse from the *midwifery* nurse: *one* should never take *the other's* cases and it is even better that the two *bodies* should be apart (the use of antiseptics has greatly modified the practice in this respect) the body of district nurses from the body of midwifery district nurses.

Do tell your friends this: -- is always worrying us to do midwifery nursing, but hitherto we have stood firm upon the above principle.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45758 f121

3 March 1879

*Birmingham Lying-in Charity*. First of all I send you what you asked for: the *causes* of deaths of the eighteen mothers who died during the years comprised on the report in childbirth 1870-78 (*nine years*). *Please return it to me*. I also send you a Birmingham paper with the report.

---

52 Angelique Lucille Pringle (1842-1921), superintendent at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, later at St Thomas'.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45764 f257

10 May 1879

I have received tracings (for me to criticize) of the new *Lying-in Cottage Hospital* proposed to be built at Ravensworth House (which has been already bought as a site) at Balham. The plans do not give enough to judge by. But would you let them be *sent to you* (by me) *to look at*? Perhaps they have been already sent you?

### Proposals to Reopen a Training School

**Editor:** In 1876 Nightingale was amazed to be approached by St John's House regarding a proposal for a new lying-in institution and midwifery training school. The plans she was sent evidently contained many defects, indeed faults on which she had given much advice before. She sent them on to Douglas Galton with a covering letter, the first item below. Nothing came of this endeavour, presumably because St John's House was not willing or able to do what Nightingale considered essential. Another possibility came up in 1878-79 with the proposed reconstruction of the lying-in hospital on York Road, the General Lying-in Hospital. As we shall shortly see, yet again no agreement was reached.

Source: From a letter to and notes for Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45764 ff214 and 222-25

15 April 1876

*Are you in London? Might I send you* and would you be so good as to look at *and criticize* some *plans* for a lying-in institution and training school for midwifery nurses? about to be built.

I am so very glad that you are going to give on Saturday a lecture on *sanitary results in India*.

*How is Evelyne?* And *how is Marianne?* Excuse pencil. I will write more intelligibly when I know that you are in London.

Proposed Maternity Hospital and Nurses Home and Nursing School:  
*Notes on Plans*

1. *Forty-eight* lying-in beds, but in fact only *thirty-six occupied*. Beds indeed by architect's own showing, only twenty-seven since, as there is no delivery ward, he intends *three only* out of each group of *four* to be occupied together.

2. Is not *basement* accommodation unnecessarily large? A dispensary not necessary in a lying-in institution, where the fewer drugs the better.



3. *No basement* accommodation especially *not* an out-patient's waiting room or surgeon's room should be *under lying-in wards*. The two, out-patients and in-patients, indeed the two, patients and administrative, buildings should be separate or, if this is impossible, only harmless stores should be *under patients*. *Not coals*: even a linen store, where there is much passing to and fro, not desirable.

4. We should think the *ward scullery accommodation* insufficient for this reason, that every block (of four beds or ward on each floor) *must have its own scullery accommodation, sinks, etc.*, in order for the periodical cleansing of the whole: *one* block with *all* its appurtenances to be *always vacant* for cleansing. Also, *a bath sink (infants' baths essential), slop sink, W.C., linens and everything to each floor of each block quite separate*. "Nurses's room" may be well turned into a scullery, but there must be either *two linen rooms, one for each block*, or the *linen* may be *in scullery, which is quite admissible*. In that case the linen room might be made into a nurse's room, but it would be far better to give up the "nurse's room," throw half of the linen room into each scullery, where there must be a hot linen closet, a small kitchen range, wh[ere] syringes, etc., one for each woman must be kept and washed, where infants must often be washed and dressed and where there *must be room* for nurses and pupils. The scullery is the "nurse's room" in a lying-in institution and must be made proper for the purpose.

5. We suppose it is proposed to *deliver each woman* in her *own ward*. In this case, after each delivery, the ward ought to stand empty for at least ten months, to "*assimilate it to a woman's own home*": objectionable also, for the danger of disturbing the women in the three next wards (especially if one were in a state of exhaustion). This makes the *periodical vacating and cleansing* of the whole appurtenances still *more essential*, for if the scullery is to do duty as the scullery of a *delivery ward* as well, it will have a good deal to do.

6. Is it intended that the *lying-in woman* shall occupy *the same ward* from time *she comes in* till time *she goes out*? No convalescent ward (three changes are good). But if only there were a delivery ward no other change is *necessary*.

7. It is not desirable to have *ward doors opening* OPPOSITE each other.

8. Will not the "*open*" spaces make dangerous *draughts*? If there is a delivery ward (which is considered essential), the passages and corridors must have no "*open*" spaces and must be capable of warming as the women will have to be carried through them after delivery.

9. *Yes: Lifts.*

10. We see *no* provision for ISOLATED *accommodation* for a SICK *lying-in woman*. This is essential.

11. We see *no accommodation* for having RELIEFS of *pupil midwives*. Nor is the *number* proposed to train given: thirty? (There are only *twelve nurses' beds* shown and five ladies') and *no* reliefs.

12. We see no accommodation for *head midwife or midwives*. There must be one, if not two or even three, midwives. The head midwife will expect *two* rooms. The "sister's" accommodation however might be turned to this purpose.

13. Is not the *mortuary* (though there should be *no* deaths) too much in sight of the *left-hand block*? Even if there were no deaths this is objectionable. (Of course *no post-mortems* will be done *here*.)

14. *Points of compass not indicated.*

15. *Four floors and three floors of wards* objectionable. This is the blot of the plan, both for health and convenience. Also it necessitates vacating *twelve* beds: viz., a whole block, always for *periodical* cleansing. Of course you cannot be scraping, whitewashing, etc., over the heads of lying-in women: The whole block from top to bottom must stand empty at one and the same time.

Source: From a letter to and notes for Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45764 ff220-21

21 April 1876

*Proposed Lying-in Institution and Training School for Midwife Nurses.* I am extremely obliged to you for being willing to overhaul these plans. This possibility of reopening our school *for midwifery nurses* comes from the quarter whence I should have least expected it, St John's House, with "force civilités" from the female superiors. This great civility is of course due to the hope that we, the N.F., should spend our money with them, as we did with our ill-fated school at King's College Hospital. And this we should, that is, if not only we were satisfied with the *lying-in* accommodation *and* with the accommodation for *pupils*, *but also with the training means* afforded, we might very well spend money (not in maintaining beds, as we did at K.C.H.) but in maintaining *pupils* there at this next institution.

And if the "National" District Nursing Association gets money, they might do so too. (At present I must say the training prospects appear of the gloomiest. The *Sisters of St John's* seem to intend to be themselves the *midwives* and to contemplate only MONTHLY nurses, and for the *rich*. In that case, of course we should have nothing to do with

them. But we have this hold upon them: that they want our money and our name. They will not get it unless they do what we think essential. This prospect not only of saving lying-in lives, but of possibly reopening our *midwifery school* under good conditions, makes me willing not only to take a good deal of pains but *to ask you* to do so too.

(I will ask you *at present* not to show these plans to anyone. For some reason that I do not understand they ask this. Afterwards I shall of course show the criticisms that you are good enough to make.)

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

Enclosed or accompanying are: one roll (two plans, estimates and letter), one envelope of five plans, etc., one envelope of three letters, etc., F.N.'s notes of criticism (three sheets, Dr Sutherland's one sheet) and a copy of F.N.'s book on *lying-in institutions*, in case you wish to refer, that you may have it at hand.

Source: From a letter to George Frere,<sup>53</sup> Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/76/2a

5 June 1876

*Proposed "Maternity Home and Training School"*

In returning to the lady superior of St John's House the plans of the proposed "Maternity Home and Training School," which your council were so good as to allow me to see, together with Mr Salter's letter of explanation, I have in accordance with the kind invitation conveyed in your letter of 11 April accompanied them with some notes which, though roughly put together, embody the results of a careful consideration of the plans, in which I have been assisted by two gentlemen who are recognized authorities upon the subject of hospital construction.

May I venture to say that the plans are in many respects admirable and afford evidence of a very great advance in the adoption of sound principles of sanitary construction? I would add, if I may, one or two remarks upon some points of your letter and of the printed Prospectus and Circular.

1. In the plan which was carried out at King's College Hospital in the years 1862-67, at the cost of the "Nightingale Fund" under the auspices of your council, our object was to train *midwifery nurses* to be employed among the *poor*. We advisedly called the nurses "*midwifery*" and not "monthly" nurses, conceiving that the former designation

---

53 George Frere, secretary of the Council of the Sisterhood of St John's.

more correctly indicated both the nature of the work which the nurses would have to undertake among the poor and the amount of *training* required for the purpose. In point of *fact*, these nurses were better qualified than any ordinary midwives and did for the poor more than these midwives ordinarily do. We did not call them “midwives” because we considered that even the training which we gave fell far short of what properly qualified accoucheuses ought to have, and we therefore made it a condition of their employment that they should act under the direction of the medical men. But the ultimate object was to attempt to substitute *trained* for untrained *midwives* for the *poor*, and what was done was regarded as a first step toward this end.

The distinction between “*monthly*” nurses and “*midwifery*” nurses was therefore in our view an essential one. It indicated moreover the difference between the requirements of the *rich* (at any rate according to present demands) and the wants of the *poor*, to meet which the training school was designed.

2. The present scheme does not appear to contemplate such a provision for TRAINING as was carried out at King’s College Hospital (though on a small scale) and therefore not such a one as would, according to our views, be sufficient for the necessities of the case. There, with *ten* beds, we had a skilled *midwife* instructor and *six resident pupils*, the whole being under the supervision of the *lady superior* and the sister of the ward. In the present plans there are forty-eight beds and, having due regard to the number to be occupied, a corresponding staff of *training midwives* and *number of resident pupils* would be required if the institution is to be a *training* school. The proposed accommodation is surely insufficient for this purpose. (Some of the notes refer more in detail to this point.)

3. Although perhaps somewhat premature to refer to the time when the buildings shall be completed, I have little doubt that, should the organization of the proposed training school prove, according to our views, efficient, that is, should we be not only satisfied with the *lying-in* accommodation, which promises, with some alterations not difficult to carry out, to be admirable, and with the accommodation for *pupils*, at present not a little meagre, but also with the *training means* afforded, the committee of the Nightingale Fund will be glad, only too glad, to avail themselves of its resources in training *midwifery* nurses and *midwives* for the *poor*.

May I add the warmest interest and sympathy in your project. The prospect as well of an institution which shall not destroy lying-in lives,

and which shall teach the care of infants, as of opening a school under good conditions rather for midwives for the poor than for monthly nurses for the rich, the prospect of having all that done which is essential for this, fills me with hope. I wish you “Godspeed” with all my heart and strength and shall be proud if we can, by maintaining pupils with you, follow in your steps, and extend among a larger number your benefits promised to the poor. Pray believe me, Sir,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

May I add that if I can be of the least little use in considering, at any time, further plans, I shall be only too happy to put myself at your service and without, I trust, the almost unpardonable delay incurred this time?

Source: From a note, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/A44/1

[c1876]

Proposed Maternity Institution and Nurses Home and Training School, Notes on Mr Salter the architect letter: Mr Salter appears to forget that, in “trying to assimilate” his “plan” to that of “lying-in women’s own homes,” he has omitted *the most essential* condition, viz., that in any room inhabited by the same couple *a second delivery CANNOT take place within ten months*, and may not take place for years. *This I believe to be the real secret of safety at home.* The nearest approach that can be made for her is to have *two delivery wards to each floor*, one of them always standing empty, month and month about, and these delivery wards I believe to be essential, in any lying-in institution of *more than three or four beds* and in constant use, for any safety. Mr Salter’s single-bed wards are then capital. But *delivery* in the single-bed ward would not be without danger, nor would it be assimilated to home lyings-in.

As Mr Salter wishes, unless each ward after each delivery remained empty for ten months—a condition which renders any institution at all impossible. Neither does *economy* appear to be attained by this plan since the essential “standing empty” (for cleansing *and aeration*) of each ward, even for a much shorter period than ten months, seems, by Mr Salter’s own showing, to be necessarily longer than if there were a delivery ward. . . .

N.B. (To have all the soiled *delivery* linen in this ward scullery somewhat increases the risk to the lying-in women in the wards.) It is so much better to have all the delivery bustle and mess apart.

**Editor:** With the planned renovation of the York Road Lying-in Institution, another opportunity to reopen a training school arose, again not realized. As soon as Nightingale saw the plans, in early January 1879, she told Henry Bonham Carter “we ought to have nothing to do” with it (see p 382 below). Douglas Galton, as usual, helped with a critique, for a letter acknowledged it: “You did us and the world great good service about the York Road Lying-in Hospital—very many thanks.”<sup>54</sup>

Source: Excerpt from a letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/32-34

21 November 1878

We have always intended, as perhaps you know, to reopen our school for training midwifery nurses (which we had for six years at King’s College Hospital) if a suitable opportunity and place recurred. The Lying-in Hospital of York Road, Lambeth, which had been closed on account of puerperal fever, is to be reconstructed both in building and system and has been offered to us to nurse. My idea would be to have a trained general hospital lady as matron (NOT *midwife*) and under her a skilled midwife and assistant midwife—by degrees, from twelve-fifteen pupil midwives—probably for the first year a trained general hospital nurse, cook, housemaid, etc. You will see that the “lady” must have powers of organizing (*not* necessarily a knowledge of midwifery), with great tact and discretion.

There will be twenty or eighteen lying-in beds and the committee scheme, a very good one, is to train district midwives for provident dispensaries, with which it will be in connection and remain in connection in its neighbourhood. Without this scheme we should scarcely care to undertake it. With it, there is an enormous opening for good. The committee wish to take a recommendation for a matron and for a whole scheme of organization from us. Any lady we recommended and they accepted would select and organize her own female staff.

But, you understand, *we* should only recommend the matron, as we do in the case of general hospitals. She would then pass *under the committee* as in those other cases (*not* remain under us). We should not of course be able to help her even in those other ways in which we can help in the case of general hospitals, viz., by training and by contributing a staff of nurses.

---

54 Letter 5 April 1879, Add Mss 45764 f249.

It will be a new thing which the lady will have to spin out of herself, as Miss Jones did so successfully—as regarded the midwifery training, though herself knowing nothing of midwifery—in our case in King’s College Hospital. If the midwifery training school is a prominent feature, we should probably have a good deal to say in *this* and should help in money, as we did to a very considerable extent at K.C. Hospital as in other things.

Assuming that the salary is what she would have a right to expect, *do you think*—here comes the question—that -- would be the person *to undertake* this sort of *creation*, for it would be a creation? I send my *Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, which probably you have seen before, by book post, *not* at all as a guide, for who can ever undertake this lying-in hospital and training school must work out the problem by herself and *not* by a *book*.

I have scarcely been able to raise my head from the pillow since I came here. I have been as it were ground’s provider this autumn. May God grind me into good bread for Him!

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire County Record Office 94M72 F582/17

28 January 1879

*York Road Lying-in Hospital.* We ought to have nothing to do with that lying-in hospital. I have thought the matter over scores of times since I saw the plans and have never thought differently. I tried to say this as definitely as I could when we met by appointment (in the last week of December?) more than a month ago. If I did not explain my convictions *as strongly as I ought*, it was because I understood that I should be informed of the result of your sending in to the chairman Captain Galton’s report, which you then proposed doing. Since then, as you know, I have heard nothing. And, hearing nothing, I concluded the matter was at an end. What you tell me in your yesterday’s note, and on the previous day, is, as you are aware, *news* to me. As we agreed the question is not: what is the best that can be made of “York Road” building? but whether the *improved* “York Road” answers to what, with our considered convictions, acquired at such cost of life and of labour and experience in collecting information, we could conscientiously think the only fit building for *us* to undertake lying-in cases in and a training school for midwifery nurses. I understood Captain Galton that he thought *decidedly not*. I wrote to Miss Spencer before I had seen the plans. Having seen the plans, I should write to any lady to deter her from accepting who asked my advice. After a most laborious

inquiry, I gave (in my *Notes*) the minimum of acreage a lying-in hospital should have.

York Road has *no* “open air site.” So far *from* “*standing in its own grounds*” it is *unusually hemmed in*. I gave as a rule that a lying-in hospital should have two storeys at the utmost and the rooms of the pupils should not be over the patients. On a good airy site, and with a good construction, it is possible that a third storey for staff might be added without inconvenience. At York Road, without any open site at all, it would be fraught with danger.

An “isolated” room outside in the grounds for fever, smallpox or erysipelas is a *sine qua non*. At York Road there is no space or place, inside or out, where you could have anything like real “isolation” for puerperal fever or anything else.

I mention these few things, but I could mention many more. The place, the site, the building are each hopelessly bad, hopelessly unfitted for lying-in patients. (Queen Charlotte’s is *sanitary* in comparison to “York Road.”) I can only say—have ye nothing to do with that “unjust” place.<sup>55</sup> I would not.

2. I am always glad to see Captain Galton as you propose. But this week it is, I am sorry to say, impossible, almost impossible for the next fortnight, that I am more and more subject to attacks of entire prostration—the result of never having had one day’s rest for five years. I have a slight attack of erysipelas. I have been obliged to put off appointments on urgent business: one, a man who returns to India next week. I am overworked and shall be till the meeting of Parliament with India is to say nothing is impossible if it is a matter of life or death. But I do not see that it is. Captain Galton expressed his opinion very plainly. Unless he has altered that opinion (when perhaps he will be so good as to write me one word) I cannot think differently from what I did when I saw the plans and read his report. (I *could* have seen him *before* this, but now I am almost unable.)

3. You may lay all the blame upon me, if there is a scapegoat wanted, and say to the committee that I was so impressed with the loss of life in our own experience, and in the most laborious investigation which I undertook in consequence, including a correspondence with most of the lying-in hospitals and workhouse infirmaries in England and the Continent, that I could not recommend a lying-in hospital at all except under certain conditions which York Road can never be made to fulfill.

---

<sup>55</sup> A paraphrase of Herod’s wife’s warning in Matt 27:19.



At the same time (and without in the least entering on the merits), the resignation and non-election of the medical officers forms another argument for you to withdraw. You would never enter on a scheme of *this* kind without knowing your medical officers. To enter more fully on this subject would be to rewrite my book. I return your draft copy.

### **Last Work on Midwifery and Midwifery Training**

**Editor:** Elizabeth Blackwell's letter immediately below prompted yet another examination of the midwifery training issue, which again came to nothing. Nightingale still saw no resolution to the dilemma that training required bringing parturient women into an institution, which resulted in excessive mortality. She continued to consider the midwifery training provided in England to be badly defective. Practising midwives failed to teach new mothers good infant care and good sanitary practices generally. Midwifery practice in India increasingly became an issue.

Source: Letter of Elizabeth Blackwell, ADD MSS 45807 ff36-38

[printed address] Rock House

Hastings

16 February 1883

*Confidential*

Dear Miss Nightingale

I write to ask whether an effort at the present time to establish a thorough school of midwifery for women would meet with your sympathy and with your countenance in any way?

I write confidentially because I wish to say that I am dissatisfied with our Henrietta St. School in two respects, viz., first, *it neglects midwifery*, not striving to perfect instruction in that most important branch; second, I am not satisfied with the tone given to the school by some of the leading medical women connected—I mean the *moral* tone.

Now that the essential battle of the highest equal legal degree for women is completely won, my great desire is to make the education (medical and moral) worthy of the degree. Dr Scharlieb (who I hope will do a great work in India), after graduating with distinguished honour in the university, went vainly round to all the leading obstetricians of London to seek the means of gaining special skill in operative midwifery. All declined help and told her emphatically that they wished to keep all operative midwifery to themselves. She is therefore gone to Vienna. She told me that there were no opportunities for the attainment of practical midwifery by women in England to be compared to

the opportunities enjoyed and exercised by the matron of her own Madras hospital, and what she had gained there herself had enabled her to pass so brilliant an examination at the London University!

Now Dr Frances Hoggan is true and earnest and is interesting *one of the royal princesses* in this matter; I want to support her action! There are also several obstetricians interested in aiding women and who could I think be kept in their proper place. But so far I have vainly tried to get our own school (Henrietta St.) to take a generous view of their position and invite co-operation from all capable persons willing to help. I think that by interesting a number of able and wisely judging persons *to make an independent effort at getting up a good school, outside Henrietta St.*, that we shall take the most effectual means to draw Henrietta St. or, still better, the Royal Free Hospital, into united action. I remember well the interest you formerly took in this subject, and if now, you will again give us the expression of your sympathy, I believe the time is ripe for a new and successful effort. Believe me,

your old friend

Elizabeth Blackwell

Source: Letter of Elizabeth Blackwell, ADD Mss 45807 ff49-52

Rock House

Hastings

16 March [1883]

Dear Miss Nightingale

Thank you very much for the letter [missing] and book which reached me yesterday. I attended a little conference on a midwifery school, held at Henrietta St., on the 10th. There were present Mrs Thorne, Mrs Meredith, Miss Beddington (a friend of Miss Hubbard, a very pleasant intelligent midwife), Mrs Marshall MD, Dr Jex Blake and myself. I mention the names because they represent a great variety of interests and experience; therefore the conclusions we unanimously came to may be interesting.

1st. The great existent necessity of a thorough midwifery training school, where not only capable moral midwives might be educated, but where our young physicians may gain what they require.

2nd. That medical *men* will never organize the school we need; a great variety of experience from *all* of those present supported this conviction.

3rd. That as we have neither funds nor persons to devote exclusively to this work, as neither Henrietta St. nor the Royal Free is prepared to take it up, its growth must be slow, but may be approached in two ways. First a promising student who possesses ability, health and

enthusiasm, and who will complete her studies this summer, will, it is believed, consent to devote the necessary time to midwifery in France, to become a skillful surgeon accoucheuse, and familiarize herself with the organization of a training school. Details of La Maternité and the newly formed hospital cliniques in Paris were given, showing the course for this young lady to pursue.

Secondly, it was stated that a benevolent home was about to be started in a neighbourhood not far from the Royal Free Hospital, and that it was not impossible that rooms for an approved midwife in connection with such a home might be provided, for the purpose of forming an outside clinique (at present with a male consulting surgeon), from which a future school might grow. This was as far as our little conference could go last Saturday, but we all felt that, although we had come to very modest and slow plans, yet we thoroughly understood what was wanted, and we felt some hope that, even in such a gradual way, we could approach our aim.

You see, therefore, dear friend, that we are very far yet from being able to put your admirable plans into force, but they will be a valuable guide for future work, I hope, and I am sure it will encourage future workers to know of the deep and lifelong interest which you have taken in this subject.

A confidential word about myself. I thought my work was done when I left my "Moral Education of the Young" as a legacy to my successors. But not so. A new and peculiar work has opened before the first woman physician that, as far as I see, no one else is able to do. It is the education of men as well as women in true instead of false sexual physiology!<sup>56</sup> Of course this is only the hidden gist of my work—the ways in which it must be worked out are various. But light seemed to dawn on me last January at that most interesting convention of religious bodies at Devonshire House, and the enclosed leaflet will give an idea of one of the ways in which I hope to lead up to municipal action. Our April conference will, I hope, take place in the Town Hall by ticket and be joined from friends from neighbouring towns.

But I must not take up more of your valuable time with details of what seems to me a grand and inspiring work. Believe me,

sincerely yours

E. Blackwell

---

56 Blackwell published *The Human Element in Sex: Being a Medical Enquiry into the Relation of Sexual Physiology to Christian Morality*, 1884.

Source: Excerpt from a letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/53 [ellipses in letter]

7 November 1886

I have been rather bothered for the last twelvemonth by inquiring for and despatching sanitary and domestic economy books to India, to be boiled down by some sort of process into textbooks for native girls and women, and for European girls' schools as an adjunct to Lady Dufferin's Fund. Believing as I do that the conditions of England and India are so different that each country should have its own books, I did it in a cold perspiration.

I am now engaged to do the same thing in *medical* books for the doctresses—to send out the best books on midwifery and diseases of women and children. I have already collected several recommended to me by medical authority. But they are so elaborate—they, especially the midwifery books, treat childbirth not as a process of nature but as a terrible surgical disease. And there is a description of every kind of operation that can possibly be invented.

Could you . . . ask the authorities of the lying-in hospital, or the physician accoucheur of your infirmary, for the names of the *simplest* and *most useful* books on these matters, telling them it is for *India, for nature* and other *lady doctors* and for *whose Fund*. . . . I should be so grateful.

But they in India ought, as for sanitation, so for midwifery and women's and children's diseases, to write manuals *for India*. The mortality among native women, and men, among European women in India, is far higher than with us. The sanitary conditions (of the natives) in childbirth are fearful. And they have many other drawbacks. . . .

If there were any book dwelling upon the conditions which should produce *health* in pregnancy and childbirth, that would be a Godsend for me. . . . They (the books) will be chiefly for (trained) *native women-doctors*.

Source: From two letters of Dr Sutherland to Nightingale, ADD Mss 45758 ff257-58 and 259-60

Alleyn Park

3 November 1886

The midwifery book has done its work, partly by information, partly from envy and strife. Anyway rest assured that the ground gained will be kept.

If it were to be done new the book would take a different form, and as it is it could not now spread the same startling information as it did.

If you want to keep a few copies for private dedication Longman will have them bound. Otherwise there is no reason in keeping them in stock. (Say twenty.)

Horse Guards

6 December 1886

[The] Registrar-General's report that the death rate which Farr gave us as 1 in 250 is now for England and Wales 1 in 350 or less. It might be worthwhile to get out the lying-in hospital returns for I see that the Rotunda death rate is about a half what it was. "Throw thy seed upon the waters and thou shalt receive it again after many days."<sup>57</sup>

Source: Excerpt from a letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/104

20 December 1886

I had already sent that particularly good little book *Obstetric Aphorisms*<sup>58</sup> to Lady Dufferin and to a Madras Vernacular Education Society, which asks me almost the same questions as Lady Dufferin, also Dr Croom's . . . the same, to both. . . . I did send out "Combe on Infancy" but I think I will send another copy or two. Do you think Dr Croom would publish his "Lectures to Nurses on Midwifery and on the Nursing Required in the Various Diseases of Women"? It would be so valuable. Then I would send that out. And pray make Dr Affleck publish his Nursing Lectures on "Fevers." I should like to send him my very grateful regards, if I dared. Oh! make a beautiful "Edinburgh series of nurses books"—how invaluable they would be.

**Editor:** In a letter to A.L. Pringle in 1887 Nightingale stated: "The best institution for lady physician-accoucheurs *was* in Russia. The grand duchess's [Helen] nurses were excellent."<sup>59</sup> Nightingale referred to Robert Sydenham Fancourt Barnes's midwifery book with Mary Scharlieb in 1887 and sent his books to nurses in 1888 and 1892.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> A paraphrase of Eccl 11:1.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Griffiths Swayne, *Obstetric Aphorisms: For the Use of Students Commencing Midwifery Practice*, first published 1856 and many editions thereafter.

<sup>59</sup> Excerpt from a letter 12 November 1887, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/87/49.

<sup>60</sup> Notes, ADD Mss 52427 f118, 45808 f189 and 47761 f127.

Source: From a letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/88/4

1 March 1888

I have written and enclose a letter to the secretary of the York Road Lying-in Hospital (whom I only know by a slight correspondence) for Miss Formby, if you like to send it, according to your request. (I send her £2.2., to conciliate her for you.) But for ourselves, we always insisted, as perhaps you know, in the midwifery school we kept for six and a half years for nurses, and have always stoutly stood by it since, on *six months'* training (two months in large *outdoor* [out-patient] practice) and *then* would only certify not as midwife but as midwifery *nurse*. In most, if not all, of the places where these six months' women afterwards served, the doctor was not "nine" but *two* miles off. He might even be in the next street (N.B. All *abnormal* as well as normal cases were under the skilled midwife at the head of the school.)

Would it not be better probably, in order to obtain admittance to the York Road Lying-in Hospital, for Miss Formby to apply to some of the St Thomas' medical officers, Dr Gervis or Dr Cory? Should not Mr Arnold White take this matter in hand, we having done what we can to ascertain the best place to go to for his purposes? (I should deprecate "Endell St.," but if York Road fails, will talk farther about it.)

I want to clean up my own ideas about Miss Formby's "high enterprise" by a little confab with your superior practical knowledge. *We* are not sent, are we? except to the lost sheep of the house of Britain?<sup>61</sup> Is it not a higher "enterprise" to be district nurse to "twenty-five" poor Holborn "families" than to "twenty-five agricultural families" in East Africa? or even to be a trained sister in a hospital ward?

Source: From a letter to Annie Whyte, secretary, General Lying-in Hospital, York Rd., Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/GLI/A36/1

1 March 1888

Might I ask you whether it would be possible for you to admit IMMEDIATELY for *three months'* teaching and training, in midwifery, from our Nightingale Training School for Nurses at St Thomas' Hospital, a trained lady nurse of ours, Miss Formby, who is engaged to go out to East Africa to look after twenty-five agricultural families, emigrants, in *three months'* time. There is therefore not a day to be lost. Miss Formby's age is thirty; she has had three months' experience in the

---

61 A paraphrase of Matt 10:6.

obstetrical ward of St Thomas'. I believe Miss Formby has applied to you and was told that there was no room at present for her.

Might I ask if it would be possible *under the circumstances* to make an exception in her favour, without displacing anyone else? May we take for granted that, at your institution, which has such claims to our admiration, the pupils live *IN* the institution to be ready for cases at night—that they have also *outdoor* practice—that they have constant clinical instruction as well as lectures—and that after a successful three months' training, they are certificated, *not* as midwives but as midwifery *nurses* only?

What *abnormal* cases have they the chance of attending under a skilled midwife? And do the skilled midwives of the institution deliver all abnormal, as well as normal cases?

Pray believe me. Madam,

faithfully yours

Florence Nightingale

Would you kindly send me two copies of the little square book of "Hints," the best I know?

Source: From a letter, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/14

Very dear Sister Frances [Wylde]<sup>62</sup>

22 May 1888

I should have answered your kind note about a matron for Port Said and about Suez before, but unluckily had no help to give. We were asked before for a matron for P. Said, but had no one to spare. We are sending out at once two sisters (at least one is a *stepsister*) to a Muhammadan hospital for women and children at Cairo under the Khedive, who asked for our sisters because it has an English doctor. And we are sending out another immediately to start Lady Ossington's little new agricultural colony in S. Africa in all women's work. I have pocketed my principles and got her the three months' (they give no more) training at York Road Lying-in Hospital and the examination and certificate of the Obstetrical Society. You know under dear mother [Mary Jones] we always required *six* months to qualify as midwifery *nurse* and would certify only as *nurse* not as midwife. Hence you will say my principles are gone to the bad and truly.

---

62 Frances Wylde (d. 1909) succeeded Mary Jones as superior of St Mary's Convent, Kensington, the community established by the St John's sisters on the break with the council in 1868; correspondence with her is on p 1021 below.

You know we asked dear mother to undertake York Road. We are now asked to undertake the *nursing* of the *abnormal* cases of OUTDOOR lying-in patients, which require skilled nurses *after* delivery, about 150 a year, of St Thomas' Hospital. I do not think we shall, not unless we could hook a midwifery school on it.

*You have not any papers* of dear mother's, have you? which you could *kindly lend me*, showing her system of training our women *in midwifery* on the *outdoor* lying-in cases at King's College Hospital, of which our pupil midwives always had two months' under *their* midwife when the men students were away (after four months in the lying-in *ward* of training). Neither of these African expeditions are quite within what we consider we are there for. But we did not feel we could refuse.

Source: From a letter to Miss Atkinson, matron, or Miss Annie Whyte, secretary, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/GLI/A36/2

24 May 1888

First, allow me to thank you very much for the excellent training and great advantages which Miss Formby has enjoyed during her three months' stay with you, and practice both on indoor and out-of-door lying-in cases. And though I must always deplore that your three months' term of training is not at least six months', so as to give the pupil midwives more practice, and a better chance of seeing abnormal cases, yet I most gratefully acknowledge the superiority of training, practical, sanitary and theoretical, for the infants as well as the mothers, which you give your pupils.

I could wish indeed that a supplement to your excellent little book (for which I beg to enclose 3/, two copies, which you kindly sent me) were published, containing those lessons on the care and feeding of infants, which I understand Miss Atkinson so wisely gives to the nurses.

**Editor:** A letter to Angelique Lucille Pringle said: "I wish we knew more of that female garrison hospital at Woolwich, as they give a year (instead of three months). Do you think it might possibly develop into a training school for midwifery nurses? or are the cases all too slight and too few?"<sup>63</sup>

There is a note regarding "a manual for midwives using Playfair and other books I sent, in Urdu, with translations. Most important to train

---

63 Excerpt from letter 31 July 1888, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/70.



native lady doctors and *midwives*. Lady Dufferin now gives the midwives a year's education. Before native women did not care for them."<sup>64</sup>

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47721 f230

13 June 1889

4 to 8 A.M.

*Midwifery Training*. I enclose in another envelope a vile sketch for your "Questions."<sup>65</sup> I am afraid it will be of little or no use to you. But I thought, when you were doing such famous work for all of us, I would just try this morning. They are dreadfully prolix, repetitions, and involved. But if they give you *any* suggestions and you would kindly give me your suggestions, it is possible that I might be able to improve them, if you would tell me how. They are far too much in detail, while perhaps important general questions are omitted.

(I have had time to *glance only* at my own book, but I am pretty sure the sort of questions you want are *not* treated in it.) My questions, now sent, probably betray ignorance. Terms have changed in the last ten or fifteen years. . . .

**Editor:** Much the same material was included in a further letter to Henry Bonham Carter 8 July 1889, ADD Mss 47722 ff12-15, but with the following paragraph added:

*Strictly Private*. But, though they have much modified their registration scheme, how can *we* forsake the principle not only of ourselves but of the best training schools and hospitals and of many of those men you would call the best of the hospital medical profession, which is *that the registration scheme should be put off in ANY shape for some (considerable) time?*

Source: Draft questionnaire, ADD Mss 47721 ff232-38

13 July 1889

"Questions to bring out the training in midwifery—what inquiries should be made of any given lying-in institution in order to determine whether it is suitable for training":

---

64 Note 30 October 1888, ADD Mss 45778 f189. Presumably W.S. Playfair, *Treatise on the Science and Practice of Midwifery*.

65 Perhaps the draft questionnaire below, dated 13 July 1889, or possibly it is a later draft incorporating the advice received; items have been reordered according to paragraph numbers.

1. Whether men students are admitted;
2. Whether the women students are under the authority of a matron or superintendent or under the medical officers as to practice, clinical instruction and supervision, clinical by lectures, by hours, course of duty, indoor, *outdoor*, (a) e.g., after what time or after what experience or practice, i.e., when is she considered equal to being entrusted with outdoor cases?

And by whom she (the pupil midwife) is sent out to attend outdoor cases (a) without a midwife or entirely alone? (b) after what time and by whom the pupil midwifery nurse is allowed to officiate without inspection.

3. What practical instruction she receives in washing and dressing infants, whether this consists in looking on, while the nurse in charge does it, or in doing it herself while the nurse in charge looks on?

4. The same about washing the mothers, nursing them in illness, using medical appliances, catheter, syringe, vaginal tube, etc.

5. Whether the head midwife delivers all cases, normal and abnormal, *in the hospital*—subject to calling in the obstetric physician or house surgeon when required—with the female pupils assisting her?

6. Same question as to *outdoor cases*. After what practice is she allowed to conduct instrumental labours, when to use instrument herself, when forceps, etc., alone?

7. (See 2), when the female student is allowed to attend an outdoor case alone, what are the instructions as to when (under what circumstances) and from whom she is to call in assistance when required?

8. What are the instructions as to antiseptic cleanliness (a) for patients, (b) for herself, (c) for utensils, syringes, catheters, etc., given to the *indoor* pupil, to the *outdoor* pupil? [how to] give the instruction in *antiseptic cleanliness* for the pupil in outdoor cases.

9. What are the domestic arrangements as to accommodation, sleeping rooms, meals, hours, turns of duty, housemaid's work, for themselves?

10. See 2 p 1. What instruction and supervision does she (the student) receive (a) practical, (b) by lectures, from the head midwife, obstetric physician, house surgeon, nurse in charge, older pupils?

- 10a. See 2. Who directs her course as pupil? to indoor duty (duty in the delivery room), *outdoor* duty?

- 10b. See 2. What record does she keep of her cases? and who examines her records, corrects them?

11. What are the rules about *diplomas*, about *certificates* of qualification? What does each of these terms imply? (a) after what course, what

report in practical work, what theoretical examination, what number of normal cases, what number of abnormal cases seen, delivered, superintended, assisted, reported on by her (1) indoor, (2) outdoor? Might she receive a diploma (1) as midwifery nurse, (3) as midwife, (2) as lady's nurse? Midwifery nurse, lady's nurse, conditions so different—in latter case always under an accoucheur. You have nothing to do with “lady's nurses,” but it should be defined or noted (the difference).

(b) What would prevent her receiving her diploma or certificate of qualification? failure in *attending cases*? (who reports on these?) failure in *examination*?

12. What is the duty of the (1) house surgeon *indoor*? (2) house surgeon *outdoor* as regards the pupils? besides regular visits (1) in the wards, (2) to outdoor case? By whom is he called into the delivery room? or to the wards? to assist the officiating woman (2) or to the outdoor case? Who calls in the physician on duty when required? How do the matron and indoor house surgeon mutually arrange their respective hours, i.e., in leave of absence? or for the pupils?

Is the outdoor house surgeon a *student*? *outdoor* house surgeon? How is the *outdoor* house surgeon's duty arranged as regards the pupils? Define the supervision of the woman pupil in outdoor cases, the instruction, management, etc., in outdoor work. How is the district physician called in when required to these cases?

Questions on Training Midwifery *Schools*. I would certainly add:

13. What is the result of the training received by the pupil midwife in the sanitary care of infants as to cleanliness, food, nursing, etc., *in enabling her to teach it to the mothers* (as district trained nurses teach the families)?

N.B. The York Road is, I believe, quite the best place for training. Yet, when I wrote a very civil note to the matron and secretary, who are very kind to me, asking the question above (a midwife they had sent me for a poor charwoman was more utterly ignorant about the *infant* than the old crones of fifty years ago). They replied that “it was quite impossible—they could hardly get the pupil midwives to do their sanitary duty to the infants *in the hospital*” (yet they have a capital little book) “*much less to infants' mothers out.*” I did not say, but district nurses do—your midwives are pre-eminently district nurses. I fancy that the not being ladies has something to do with this kind of inefficiency.

If you kindly wish me to do anything to the questions, please return this and all the other miserable things.

**Editor:** Nightingale was evidently asked by the matron at Belfast, Ellen Pirrie, for advice on training midwives, the intention being to give all nurses in regular training (probationers) three months of midwifery training. This proposal naturally raised all the old questions. It is noteworthy that Nightingale felt that she had to ask about doctors going between maternity and regular medical patients, a major cause of the spreading of puerperal fever.

Source: From a dictated letter, with Nightingale's signature and additions, to Ellen Pirrie, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/89/10, draft letter Add Mss 45809 ff154-55

22 July 1889

*Private.* As for the midwives I hear of your desire "to give all your probationers" "midwifery training" with fear and joy. I do not know exactly the arrangements for the lying-in wards at your infirmary, but you have, I believe, a ward to await lying-in, delivery wards (query two? that one may always be standing empty to be cleansed and aired) and recovery wards. Forgive me for asking questions—it interests me so very much. (You know we had a training school for midwifery nurses for six years and a half.)

What is the average number of lyings-in annually with you? What is the average death rate among them? mothers? babies? What is the average number of puerperal fever cases, or septicemia, if any?

You have, I understood, a good old-fashioned midwife and her assistant, with both of whom you are satisfied. Strictly between you and me, the really good old-fashioned midwife is sometimes a more useful and thorough person than the three-months-old midwifery practitioner, "trained" as they please to call it, for three months in a lying-in hospital here, where she probably sees nothing like the number of cases that you have. You have doubtless a doctor to call in for the abnormal cases and the sick cases. What is your proportion of normal, and what of abnormal cases? Does the doctor give the probationers midwifery instruction? Does he come in from the medical and surgical wards to the lying-in ward, and go out from it to those other wards? After a good, thorough three months' practical training, such as you can approve, in your lying-in wards under a good midwife, do your probationers have any outdoor practice among women lying-in *at home*?

The examination and certificate of the Obstetrical Society which you mention is doubtless excellent as giving your candidates a standing, but you and I beware of thinking that it is anything more, that it teaches anything. A young woman of good education, used to get up subjects and put her knowledge into words, can pass the examination

triumphantly, and get a first-rate certificate, and know little more what to do in practical midwifery and how to do it than an ignoramus. (All this is strictly private) or at least far less than the good experienced old-fashioned midwife, who could not pass the Obstetrical Society's examination to save her life.

No doubt you do not consider your three-months-old probationers as midwives, but midwifery nurses, to know abnormal from normal cases, and when to call in the physician-accoucheur. (In the midwifery training school which we kept, we would not admit candidates for less than six months' training, of which two were spent on outdoor cases. The midwife, who was an excellent midwife, first-rate, delivered all cases, normal and abnormal. The physician-accoucheur was only called in in cases of great difficulty. Yet, after all this practice, we only certified them as midwifery nurses, and not as midwives. We had not a single puerperal accident, during the whole time. As far as we know, those whom we trained have had most successful careers since. In the last year of our school we had alas! puerperal fever from causes outside the lying-in wards, and we closed our training school in consequence and have been too much pressed by other work to reorganize it. Pardon me this little history.)

I do not like to take up your precious time with answering my questions, my dear friend, but anything that you ever are good enough to tell me is of the strongest interest to me, as I am sure you will know. God bless you and your work always and believe me,

yours overflowing but anxiously

*Florence Nightingale*

My love to Miss Lennox, please.

**Editor:** Not knowing whether they needed them, Nightingale did not include any obstetrical books when she sent books useful for nursing to Isabel Eames in Buenos Aires. "And if you have had little or no obstetric practice you know how dangerous it is to dabble in midwifery or obstetrics out [of] books. But if you in course of time tell me you would then practise then I will gladly send them out to you."<sup>66</sup>

A letter to Ellen Pirrie said that she was "so glad of the Belfast guardians' great doings, etc., though I wish the lying-in wards were not on the 'third storey' but separate and more isolated."<sup>67</sup>

---

66 Draft letter 1 December 1889, ADD Mss 45809 f232.

67 Letter to Miss Pirrie 19 April 1890, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/90/7.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47722 f214

18 March 1890

Mr Rathbone's maternity paper. It seems as if this paper combined all the old errors which we have had to fight against thirty years ago in general hospital training. "A lying-in institution"—is there *a* (one) lying-in institution of which the training can be approved? The maternity nurses work "under a doctor." What doctor is there who *practically* understands or teaches the minute nursing, sanitary care of mother and infant after birth? *He* will say: *that* should be taught in the lying-in institution and the *best* lying-in institution says it is *not* taught here. Even "three months is not necessary, because there is a doctor."

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47722 ff224-25

26 March 1890

*Private.* I send as you desire the paper which Mr Rathbone sent me "as the proposed addition to the pamphlet." The feeling I have about it is that the writer ignores that lying-in institutions do *not* train in *maternity* practice. I mentioned to you that I complained to York Road L.I. that the midwives it sent my lying-in patients at home knew and taught nothing about sanitary matters, or even about feeding infants. York Road's answer was perfectly frank: they could not make their midwives *in* training do it in the *hospital*, much less in the lying-in patient's OWN HOME, *after* their training.

(When I—unconscientiously—got Miss Formby into Y.R. I did what this paper suggests, p 4, viz., wrote to Y.R. "stating the points of training they should pay special attention to." And Y.R. most kindly attended to them in Miss Formby's case. But I tell you, privately, the confession of Y.R., certainly the best of the lying-in institutions, to me.)

Page 6 "Three months" the writer thinks, "devoted to midwifery *alone*" makes a trained midwife!! Another thing one of ours told me who had three months' training at Y.R. was that the only "abnormal" case she had seen was in Adelaide small ward, St T.'s.

**Editor:** Nightingale later told Henry Bonham Carter that her remarks about "*maternity training*" or rather non-training *at lying-in hospitals* had been accepted and put in the forefront of Mr Rathbone's book, *page 6*. But Rosalind Paget<sup>68</sup> "says that the Bolton nurses don't do it,

---

68 Rosalind Paget (1855-1948), later Dame, district nursing inspector, niece of William Rathbone.

but can get, she implies, adequate training for a month *at Liverpool!!! or Manchester!!! lying-in hospitals.*" Nightingale went on: Should not a report be called for—only who is to make it? as to the MATERNITY training in *Liverpool lying-in hospitals* and as to whether the midwives when practising at the *lying-in woman's OWN HOME* do fulfill the sanitary rules?<sup>69</sup>

Nightingale met with Rosalind Paget and hoped to clear up "some mistakes" she had. A letter to Henry Bonham Carter a few days later expressed dismay that Paget was so proud of the Midwives' Institute. "WHILE MIDWIVES ARE SO UNTRAINED," the registration of midwives would be "almost as fatal as registration of nurses." She thought that she should, after consultation with him, "write her a few brief lines about this *Midwives' Institute*. She is so clever, *so unfinished*."<sup>70</sup>

Source: From an incomplete letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/90/8

19 June 1890

Miss Paget. PRIVATE. I think it would be convenient, when there is a little more time, for you and me to go over this subject. She was here three hours. I hope some mistakes have been cleared up.

1. She calls *midwifery* maternity. You, her council, mean by *maternity* training, training for *monthly nursing for the poor*. She went on repeating that *maternity training* in the lying-in hospitals is *perfect*, till a lucky guess brought us to the same side of the shield. She then said that there was *no monthly training* AT ALL in the lying-in hospitals.

2. So it is with almost everything. A very few words between the council and her would set her in quite a different position of usefulness, e.g., as to (a) what are her duties as inspector, (b) what are the *duties* of a *district* nurse, (c) what is Mrs Craven's book for? (d) A report is generally supposed to be of *facts* not opinions. She is honestly ignorant of this. (e) Is she to be allowed an *adequate* time to inspect each place, or is she to be hurried over it as at Bolton in order to furnish the council with *something* by a certain hour? I understood her to say that she had only seen three cases.

3. is more hopeless. She (a) is perfectly "table rase" [blank slate] in SANITARY things, anxious only to keep out of scrapes and has no idea of the difference in possible sanitation between hospitals and *homes of the sick poor*; (b) the same thing must be said, e.g., in personal

69 Letter 15 June 1890, ADD Mss 47723 ff18-19.

70 Letter 22 June 1890, ADD Mss 47723 f32.

cleanliness of patient and washing “between blankets,” etc. She is rather inclined to deride doing things for *home* patients that can’t be done for fifty in *a* ward, her ward charge at the London. Except that she is so clever, good and lively, her hospital and midwifery experience and love are decidedly against her doing well in district nursing.

4. *Midwives’ Institute*. The loves of her heart are (1) the London Hospital, (2) her *Midwives’ Institute*, and here she is positively dangerous. She gave me her prospectus. You have probably seen it. She is perfectly aware of the ridiculous, if it were not awful, nature of the *Obstetrical Society examination*. She is perfectly aware that the first effect of registration would be a vast number of incompetent midwives. She is partly aware of the great *want of training*. Yet she sticks to this institute as the panacea. (I think I should WRITE her something upon this. Ought I to communicate with *Mr Rathbone* on the result of our interview? *He* is at least as much wanting as she is as to the defects pointed out of her as a district nursing inspector.)

5. She and I went through the whole of my notes, she entering keenly into it but as if nearly all was new to her. I understood her to say that she went to only -- cases at Bolton: “There was no time.” She had to give in her report at a certain hour. My wonder is that the report was so full as it is. She said that the Bolton committee was so thoroughly “up” in sanitary matters and she was so afraid of being asked questions of what she knew nothing that she evaded the whole thing.

*London Hospital*. She told me a great deal about this, all to the credit of Miss Lückes and the arrangements, none to the credit of the building. Here she was thoroughly at home. About district nursing she was like a clever child.

Source: From two letters to Amy Hawthorn,<sup>71</sup> ADD MSS 45776 ff276-80 and 286-89, both written from Claydon House

24 October 1891

*Most Private*. Have you not a profound disbelief in any lying-in hospital in London or Edinburgh teaching the MONTHLY nursing of the poor? They do not know it themselves.

Do you think it would be possible for you to choose one or two lying-in hospitals, those you consider the best, and tell them what you want for your nurses: management of health before and after confinement, *bedding* (which the midwives ought to do and don’t), stays (did

---

71 Amy E. Hawthorn, nurse and friend.



you ever examine even your own maidservants' *stays*?), personal cleanliness (I don't suppose the *feather-bed* question ever entered a lying-in hospital's category at all), management of infants and teaching the mothers how to do it, cleanliness, dress, fresh air, sleep, food, nursing, cleaning, hand feeding, value of milk, etc.

In this way you would benefit both sides: (1) the lying-in hospitals themselves and (2) your poor lying-in women. We have found the *superintendent* herself must learn and teach these things to the district nurses, for the lying-in hospitals don't and can't. You would do unspeakable good, as you always do, if you saw well to take this tremendous subject in hand. For everybody must be born. But *don't* do it *now*. (I have been told that even royalty finds difficulty in getting good monthly nurses, but royalty can take care of itself and poverty can't.)

One lying-in hospital that I know, to which one of our St Thomas' nurses went (because she was to be sent abroad), very kindly carried out what I wrote to beg of them to do for her.

It is not six months, *or six years*, that a lying-in hospital that would teach *monthly nursing* among the poor on the present system or no system of those hospitals.

PRIVATE. I don't here enter into the midwife question proper, or the medical student midwifery question. About midwives, I think doctors always forget, when they talk of three months' instruction being enough, that they themselves have had 4½ years' previous instruction, but even this four is not appropriate. Dr Playfair (in the preface to his book) exposes the three or six months' system for medical students to learn midwifery in as absurd and criminal.

(A horrible instance of this happened within my knowledge: a medical student and a one-week-old probationer were set to deliver a poor woman. Internal hemorrhage followed and they let her bleed to death without finding it out) or calling in help. This was actually in the lying-in hospital in Edinburgh, supposed to be the best in the world. *Private*.

Nothing surprises one in the way of *tearing* these poor women. The Q.V. Jubilee Institute provides for lying-in instruction without taking into account any of these things. Even Sir James Paget<sup>72</sup> laughs. St Thomas' *Out-Patient* Midwifery Department is no better than any others and we have been asked for a staff of nurses to repair the injuries done, and have not seen our way to do it.

---

72 Sir James Paget (1814-99), medical collaborator and friend.

India is 1000 times worse than England, France and *Germany* worse than England. May this great evil at last awaken attention. I don't of course say all this of myself. Others wiser than I are aware of it.

your devoted

F. Nightingale

Excuse this scraggy letter. P.S. I should say that the *midwifery proper* teaching in Russia and France is complete and perfect. It is the *monthly nursing* that is so bad there and in Germany.

6 November 1891

Your mothers' meetings will be most useful, but, alas! the book you ask for does not exist, nor the lectures. Useful hints are to be found in all, and bad mistakes in science, and worse in practice, in all. *The Making of the Home* by Mrs Barnett, Cassell 1/6<sup>73</sup> is one of these—most useful to you, mischievous in some parts if read to the poor mother. (For example, the logical statement in figures that cocoa is as nutritious as beef; one can only say *it is not*.) Mrs Buckton's *Health in the Home*<sup>74</sup> is another. The first twenty-two pages of Osborn's *Lectures on Home Nursing and Hygiene*, Lewis, 136 Gower St.<sup>75</sup> are recommended. I do not know the book.

As for books on the health of poor mothers before and after lying-in, the book exists still less; it has still to be written. I will send you my little book on lying-in institutions as soon as I get home, but it is not at all what you require. It is simply on the causes of mortality of those institutions, with a sketch of what the administration of a school for midwives might be.

The York Road, Lambeth, Lying-in Hospital has a very small book (for themselves) on mothers and infants, which I think is very good as far as it goes. It is the only one I know. I would send you mine, were I at home. It can be got at the hospital for 1/ or 2/6.

I am sure that it will do the greatest possible good, your taking up this most important, most neglected subject, the care and health of mothers before and after lying-in, the health of infants after birth. *There* is a science and practice for you, dear friend, to create. For created it must be. I am afraid it is not only difficult but impossible to find a lying-in hospital which teaches them. You will have to create that too. You will see, the world is awakening. It will all come, and through you. I seem to

73 Henrietta Octavia Barnett, *The Making of the Home: A Reading Book of Domestic Economy, etc.*, 1885.

74 Catherine M. Buckton, *Health in the House: Twenty-five Lectures on Elementary Physiology in Its Application to the Daily Wants of Man and Animals, etc.*, 1875.

75 Samuel Osborn, *Ambulance Lectures on Home Nursing and Hygiene*, 2nd ed. 1891.

have a great deal more to say. I expected to be in South Street long before this, but county council swarms here. We are kept hard at work.

**Editor:** A note from an interview with Pauline Peter has queries: “How do your probationers learn monthly and sanitary nursing?” and “Antiseptics, what? Permanaganate [a disinfectant].”<sup>76</sup> Also in 1892 Nightingale stressed the need to impress on a potential missionary to India:

The extreme danger of *a little midwifery* knowledge, when even lady doctors, fully educated, have been at a loss about these things in India (with no doctor within perhaps fifty miles, and probably the woman would not see him if he were there). It is deeply to be regretted that *monthly nursing* of mother and infant (feeding, washing, etc.) *at home* is imperfectly taught even at lying-in hospitals in London. *Uncleanliness* is the great demon that has to be fought in India with midwifery, or monthly cases, children.<sup>77</sup>

Source: From a letter to Amy Hawthorn, Add Mss 45776 ff302-05

30 May 1892

I am so glad that you have found errors in the paper you have returned me. I will take care that those who lent it to me shall become aware of those errors.

I have not yet seen any rules for the nurses who are now to attend on the out-patient lying-in cases of St Thomas', though the treasurer was to send me some. I fancy there are none, for all he has sent me is a well-drawn-up record form of each patient's condition from day to day, to be filled up by the nurse. From this it would appear as if only *disease* cases after childbirth are to be taken, which is not strictly speaking monthly nursing.

Since I saw you I have seen and had long talks with several high authorities, one of whom I am sure trains her own district nurses splendid in monthly nursing of the poor. All agree that there is no place where monthly, that is, sanitary nursing of the mother and infant in *ordinary* childbirth, can be learned, least of all from midwives. Yet that there is no training for midwives *wanted*, other than what there is they say all. In other words training is sufficient, because it is *not*. I would fain talk it all over with you again. It's YOU who will have *to do it*, my dear friend, I know quite well.

---

<sup>76</sup> Note 23 May 1892, Add Mss 47761 f127.

<sup>77</sup> Letter to William Robert Fremantle (dean of Ripon, former vicar at Claydon) 18 October 1892, Add Mss 47724 f156. Jessie Boyd Carpenter, daughter of the bishop of Ripon, William Boyd Carpenter, was a nurse at St Thomas'.

Source: From a letter to Miss Christie, "Sister Adelaide," Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/92/8

11 June 1892

As you were good enough to condescend to a wish to have this frightful book, I hasten to lay it at your feet. It is like the midwifery books which represent the art of midwifery as a performance of a series of the most terrific operations. Gynecology besides delights in a natural history of bacilli and a catalogue of the interesting species assembled together in bacteriology.

I was amazed and somewhat comforted to find that they did want "a trained nurse" in one place with a knowledge of "cleanliness." As you know, your humble petitioner spends her life (like a ghost who was looking for his *hand* for 200 years in my brother-in-law's house) in looking for, in any appendix to any gynecological or midwifery book, rules for the care of mother and infant in monthly nursing for the poor, as there are still a *few* women, I believe, who lie-in naturally. If you can find any such, will you kindly direct my attention to it? and particularly any which teach the midwife or monthly nurse to teach the mother how to feed and wash her baby. I wish all blessings on your head and am ever,

yours sincerely and hopefully

Florence Nightingale

Excuse pencil. Dr Cullingworth<sup>78</sup> has been so good as to send me his flyleaf of the rules as to antiseptics and cleanliness for *midwives* with mother and infant, for which I am exceedingly obliged. If the subject comes up, will you thank him for me?

F.N.

Is there any *midwives'* midwifery book which gives a poor chapter on monthly nursing?

Source: From a letter to Ellen Elizabeth Moriarty,<sup>79</sup> Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/95/20

30 October 1895

*Private.* It is rather hard upon you to have to train for the lying-in wards. It is so difficult for you to get good training in London lying-in hospitals. Three months is quite too short a time. Then much the

78 Charles James Cullingworth (1841-1908), author of *Puerperal Fever, a Preventable Disease: A Plea for the More General Adoption of Antiseptics in Midwifery*, 1888.

79 Ellen Elizabeth Moriarty (c1827-?), home sister of the St Marylebone Infirmary, then matron of New Infirmary, Isleworth.

most important part of the matter is to teach the poor mothers the monthly nursing of the baby and indeed the nursing of it till it is a year old, how to *feed* it, how to clothe it, how to wash it. It is said, for instance, that the health of infants is actually degenerating from the want of knowledge of the mothers that *milk* is a *food*. You have a fine opportunity at Isleworth to bring this kind of instruction, but it must be slowly used. Shall you have a midwife over the wards for lying-in patients at the new Brantford infirmary, or will there be a medical man? What are to be the nurses or nurse?

I have known something of midwives among the poor in London; not one of them gave anything but unwise advice to the mothers about the feeding and none at all about the cleanliness. There is one lying-in hospital whose training is much better than the rest. But what the pupil midwives learn is lost and forgotten when they set up for themselves.

What lying-in hospital did you intend to go to? I am afraid that there is much too much regard paid now to books instead of beds in training, "dipped in ink," as the Hindu expression goes, we are all to be -- the greatest mistake that can be made. Beds must come first, books afterwards. We had a training school for five and a half years at one of the great hospitals once. We had to give it up, because infection spread from the general wards.

This of course requires the greatest care wherever the lying-in wards are within the parochial infirmary. Are yours under the same roof? But what I was going to say is that we always gave *six* months' training and two months by bedsides at home. Still we would not call our pupils midwives but only *midwifery nurses*. Miss Hampson, who was one of our sisters at St T.s', is now the matron of the great Rotunda (lying-in) Hospital at Dublin and the training is excellent there. But they only call their midwives *nurses*. Excuse my writing in pencil and excuse my many questions, because I feel such interest in the matter.

ever yours faithfully

F. Nightingale

There is now among *doctors* after their years of studentship a very just outcry that three months' midwifery is too little.

**Editor:** An inquiry from Pauline Peter in 1895 asked if there were any objection "in employing midwives or monthly nurses in connection with and under same management as the district nurses for non-infectious cases." Nightingale noted: "Must think." A note overleaf, regarding

hospital practice obviously, stated: “Matron to go to the lying-in wards first thing in the morning before going to the general wards and in the evening before going to the general wards.”<sup>80</sup> Also in 1895 Nightingale referred to the “best obstetrical book,” by Greig Smith, *Abdominal Surgery*, and Erichsen,<sup>81</sup> “his very best edition, two volumes,” and asked if there were a “third volume coming.”<sup>82</sup> An undated note of roughly this time states:

Q. Charlotte’s three cases came into Marylebone—one died, pyemic in consequence of being left to go out of Q.C. before the proper time at the end of a fortnight—inflammation—not kept clean.<sup>83</sup>

In 1896 Nightingale was asked by Amy Hughes to write a preface to her book on district nursing, one which had many things in it she found objectionable, including the old issue of mixing up regular nursing with midwifery nursing. To Henry Bonham Carter she explained:

Nearly half . . . is occupied upon rules and hints for midwifery nurses and antiseptics they are to use. A great deal of the whole is good, but I cannot possibly mother it, and the dedication to me is rather absurd.<sup>84</sup>

Nightingale explained to Hughes that she and Henry Bonham Carter agreed that the bulk of her paper was “excellent”:

But when you come to the arrangements of the Institute for Country Nursing, you scarcely show yourself cognizant of the difficulties they have had to encounter with the Rural Nursing Association and the Lincolnshire Nursing Association in attempting to combine district nursing in country places with midwifery practice, by the employment of trained midwifery nurses as sick nurses.

She detailed numerous complications, including length of training and costs, which will be dealt with in the second nursing volume. Deliveries at home had their problems (from unclean bedding, for

---

80 Note, Add Mss 47726 f276.

81 J. Greig Smith, *Abdominal Surgery*, 1887; John Eric Erichsen, *The Science and Art of Surgery*, 2 vols.

82 Letter to Miss Easton 18 June 1895, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/95/15.

83 Note, Add Mss 45820 f54.

84 Letter to Henry Bonham Carter [c1896], Add Mss 47727 f159.

example), but Nightingale reminded Hughes of the “terrible mortality” of deliveries in hospital.<sup>85</sup> The book, *Practical Hints on District Nursing*, was published in 1897, dedicated to Nightingale, but without a preface by her.

In 1897 we see Nightingale revisiting the training given at King’s College Hospital, in the letter below. Also in 1897 she sent the new edition of Hart and Barbour’s *Gynaecology* to a nurse.<sup>86</sup>

Source: From a letter to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/97/2

20 April 1897

Could you tell me without much trouble what was the curriculum of the *six months* of the *probationers for midwifery* nursing in the ward under our dear, dear friend [Mary Jones]? what *practical teaching* they had? what *theoretical*? what practice among lying-in women *at home*? and under what midwife? The midwife in the midwifery ward delivered all cases, normal and abnormal, I believe. Was Sir W. Priestley called in at all? It would be very kind of you and valuable for me if you could give me this information, but don’t weary your dear self about it.

May I send you this poor little cheque for your hospital? Would it were more!

**Editor:** The last references by Nightingale to puerperal fever occur later in 1897 with regard to a patient in Charity Ward: Nightingale was in touch with the sister at Adelaide Ward at St Thomas’ about her, sent soup to the patient and was consulted on her being moved.<sup>87</sup> The last involvement Nightingale seems to have had on midwifery in general occurred in 1906, when a midwifery nurse she had “inspired,” Alice Gregory (1867-1944), was invited to her home to “talk of her own work without asking for any response.”<sup>88</sup>

---

85 Letter 8 September 1896, Wellcome Ms 5478/8.

86 Letter to Sister Adelaide 17 September 1897, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/97/15.

87 Letter 3 October 1897, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA).

88 Egbert Morland, *Alice and the Stork, or, The Rise in the Status of the Midwife as Exemplified in the Life of Alice Gregory 1867-1944* 36.

## Conclusions, and What Might Have Been

**Editor:** Monica Baly's assessment in *Florence Nightingale and the Nursing Legacy* seems reasonable, that the result of the midwifery nursing experiment was "on the whole disappointing." It took one quarter of the income of the Nightingale Fund and yet it is doubtful whether it trained more than forty women (66). The material related in this volume seems largely of failure: the midwifery ward and training school were closed after less than six years and never reopened; Nightingale never published a second edition of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, although she gathered a great deal of data to that end. On the positive side her book doubtless had a strong, positive impact and she herself continued to give good advice on the subject, on the construction and design of institutions, civil and military, and on home deliveries.

The Nightingale method of obtaining the best information possible and collecting one's own when that available was inadequate stood her in good stead on so many issues. Here we see its limits, for the answers were not to be found even with the best material of the time to hand. The science on puerperal fever was decades yet in coming and medical experts prevaricated wildly in their opinions on causation. Those who (with the benefit of later knowledge) produced good advice (e.g., Rigby and Simpson), lacked relevant data to support their contentions. The best statistical material, Semmelweis's, scarcely circulated and Nightingale did not know of it. Elizabeth Blackwell's hope that her "valuable" book would "conquer that male opprobrium, puerperal fever," was not to be.<sup>89</sup> It took not only the better use of antiseptics, begun in the 1870s, but the availability of the sulpha drugs in the 1930s and then penicillin in the 1940s to make deaths from puerperal fever rare.<sup>90</sup>

A major theme of the editorial introduction to this unhappy subject was, like an inquiry into a political scandal, "who knew what when." As we leave the issue we are aware of what might have been, that is, if the (limited amount of) useful information on mortality had been available to Nightingale, or indeed to any colleague who understood statistics. Today's feminists would raise questions not only about

89 Letter 30 December 1871, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC2/V30/71.

90 On these later developments see Irvine Loudon, *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever* 85-95.



the exclusion of women from positions of power and the medical profession but from the ranks of the educated, especially the statistically literate. Nightingale could have read and understood Semmelweis's well-grounded work and started the move to lowering death rates from puerperal fever, but she never saw it.

It is revealing that Nightingale did not pursue her preferred goal, the establishment of a woman-led midwifery profession at a level comparable with that of medicine. Opportunities for establishing another training school emerged several times, but Nightingale in the end always declined. I suspect that her grounding as a social scientist kept her back, for data continued to show that death rates were higher where births were conducted by women midwives (in lying-in institutions) than by male doctors and medical students (assisting at home births). The leading midwives, in France, seem never to have addressed the issue of puerperal fever and maternal mortality.

Nightingale's repeated opposition to the registration of midwives reflects respect for data and the Hippocratic oath: do no harm. She could not advocate certification without training, yet training required bringing women into institutions for delivery, and institutions continued to have high death rates. The result was an impasse: she would not start another training institution nor recommend any other project brought to her for her endorsement.

The "great question" to be decided, as she put it in the introduction to *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*, was "whether" a training school for midwifery nurses could be "safely conducted" in any building with many midwifery cases. Evidently the answer remained "No."

**PROSTITUTION, THE CONTAGIOUS  
DISEASES ACTS AND THE TREATMENT OF  
SYPHILITIC PROSTITUTES**

---



## THE REGULATION OF PROSTITUTION BY THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS

---

The Contagious Diseases Acts that Nightingale and a small group of people so vigorously opposed were first legislated in 1864, as a means of addressing the growing problem of sexually transmitted diseases in the army.<sup>1</sup> They targeted women prostitutes, never their male customers. For the army (and navy) prostitution was an essential service. Most men served in places without their wives (marriage could not be forbidden but only a small number of wives were permitted to join their husbands abroad). While little was known about the causes of any sexually transmitted disease and there was no effective treatment for any, a high incidence was associated with garrison towns and naval ports, where large numbers of prostitutes were available.

For the government the problem was the substantial waste of resources. Data from 1860 showed that the proportion of men admitted into hospital on account of venereal disease exceeded one-third average strength; at Portsmouth, a seaport town, it was 503 per 1000 of mean strength. The average number of soldiers constantly in hospital with venereal diseases was 23.69 per 1000. These diseases “have caused a loss

---

1 On the Contagious Diseases Acts see Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State*; Keith Nield, *Prostitution in the Victorian Age: Debates on the Issue from 19th Century Critical Journals*; Linda Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the 19th Century*; Sheldon Amos, *A Comparative Survey of Laws in Force for the Prohibition, Regulation, and Licensing of Vice in England and Other Countries*; Paul McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform*; Susan Brown, “Economical Representations: Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s ‘Jenny,’ Augusta Webster’s ‘A Castaway,’ and the Campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts.” F.B. Smith is as unreliable on this subject as he is generally in his *Florence Nightingale: Reputation and Power*, where he stated that Nightingale “abandoned the issue in 1864 when she realized that the first bill could not be stopped” (196); his article is better: “Ethics and Disease in the Later Nineteenth Century: The Contagious Diseases Acts,” *Historical Studies* 15,171:118-35.

during the year to the army at home equal to 8.69 days of the service of every soldier.” The average stay in hospital for treatment was 23½ days.<sup>2</sup>

For Nightingale and her colleagues the issues were quite different. The problem was prostitution, or vice, not merely its consequence in disease, which they saw as the result of God’s law. They wanted to see the already existing legislation against brothels enforced. While they had no better understanding of the causes of sexually transmitted diseases than the advocates of regulation, they were more aware of its broader consequences in spreading disease to wives and children of infected soldiers and sailors. In the case of syphilis the harm included developmental disabilities in the children. Nightingale and some other women seemed to think that the disease was the consequence of promiscuity or prostitution per se, “vice” or “filthy habits” as opposed to “simple poison” in the language of the day (see p 429 below). Correlation, however, is not causation.

The now-accepted cause of syphilis, *Preponema pallidum* (*Spirochaete pallida*), was not identified until 1905, although the source for gonorrhea was discovered in 1879. Nightingale was then wrong on the theory, we can say with the benefit of hindsight, but her respect for facts and good analysis stood her in good stead in dealing with the issue. Her short papers and memoranda draw on the best data available, make appropriate comparisons and draw reasonable inferences from them. In arguments with Sidney Herbert, for example, she pointed out that the regiments with minimal rates of venereal disease were those with day and reading rooms, or practical measures to minimize recourse to prostitutes (see p 417 below).

Other countries, led by France, had attempted to deal with the problem of sexually transmitted diseases through the compulsory inspection and treatment of prostitutes, the “French system,” or “Continental system,” as the opponents of the Contagious Diseases Acts came to call it. England was the last European country to bring in such legislation.

One of the few doctors to address the subject in print, although not bold enough to mention it by name, was Henry Wyldbore Rumsey, in his essay “The Outline of a Sanitary Code,” in an otherwise remarkably progressive collection, *Essays on State Medicine*, 1856.<sup>3</sup> Rumsey explained:

---

2 United Kingdom Army Medical Department, *Statistical, Sanitary and Medical Reports for the Year 1860* (London: Harrison & Sons for HMSO 1862) 12.

3 Nightingale at least knew of him, for she sent him a copy of her *Notes on Nursing* when it appeared in 1860. Rumsey’s wife wrote Nightingale in 1870 “with a violent declamation” against her for signing the petition against the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1869 (see p 471 below).

“Before entering upon another section of this scheme, I cannot altogether omit to notice a delicate and painful subject regarding which sanitary regulations exist in most civilized countries.” The subject was indeed so delicate that, as a footnote explained, “a mock morality makes it a very crime to name, but which leaves its base imprint more or less marked on every hundredth babe, at least, born in this great metropolis, and which engrafts a host of maladies on half our Saxon race. This of all diseases, is most preventible by coercive legislation.” Further:

So long as a class of women live by the wages of prostitution, they should be considered as offenders against society and public morality, whom it is proper to place under surveillance, and this involves systematic inspection and control, both of which are of great importance, not only for the prevention of diseases of which this unfortunate class are the propagators, but for the diminution and detection of other crimes of which they are often the abettors. Legal inspection in their case is also humane and expedient, as affording them the means of escape from the perils of their miserable lives.<sup>4</sup>

A letter Nightingale wrote her sister in 1854 cites the criminologist Frederic Hill that “prostitution is now the most lucrative female employment” and that needlewomen “always help themselves out by prostitution.”<sup>5</sup> Her earliest involvement with prostitutes, although not with syphilis, is given by novelist Elizabeth Gaskell, a family friend, in letters she wrote shortly after meeting Nightingale at Lea Hurst.

Source: From two letters of Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell,<sup>6</sup> *Letters of Mrs Gaskell* #211 305 and #217 318

Lea Hurst, Matlock

Wednesday evening [11 October 1854]

All the people who wrote about poor George Duckworth’s death say that cholera is *not* infectious, i.e., does not pass from one person to another. Mr Sam Gaskell says so too, and last authority, Miss Florence Nightingale, who went on the 31st of August to take superintendence of the cholera patients in the Middlesex Hospital (where they were obliged to send out their usual patients to take in the patients brought every half hour from the Soho district, Broad St. especially) says that only two nurses had it, one of whom died, the other recovered; that none of the porters, etc.,

<sup>4</sup> *Journal of Public Health* 1855:204.

<sup>5</sup> In *Life and Family* (1:316-17).

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-65), novelist; on whom see p 814.

had it. She herself was up day and night from Friday 1 September afternoon to Sunday afternoon, receiving the poor prostitutes as they came in (they had it the worst and were brought in from their “beat” along Oxford St., all through that Friday night), undressing them and awfully filthy they were, and putting on turpentine *stupes*, etc., all herself to as many as she could manage—never had a touch even of diarrhea. She says, moreover, that one week the chances of recovery seemed as one to ten, but that since the chances of recovery are as twenty to one.

27 October 1854

Speaking of the cholera in the Middlesex Hospital she [Nightingale] said: “The prostitutes come in perpetually—poor creatures staggering off their beat! It took worse hold of them than any. One poor girl, loathsomely filthy, came in, and was dead in four hours. I held her in my arms and I heard her saying something. I bent down to hear. ‘Pray God, that you may never be in the despair I am in at this time.’ I said, ‘Oh, my girl, are you not now more merciful than the God you think you are going to? Yet the real God is far more merciful than any human creature ever was or can ever imagine.’”

**Editor:** During the Crimean War (1854-56) the issue of sexually transmitted disease came up only sporadically. Not until Nightingale began to read Indian sanitary reports after it and became aware of the high rates of infection of soldiers did it come to be a serious matter for her. In 1860 she, now aware of increasing disease, wrote Surgeon-General Thomas Graham Balfour, deputy inspector of military hospitals, asking the causes and means of prevention (see p 416 below). But he was on the other side of the regulation issue as the first letter below shows. In the next letter, 1861, Nightingale (responding to a letter of Douglas Galton’s) was objecting to the incorporation of a lock hospital (for the treatment of syphilitic prostitutes) into a general hospital, for offending the feelings of the “honest sick poor” who would be using it (see p 421 below). She passed on complaints that prostitutes were better cared for than the wives and children of army and navy men.

When Nightingale began to work on the issue she was almost alone. Dr Sutherland was the only one of her core co-workers who shared her progressive views; indeed his faith brought him to such a strong pro-woman position that Nightingale could lift whole passages from his drafts and use them as her own (examples will be given shortly).

Scarcely any of Nightingale’s usual supporters shared her and Sutherland’s position. Sidney Herbert favoured compulsory legisla-

tion, as is clear in a letter where Nightingale referred to their “many discussions” on the point. Herbert, however, died in 1861 before the political fight became serious. It is possible that Nightingale convinced him enough to stave off legislation at that time. Certainly he became sufficiently convinced to work right to the end of his life on day rooms and better living conditions for soldiers, constructive alternatives to regulation. Her good friend Benjamin Jowett was evidently in favour of the legislation, and even had the temerity to write her approvingly of Elizabeth Garrett’s support for the Contagious Diseases Acts.<sup>7</sup> There are joking references to his mistaken views (see p 446 below). Nightingale’s close colleague on so many things, Douglas Galton, seems also to have at least initially favoured the acts, given the fervour of her early letters to him, presumably to get him to change his mind. Even such a “dear friend” as Dr Edmund Alexander Parkes, professor of hygiene and later chair of the Nightingale Fund, went “the whole length with the advocates of legislation” (see p 474 below). Remarkably Nightingale’s long-time antagonist, John Simon (1816-1904), medical officer of health, was on this issue at least not an opponent; in 1870 he opposed extension of the acts (see p 463 below), which does not mean that he opposed their existence at all.

Lord Palmerston (1784-1865), a Liberal and an ally, was the prime minister in 1864 when the first Contagious Diseases Act was passed. Here it seems (but is not clear) that Nightingale made one approach to him in 1863 (see p 440 below). In fact he took no prominent part in forwarding the legislation, but he must have been sufficiently in favour of it to permit it to be introduced and passed.

Nightingale respected those who worked for the voluntary reclamation of prostitutes but thought that most such efforts were futile. She consistently held that measures for prevention were better (see p 422 below).

Her differences with the army on regulation ultimately go back to fundamental philosophical differences as to human nature. Both her egalitarian Christian faith and her republican political philosophy led her to a more noble view of human nature. As she explained to Dr Balfour in the letter immediately below, “The great men in the office always look upon the soldier as an animal whom nothing can check. . . . I don’t.”

---

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Nightingale 30 January 1870, in Vincent Quinn and John Prest, eds., *Dear Miss Nightingale: A Selection of Benjamin Jowett’s Letters to Florence Nightingale 1860-1893* #224, 184.



She sought practical measures to discourage recourse to prostitutes in day rooms at barracks at the least; it was desirable that more enlisted men be permitted to marry and take their wives with them on postings in the letter immediately below. In 1887 still she held that prevention was better than cure (see p 501 below).

Source: From a letter to Dr Balfour, Balfour Papers, ADD Mss 50134 f90, copy ADD Mss 45772 ff238-39

10 December 1860

There is one thing which is seldom out of my head, and that is what it is the fashion to call now the "Social Evil." I am surprised to hear men like Mr Herbert thinking to cope with this by lock hospitals, dispensaries, etc. I am sorry to say I have seen more of this than most *men*. I have seen the French and the English civil system, the French and the English military system. I unhesitatingly prefer the open-faced vice of the English rather than the legitimized system of our neighbours under police and physicians. The best among the latter all say that their system is a failure in preventing disease. I suppose there is no doubt that *this* is increasing in our army, is there?

People are making a "row" about Aldershot. But many places are worse than Aldershot, e.g., Woolwich. What are your ideas about this, about the *causes* of the increase, the means for prevention?

Most satisfactory results have been obtained, have there not? at Gibraltar by the institution there of three "soldiers' homes." The officers say so. I know that Dr Gibson<sup>8</sup> looks upon the substitution of these day rooms and "homes" for canteens and drunkenness as one means of check at Aldershot, in which I entirely agree. The great men in office always look upon the soldier as an animal, whom nothing can check, anymore than I can check my cat from lapping milk. I don't.

I believe that there ought to be an act of Parliament for garrison towns, which would be easily framed, that soldiers' day rooms and clubs, etc., would, as they have been already proved to do, make a great difference. I wish there could be more "leave to marry," but this is not so easy.

ever yours sincerely  
F. Nightingale

---

8 James Brown Gibson (1805-68), deputy inspector-general, later director-general of the Army Medical Department.

Source: From a letter to Sidney Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/69

1 February 1861

*Private.* I am very glad you sent me the Venereal Returns, although Balfour had sent me them before, because I wanted to trouble you with one request and two remarks. It is “becoming a most serious question.”

But first there is *one* regiment which has a minimum of cases of this description. This is the 5th Dragoon Guards.<sup>9</sup> What respect is this regiment different from others in? It has day and reading rooms where the men have perfect liberty, which, encouraged by the officers with coffee, games, light and pictures—and the sale of the coffee covers the greater part of the expenses!! (The officers give the bagatelle board, etc. and I have given maps.)

The *medical fact* is attested by the surgeon and the brigade major. Now this isolated fact does not *prove* the case. But it is very strong *prima facie* evidence for it. The men, if you go in an evening, are all at home instead of wandering about the town. They are smoking, drinking coffee and reading the newspapers, like gentlemen at a club, or playing at bagatelle.

2. I have heard you say (and Colonel Lindsay<sup>10</sup> and Colonel Kennedy are, I happen to know, of the same opinion, as well as many others): “if men want one thing, it is no use to offer them another.” In other words, that the want of that thing is a “final cause,” but this is against experience and physical science both.

That thing is made up of a great many different causes and it is possible to weaken one cause and to strengthen another. If I only said this, it would be nothing (though I am sorry to say few men have had the experience I have had. The experience of hospitals, I always feel, is where you see human nature *tout nu* [entirely nude]. It is one I would introduce no one to). But the practically scientific men *who know most*, and far more in France than in England, though nobody will believe this, *all* say it.

It is well known that “men about town” are those who furnish the greatest number of these medical cases. Now the garrison soldier in

9 The table showed for the Dragoon Guards 206 admissions per 1000 from venereal diseases for the years 1837-47, compared with 250 for the Foot Guards and 277 for infantry of line.

10 Robert Lindsay (1832-1901), later Lord Lindsay and then Baron Wantage, served with distinction in the Crimean War, later a colleague on relief during the Franco-Prussian War.

England is, of all men, the one most “about town.” And *Portsmouth* is the worst!

It is becoming *so* “serious a question” from the great loss of efficiency and waste of money—because of efficiency—in our army occasioned by it. And it is becoming worse. *And* commanding officers are doing hardly anything to stop it.

3. *My Request.* It is that you will have Sutherland on the day room committee after all. This medical question is one of its most important points. You must have a doctor and I know none but him (for *he* knows both the French and English systems) through whom I could get the facts. (It would be quite impossible for me to “put up” either Lefroy<sup>11</sup> or Galton to these things.) . . .

The more I think of this committee the more I see how much may be accomplished with the existing machinery without *any* expense. Because it is mainly the fault of the C.O.s that there are so few day and reading rooms. *With the existing regulations* they could, if they would take the trouble, have them everywhere.

Therefore I *hope* you will publish the evidence and therefore I hope you will make the inquiry as full as possible. And *therefore* I hope you will have Sutherland and have out the medical question. And therefore I hope you won’t have Colonel Lindsay.

It is very different from anything (e.g., like the Hospital Staff Corps organization) which can be done *directly* from the W.O. This can’t. It *must* depend on commanding officers, on public opinion, on Horse Guards,<sup>12</sup> on commander-in-chief. So I hope there will be a good little blue book.

I *believe* Gibraltar gives the same medical proof as the 5th Dragoon Guards. But I am going to send you the statistics of the latter, when I return yours.

I am only afraid that the whole report, *if fairly done*, will be nothing but one indirect censure on commanding officers. And I believe the inquiry in itself (if there is nothing more) will do much. (You cannot think how in the Indian inquiry we see this—numbers of improvements set on foot by the mere inquiry itself and nothing more.) But, *if this is not done while you are in*, it never will be done at all. And it is such a “serious question.” I have not said a word to Sutherland, So all this comes from me.

F.N.

---

11 Colonel (later Sir) John Henry Lefroy (1817-90), an ally from Crimea days.

12 The headquarters of the War Office was in Horse Guards Parade, hence a reference to the senior administration of the army.

You know I always feel that “leave to marry” in the army must be extended. If you don’t have that, you must have vice. But then I can do nothing about *that*. About this we can.

Source: Undated note to Sidney Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/69

[c1861]

I ought to tell you what is the Guards’ case (according to that great goose, Reeve) supported by Sir Henry Holland.<sup>13</sup> It is that their consumption is the result of syphilis. It is not true, in the first place, for there exists no relation between the two.

I find from Tulloch’s<sup>14</sup> data, v. table [page missing]

Were it true, these geese, to defend the commanding officers, have laid it on a cause *mitigable* by the commanding officers—whereas you have laid it on the barracks, which is the true one. At the same time, it is true that venereal disease is the scourge of our army—hitherto untouched except by you in your report.

It requires a medical man of European experience to tell you all the bearings of it. But it requires an old nurse like me to feel all the horror of it. There is no doubt that much of the disease of our army is occasioned by it. And there is no doubt that much might be done to prevent it.

Our government is the only government in Europe which takes no cognizance of it. But, to my mind, the measures adopted to prevent it abroad are far worse than the disease. Far better the open vice in our streets—with the penalty attached to it by God—than the systematized and regularized vice in France—with its police regulations averting God’s penalty.

The measures that *could* be adopted to mitigate the evil alluded to in your report would be:

1. Employments, exercises, certain gymnastics, day rooms and reading rooms for the men—in short, everything to make their barracks comfortable, to amuse and interest them, to prevent them wishing to go out, *to exercise their bodies* and occupy their minds.

2. Whatever could be done to enable the men to marry early, to marry as the reward of good conduct and to marry *respectable* women

13 Henry Reeve (1813-95), editor of the *Edinburgh Review*; Sir Henry Holland (1788-1873), physician to the queen.

14 Major-General Alexander Tulloch (1803-64), member of the sanitary commission that went to Scutari and a Nightingale ally.

would do something (but not much) to leaven the mass. At present, marriage in the army is nothing but a licensed concubinage. (The first, however, is the real physical remedy. It is practical and not at all romantic. And medical men would agree in it.)

In the Crimea, the French and Russian armies had their regular imported establishments *of those women*. So had our German Legion. We, of course (and that is so like humbugging England) had no such thing. But our *wives* did the business.

Little do the good innocent lady fools of England know what it is to conduct a set of female nurses through an army in the field without a scrape. Or they would not have found fault with our *necessitated* discipline and reserve.

It has happened to me to have to report a *sentry*! on duty (in the Crimea) for an attempt by night upon a soldier's sick wife, whom we were nursing, and to be told that, if I "chose to proceed, the man must suffer death. *But how could anything else be expected?*" I desisted. Not at all because I should have recoiled from taking the man's life, if it would have done any good. But it seemed to me hopeless to try for good in that manner, when the authorities considered the crime a matter of course. In a similar but less flagrant instance at Scutari, Lord W. Paulet<sup>15</sup> refused to take any notice because he "would not make a good N.C. officer *desert!*" although a breach of military duty was also included in the sin.

I have written all this because the dreadful sin and amount of syphilis in our army is not to be denied. Your sentence in the report, p xx, is entirely true. And much, very much, might be done to lessen, though not, perhaps, to prevent, the evil.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff128-29

Hampstead, N.W.

24 April 1861

We find that the disease of vice is daily increasing in the army so that fully one half of all the sickness *at home* is owing to that. And that the absolute incuria of the magistrates (even to enforce the existing law) as at Aldershot, Chatham and all our garrison towns makes the public houses nothing but bad houses, where prostitutes are openly kept by the beer house keepers for their customers.

---

15 Lord William Paulet (1804-93), brigadier-general, commander in the Bosphorus.

And it is to be feared that the present war secretary [G. Lewis], who is totally ignorant of his business, considers that there is no remedy for this but the French plan (of inspection and breveting of the women)—a plan invented expressly to degrade the national character. We find (2) that the most ordinary day room, evening club, or whatever it may be called, will draw away the men from these places of resort—so much do they prefer morality to immorality. But it must be “free and easy” as to its rules. Smoking must be allowed—and, as the majority are not “reading men,” it must not partake so much of the character of a reading room as of a club. Tea and coffee must be sold, dominoes and chess, etc., given, the room well lighted, illustrated newspapers supplied. And you are *quite sure* of a large attendance.

Source: From two letters to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45759 ff234-37 and 238-40

25 June 1861

But to combine a lock with a general hospital in this way is a radically vicious thing to do. You don't know what the honest sick poor say; I do. They say yes, the wretches who bring disease upon our husbands and sons are cared for and cured, to be turned out again to pursue their vile trade again. And what does government do for the sick *wives* and children of soldiers and the sick *wives* and children of sailors? Why, they take more care of the prostitutes than they do of the honest wives. (This is true in India. And there is enough truth in it *everywhere* to make it worthy of notice that the honest sick poor say so.) Now look at this hospital. The best end is given to these wretches. The honest *must* go into their end if they are sick. Because they can't help themselves. But what will they say? Depend upon it, it does not do to lower this tone of feeling among them. The only place to put your lock wards, if you will have them, is by themselves on that tongue of land which runs out. And build a high wall between. This is what is done in any honest seaport.

The sick poor say the lock charity is the only charity which cures a person to be sent back to vice. Why? Because government cares about having diseased soldiers and sailors. It does not care about having honest soldiers and sailors. If, what has been actually proposed in the War Office, viz., to bring in the French system of registration, medical inspection and treatment, licensed vice, as long as it is healthy, be done (which it will not be, because our whole national feeling revolts against it) I can conceive no completion of the system of lock hospitals which will more tend to debase our national character. I can tell

you (I who have seen the French and British armies) what that is. I have not the least objection to this letter being shown to Sir J. Liddell<sup>16</sup> who, I believe, more than half agrees with me. And I will not sanction in any way your pair of trousers.

yours

Florence Nightingale

Let me say that I am perfectly aware that (what I have related of) the tone of feeling of our honest poor is partly exaggerated, that a great deal *is* done to reclaim these poor wretches. But I entirely agree with the honest wives in this: you cannot reclaim prostitutes; you must prevent prostitution. The last way to do this (or rather the best way to increase prostitution) is to provide means free of expense and ostentatiously handsome and comfortable for the cure of the disease it entails. If you were to provide means for the marriage of one honest soldier or sailor, or for keeping him honest, if unmarried, by proper occupation and amusement, you would really prevent prostitution more than by reclaiming ten prostitutes.

In civil life you don't expect that *every* workman who does not marry before he is thirty will become diseased. In military life, you do. Why? Because a workman may have occupation and amusement and consort with honest women. This is a horrible subject and people always say, a woman can't know anything about it. It is because I know more about the actual workings of the thing in the national mind and body than most men that I cannot hold my tongue.

I believe I was the principal means of putting a stop to the horrible proposition in the War Office above alluded to (by procuring information from France of the effects of it there). I wish my life were beginning instead of ending.

F.N.

I think I could do something to inoculate the country with this view of preventing instead of cure. Every time you provide a hospital for sick wives and children, means for making marriage respectable, for making the soldier's life comfortable, you are doing something towards it. Every time you provide means for making prostitution comfortable, you are doing something against it.

F.N.

---

16 Sir John Liddell (1794-1868), director-general of the Medical Department of the navy, member of the Nightingale Fund Council.

2 July 1861

I presume the upper storey is to be female. Female lock cases are different. They are generally severe, often in danger. They require the best nursing and closest surveillance from a very competent woman (and no surveillance I have ever seen prevents the appointments for further vice being made actually in ward). A woman's lock ward is a far sadder place and more hard to manage than a man's. But you won't get a head nurse *competent* to manage for these arrangements (which are made for the patients). *Such* a head nurse is, and ought to be, very highly paid.

Don't ask Sir J. Liddell about *this*, for I made the closest personal inquiry into the nursing at Haslar, and the character of the nurses there is notorious. I wish we were well out of this, or rather had never undertaken it. No one but a John Bull (and a seaport John Bull) would ever put the two sexes of lock cases on two flats of the same building, if, as I suppose, this is the case here. Male and female lock cases ought to be on different sides, if under the same roof at all.

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8999/31 and 32

12 July 1861

I am going to write about a strange thing for me to do, but I have tried the war minister in vain. It has occurred to me that the "Society for the Suppression of Vice," whose offices are in Lincoln's Inn Fields, might do something for us and that you would be the person to find it out.

Both at Aldershot and at Chatham *illegal* facilities to prostitution are offered by publicans to soldiers. For example, publicans sell a one penny drink for four pence, for which the man receives a ticket which admits him to the superior brothel, or three pence which admits him to the inferior brothel, both on the publican's own premises. Or publicans keep prostitutes as their domestic servants.

Commanding officers are well aware of these facts and deplore them far more than our Cabinet ministers do. But they are not generally men of much resource. They say they cannot bring the magistrates to act against these practices, not because the law, but because the magistrates refuse to act. I suppose the Home Office could make them act. I will not enter more into facts till I know from you what, if anything, can be done. Of course the parish interests arrayed in favour of the publicans are very strong. It is a very thriving trade.

It appears to me so shocking that the government should be actually providing lock hospitals in order to enable its prostitutes to con-



tinue their profession, and will do nothing to prevent it, that I have thought whether private hands could do nothing.

It is a fact that I have been lately requested to make plans for a hospital at Devonport where Lord Herbert's ten prostitutes and the duke of Somerset's<sup>17</sup> fifteen are to be comfortably accommodated, in illness, for the army and navy respectively. And this when we have to beg and sue to get hospital accommodation for honest wives of soldiers.

18 July 1861

I enclose a letter from Captain Jackson, true evidence as to the state of Aldershot, which may be of use to you in the interview with Sir G. Lewis.<sup>18</sup> I can corroborate Captain Jackson's assertion that there is nothing to compare among the young unmarried workmen of even the great seaports of England with the army for immorality and disease. Surely then something might be done. It cannot be said, "It can't be helped."

Source: From a note, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/25

[March 1862]

Colonel Bertie Gordon is one of those true soldiers who care for their men and who feel the evils of being hampered by those who don't. He was hurt by our criticism on this latter class, because he inferred that we criticized his work. . . . He misunderstands the objection. Nobody objects to simply receiving these poor creatures and treating them. The objection is to any system which does more. For example, no law can recognize as lawful both prostitution and marriage without introducing such confusion as to sap moral distinctions. This is no theory. It is an ascertained fact in countries where it is done.

The objection is to any system legalizing both. But any system placing prostitution under the ban of public law, yet trying to save its victims morally, physically or both, is *not* open to objection. But no government should cure a woman merely to turn her out again to sin, and it stands in the place of the church in this matter. It ought to provide for both ends. If only the physical cure is made, and if, for this end, the law is relaxed as regards prostitution, more harm is actually done than good, *even physically*. For moral self-control is relaxed.

The abomination in India is not venereal disease, nor lock hospitals (nor the *refusing* to have lock hospitals) but the licensing of lal

---

17 Edward Adolphus Seymour (1804-85), 12th duke of Somerset, earlier an MP concerned about army issues.

18 George Cornwall Lewis (1806-63), war secretary 1861-63.

bazaars [brothels]. Syphilis in the Indian Army is the result. And all the lock hospitals in the world will never cure it.

*Soldiers' Marriages:* I have always been of Colonel B. Gordon's opinion. If a soldier enlists at eighteen, his ten years' service are over at twenty-eight. If he marries then, he marries earlier than most (provident) men of his class. Let him always marry then, I say. There ought not to be that in the soldier's life which makes earlier marriage necessary. It would go far to remedy the evils mentioned by Colonel Gordon at Calcutta, if the state allowed the men not to marry till then. But anything so dreadful as what he mentions cannot be charged against the practice of marriage. It must be charged to the wretched inefficiency and incompleteness of the army administration.

When such things happen it is the public servants who should be called to account. Sir J. Lawrence<sup>19</sup> prevented them.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/26

Good Friday  
[2 April 1862]

*Private.* I have often heard the remark made by your Frenchman and it is true. The police here *ought* to repress all indecent exhibitions in the streets and all (repressible) temptations to young persons, as they do in Paris. Paris is the most decent city in the world. But I have also heard the best physicians, physicians who had gone into the subject not only with science but with heart and soul (and *not* English) say, "Better 1000 times your London vice in all its frightful openness than our regularized, legalized Paris vice eating into the national soul." And I agree.

England looks upon vice as theft or murder or any other *criminal* action, as the crime to be repressed, the criminal to be saved if possible. France looks upon vice as birth or death or any other *natural* action, not to be performed in the streets, to be provided for as comfortably as possible under cover, and the suffering of it to be averted as much as possible. But to this last God has said "No." *He* has arranged its punishment and police cannot avert it.

The one thing which I think more horrible than either French or English system is the army system here, where a poor stolid country bumpkin of nineteen or twenty, just enlisted, goes into a public house to rest and "have a drink," and has temptation pressed upon him in a

---

19 Sir John Lawrence (1811-79), Lord Lawrence, viceroy of India.

form which the prince of Wales, alas! could not resist. How can this poor ignoramus be supposed to do so?

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/21

7 April 1862

Sir G. Lewis is such a muff that he will do nothing. Lord de Grey<sup>20</sup> perhaps may. I have long been convinced that nothing but such measures as I have put on the other side would do any good. *Although day rooms and clubs we must have, too*, to fill the men's minds with good, while removing the temptation from them to evil.

ever yours affectionately

F.N.

With regard to the abominations alluded to in Captain Jackson's report, the following steps should be taken:

1. the attention of the Home Office directed to the report and copies sent to magistrates calling their attention to it and to putting the law in force;
2. if magistrates won't act, government to apply for a mandamus;
3. if powers not sufficient, an act to be immediately introduced to extend military jurisdiction over all public houses and other places of entertainment within (say) 1½ or 2 miles of camp limits.

Lock hospitals and soldiers' clubs would just be as inefficient *per se* to stem this evil, which is one purely for the police to deal with, as it would be to build day rooms for thieves to prevent them from thieving.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45760 ff63-66

12 April 1862

This is only for yourself. I will try to draw up a paper for Lord de Grey. I only hope we may have *facts* enough to support a conclusion to other minds, long since proved to my own. All evidence *tends to* show that venereal disease is *generated* by vice, not only propagated by infection. The best of the French physicians have long since maintained that the French system entirely fails of the effect intended, so that you actually have the demoralization of that licensing of vice, *without* the diminution of disease. Lock hospitals are found *not* to diminish the number of cases but somewhat to diminish their virulence.

---

20 3rd earl de Grey (1827-1909), secretary of state for war; later 2nd earl of Ripon and viceroy of India.

The whole system (viz., the French system of police and the lock hospital system) is based upon the old superstition of infection, whereas dreadful experience is forcing upon us every day the truth: that vice, between persons who have *no* disease, generates disease. I have not the least objection to your showing this to Lord de Grey, if you like it. I only pray that evidence enough may *now* be found to support this statement. But, whether it is or no, you will see, though I shall not, ten years hence, that this is then the acknowledged opinion of Europe.

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/22 and 27

12 April 1862

*Private.* I find a strong impression in the War Office that you had better do what you think fit in the House of Commons (1) about directing attention to the state of vice in the army; (2) about the Iron House at Aldershot, for that otherwise Sir G. Lewis will do nothing.

At last Saturday's meetings the duke of Cambridge pressed him very much to give the Iron House to Mr Pordmore [?] for the *officers*. And Sir G.L. only said, le roi s'avisera [the king will see to it], and the Horse Guards still expect to get it! About the other thing, he is still less likely to act, unless forced by the House of Commons, so they tell me.

Lord de Grey sent to me (and I have done it and sent it) to write a minute upon day rooms to put forward in the War Office *and upon the other thing*. In answer to what the W.O. often urges for adopting lock hospitals and the French system, I should like to write to you someday the overwhelming evidence we have that venereal disease is *generated* by vice, not only *communicated* by infection; (2) that the French system, as is acknowledged by themselves, fails even in averting the disease, which is all they use it for; (3) that lock hospitals scarcely check the evil, for it is vice which makes it, not infection.

17 April 1862

If it would interest you to glance over the enclosed paper, which I have prepared for Lord de Grey, pray do. But I must trouble you to send it me back in an hour.

### “Note on the Supposed Protection”

**Editor:** The paper Nightingale referred to (immediately above) as having been prepared for Lord de Grey was her unpublished “Note on the Supposed Protection Afforded against Venereal Disease, by Recognizing Prostitution and Putting It under Police Regulation.” The title is quite descriptive, for the short paper deals statistically with the “supposed protection,” showing that rates of venereal disease were not lower where the “protection” of legislation existed. It also argued for alternative ways of dealing with the evil, the evil of course being the vice of prostitution, not the fact of the disease ensuing. The paper was evidently drafted in April 1862 and circulated to some people presumably in handwritten form. It is undated. A bill from the printers for twenty copies is dated April 1863, suggesting that it was only printed then.<sup>21</sup>

The paper at least had some effect on Lord de Grey, for a letter to her brother-in-law said that her facts had “shaken his views with regard to police regulations (French).”<sup>22</sup>

Source: Florence Nightingale, “Note on the Supposed Protection Afforded against Venereal Disease, by Recognizing Prostitution and Putting It under Police Regulation.” Private and Confidential [1862]

1. There is absolutely no evidence that there is less syphilis among populations under police restrictions and certificates of health than among populations under none. It is pure assertion.

2. The first step, therefore, requisite before the protective power of regulation can be admitted, is to discard mere opinion, and to obtain correct statistics of syphilis in England to contrast with those of parts of France and Belgium, where the police arrangements in this particular are supposed to be most complete.

3. There is no satisfactory evidence that syphilis is propagated *only* by contact with infected persons. This again is pure assertion. It rests exactly on the same evidence as does the presumed origin of smallpox solely from contagion. Syphilis may be the result of one kind of foulness, smallpox of another. *Because* syphilis is inoculable, which nobody denies, *because* smallpox is inoculable, which nobody denies, *therefore* it is asserted syphilis or smallpox is not to be generated by a repetition of the same neglects which first gave it birth, which has to be proved.

---

21 Bill from Eyre & Spottiswoode April 1863, ADD Mss 45798 f157.

22 Letter 29 April 1862, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/33.

4. There is no satisfactory evidence that both these diseases are not propagated as much by filthy habits as by simple poison.

5. People who start upon the hypothesis that syphilis is a specific poison, always marking its presence by visible signs, and only to be propagated by contact with the visible sign, overlook the absence of complete evidence on which to rest such a hypothesis. And yet on this hypothesis they are willing to establish a system of police regulations, which is, in fact, the recognition of vice by law and the introduction of an *immoral* principle.

6. Still, if it can be proved that syphilis has been suppressed by police regulation, the question should be studied as a branch of sanitary medicine.

7. But at present the whole evidence on which the efficacy of police interference is supposed to rest is absolutely nothing more than was the hypothesis on which the whole system of quarantine (now nearly abolished in all civilized countries) rested.

8. As regards civil populations, the proof of protection from syphilis by police regulation is *absent*. Yet any repressive measures for protecting the army must include repressive measures for the whole civil population among whom the army is placed, so that we are asked to recognize vice on hypothetic grounds, in order that we may hypothetically diminish its consequences after recognition.

9. What the probabilities are of such a result being attained may be gathered from the table at the end, collected from the Army Medical Reports, showing the comparative frequency of venereal disease among different bodies of troops. It certainly does *not* show police regulation to be the likely means of preventing it. Not only does the percentage of admissions to strength from venereal disease differ remarkably at different stations and in different years, but also among different arms.

(1) First, as regards stations and years, the admissions per 1000 in different groups of years vary at:

St Helena	from	32 to 102, to 92 and 71;
Bermuda	"	39 to 64 and 80;
Cape	"	210 to 130, 170 and 157;
Canada	"	99 to 102, 117 to 113;
Ceylon	"	72 to 93, to 242 and 227;
Newfoundland	"	33 to 17 and 18;
New Zealand	"	31 to 46 and 23;

while home stations had no less than 422 per 1000 in 1859, showing an increase on nearly one half upon former averages. The proportion

was about 346 in 1860, the circumstances remaining the same (Reports 1859-60, Army Medical Department).

These figures are quite enough to show that there is some other influence at work in determining the greater or less prevalence of venereal disease besides police regulations, for none of these stations are under any such.

(2) Second, as regards arms of the service: there is a remarkable variation as to the number of attacks in different arms and in different years, as follows:

	<i>Admissions per 1000</i>		
	<i>1837-46</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>1860</i>
Dragoon Guards and Cavalry	206	402	356
Foot Guards	250	338	287
Royal Artillery	392	571	446
Infantry (Line)	277	399	324
Military Train	—	580	427

In different groups of years the admissions per 1000 have varied:

Cavalry from 181 to 206 and 402 to 356;

Infantry [from] 277 [to] 399 [and] 324;

Foot Guards [from] 250 [to] 338 [and] 287.

Here are different groups of men living under the same moral conditions, giving very different amounts of disease. All under the same *absence* of police regulation.

(3) Third, as regards stations *under* police regulation: Gibraltar, Malta and the Ionian Islands have been for years under what is considered as rigid a police system as can be carried out. All infected women are at once sent to hospital. We should naturally expect a very marked effect in these garrisons. The following are the results of this police inspection of prostitutes on bodies of men living among small fixed groups of population:

	<i>Admissions per 1000</i>			
	<i>1817-36</i>	<i>1837-46</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>1860</i>
Malta	180	99	149	148
Gibraltar	57	78	259	171
Ionian Islands	66	85	138	117

This disease appears to care little for the police, and to be guided by other laws entirely.

If we compare the admission from venereal disease among troops at these stations with others (in warm climates) where no preventive measures are carried out, we obtain the following results:

<i>Under Police Regulation</i>				
<i>Admissions per 1000</i>				
	<i>1817-36</i>	<i>1837-46</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>1860</i>
Malta	180	99	149	148
Gibraltar	57	78	259	171
Ionian Islands	66	85	138	117

<i>Not Under Police Regulation</i>				
Bermudas	39	80	64	—
Sierra Leone	64	—	106	—
St Helena	32	102 <sup>1</sup>	92	71
Mauritius	115	78 <sup>2</sup>	74	76
Windward and Leeward	35	77 <sup>3</sup>	118	126
Jamaica	20	40	213	76
Ceylon	72	93 <sup>4</sup>	242	227

<sup>1</sup> 1837-56   <sup>2</sup> 1838-54   <sup>3</sup> 1837-55   <sup>4</sup> 1837-56

The mean results for these groups of years are as follows:

<i>Admissions per 1000</i>				
	<i>1817-36</i>	<i>1837-46</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>1860</i>
Warm climate stations <i>under</i> police arrangements for preventing disease	101	87	182	145
Warm climate stations <i>not</i> under police arrangements	62½	75½	129½	115

The unprotected foreign stations in warm climates in the table gave 95 per 1000 annual admissions to strength during these years, while the protected stations gave 129 per 1000.

10. Thus, the assumed protection of the troops at Malta, Gibraltar and Corfu is simply a myth. When we compare the results there with those among bodies of troops similarly situated at other warm climate stations, the balance is rather the other way, *i.e.*, it is in favour of non-protection in the proportion of 9 to 12.

If indeed the figures prove anything, they prove that restriction by police inspection of these unfortunate women (climatic conditions being similar) tends rather to increase the disease.

11. The only way of dealing with the question, so far as present experience enables us to judge, is: (1) first, as one of nuisance. The number of women can be reduced by suppressing brothels and punishing with the utmost rigour their keepers. This principle is recognized in matters of less importance, *e.g.*, thieving. Thieving cannot be



suppressed and yet thieves, their trainers and reseters are punished, although thieving is a much less injury to society than prostitution. The consequences of prostitution pass into the blood of generations. The sin of the father is visited on the child literally to the third and fourth generation.<sup>23</sup> This evil is *irremediable* as regards health.

Nuisances from filth are interfered with because they injure health. Why not interfere with this nuisance on the same ground? It is said, "Because, if we do, passion will take another direction." This is a pure assertion. In one of the Ionian Islands, Paxo[i], prostitutes are not admitted. There is no syphilis of local origin and it does not appear that there are more illegitimate children. Private prostitution may, after all, exist, but brothel-keeping can be put a stop to anywhere.

(2) Second, every inducement should be afforded to the soldier to keep himself a respectable man by giving him recreation, instruction and amusement, especially by employing him. The idle men are always the worst.

12. If these two remedies were applied, temptation from without as well as from within would be reduced. Both are practicable; both can be done by the state. But, with the evidence which *is* attainable, it would be simply madness (and madness which the country would resent) if we were to begin to abate this great evil (1) by recognizing it *as necessary* and legalizing it; (2) by granting it certain immunities and by providing at the public expense for the medical treatment of diseased women.

These systematizings and legalizings of vice have eaten into the very national heart of France (so say their own best men); and Parent du Châtelet's doctrines,<sup>24</sup> which is their practice, has "cursed the nation with a curse."

Lastly, the effect of temptation in this matter has been altogether overlooked and passion alone has been considered. Our legislation should be all directed to reducing *temptation*. It is the turning point as regards the diminution of venereal disease.

N.B. Lord Campbell's Act<sup>25</sup> recognizes this principle as regards literature.

---

23 An allusion to Exod 20:5.

24 Alexandre Jean Baptiste Parent du Châtelet, *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris, considérée sous le rapport de l'hygiène publique, de la morale et de l'administration*, 1836.

25 An Act for Compensating the Families of Persons Killed by Accidents, 1846, in effect for death by a wrongful act.

**[TABLE 1]**  
**Table Showing the Annual Proportion of Admissions to Hospital**  
**from Venereal Diseases among British Troops**

		Years and Admissions per 1000 per Annum (Excluding Fractions)			
		Irregular Periods	Per 1000		
Stations and Arms		Per 1000	1837-46	1859	1860
Dragoon Guards, Dragoons, and Cavalry of the Line	1830-37	181	206	402	356
Household Cavalry			—	120	119
Royal Artillery			392 <sup>a</sup>	571 <sup>a</sup>	446
Military Train			—	580	427
Foot Guards			250	338	287
Infantry of Line			277	399	324
Depots			—	399	392
Militia			—	381	—
Gibraltar	1818-36	57	79	259	171
Malta	1817-36	180	99	149	148
Ionian Islands	1817-36	66	85	139	117
Bermuda	1817-36	39	80	64	—
Windward and Leeward Islands	1817-36	35	77 <sup>b</sup>	118	126
Jamaica	1817-36	20	40	213	76
Sierra Leone	1819-36	64	—	—	—
St Helena	1816-37	32	102 <sup>c</sup>	92	71
Mauritius	1818-36	115	78 <sup>d</sup>	74	76
Ceylon	1817-36	72	93 <sup>c</sup>	242	227
Nova Scotia and New Brunswick	1817-36	83	98	112	128
Canada	1817-36	99	117	102	113
Newfoundland			17	33	18
Cape	1818-36	210	130 <sup>e</sup>	170	157
Australia			—	119	144
Tasmania	1839-55	79	—	110	144
New Zealand	1846-55	31	—	46	23
China			—	347	493
India:					
Bengal Presidency					354
Madras					249
Bombay					314

a. Woolwich only   b. 1837-56   c. 1837-56   d. 1838-54   e. 1838-56

NOTE ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE UPON VENEREAL DISEASE  
IN THE ARMY AND NAVY

The result of this committee's inquiry is embodied in two propositions:

1. Compulsory police regulation of prostitution, which the committee themselves do not recommend, because they are not satisfied with the results where it has been introduced;

2. Providing local medical charities at which the poor women could present themselves voluntarily. This second proposition is merely an extension of a system of relief for such cases granted in all towns, partly by the Poor Law medical officer, partly by dispensaries, partly by hospitals. In strict law, nearly the whole class could claim medical treatment under the Poor Law.

At the Liverpool dispensaries, where a great number of this class of cases are treated, there is (or used to be) an inspector, whose duty it is (or was) to discover venereal as well as other cases chargeable to the parish, to separate them from those not chargeable, and to transfer them. It has never been found that this method of dealing with the question at Liverpool has been unsuccessful. There is some lock accommodation also connected with the infirmary there.

In this type [of] case voluntary effort, in combination with the Poor Law, does all that can be done. Why cannot voluntary effort do the same at Portsmouth or Plymouth, to which it is proposed to grant government aid? Voluntary effort by extending itself to meet circumstances could cover the whole ground, but, if government is to find money, it will certainly have to find the whole of it. And *practically* it would be impossible to separate that class of cases from other dispensary cases. They would all have to go together.

As to the presumed protection given at Malta by the police system, as cited by the committee, there is simply no proof whatever afforded by the statistics; it is all opinion. While Dr Armstrong is rejoicing over the diminution of disease among sailors, which he supposes to be due to the Malta police, the army statistics show that the soldiers are suffering as much as usual.

The recommendation made by the committee that healthy, innocent and manly amusements should be provided for the men to keep them from the haunts of vice is not new, though very true; indeed it is the only thing likely to be of any use.

There is one serious question which suggests itself on reading this report, which should be brought under the notice of the director-general.

It has been stated on good authority that army medical officers are wanting in knowledge of the treatment of this disease, and that this accounts for the high percentage of constantly sick in military hospitals and the extent of invaliding from syphilis. The remedy is to give more attention to the study of the disease at the Army Medical School.

To sum up. Up to the present time we have arrived at these conclusions: There is no proof that legal recognition of prostitution and police regulation are protective of the soldier's health. The most likely means of diminishing the *disease* (*not* the evil) are an extension of voluntary dispensary relief for the poor women to these as well as to other cases of disease; but, above all, the soldiers should be provided with every means of occupation and amusement to keep them out of mischief, the only rational remedy for *the evil*.

N.B. Sir John Liddell's reasons for dissent rest on the theoretic proposition that syphilis can be dealt with like plague or sanitary, *i.e.*, *un-sanitary*, evils generally, but he forgets that sanitary improvements are intended to prevent plague, etc. No sanitary improvement will prevent syphilis. The sanitary improvement for syphilis is moral reform, not police regulation, while police regulation would involve authoritative recognition of prostitution, an evil greater than the thing itself.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45760 ff75-76

22 April 1862

I sent my paper to Lord de Grey while you were away. I was very sorry to be obliged to do so; I wanted you to see it. We mean to reproduce all these figures in the Indian report. If they prove anything, they prove that the police arrangements, of which the French used to be so proud, rather increase the disease than not, e.g.; what do you say to this?

	<i>Admissions per 1000</i>		
	1817-36	1837-46	1859
Stations <i>under</i> police arrangements for preventing disease	101	87	182
Stations <i>not under</i> police arrangements	62½	75%	129%

### Nightingale's Attempt to Gain Gladstone's Support

**Editor:** Nightingale attempted to gain the support of W.E. Gladstone, then chancellor of the Exchequer, for her campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts (see *Society and Politics* 5:436-39 for the exchange). She did not succeed, but it seems that she did raise enough doubts in

his mind to keep him silent in the House (he evidently was in favour at first). Gladstone was known for doing “rescue work,” that is, the rehabilitation of prostitutes. Nightingale broached the subject of legislation by writing him 26 April 1862, enclosing a copy of the paper for the War Office (above). She also noted the desire in India for similar legislation, with the results of her analysis that the number of cases was not reduced (5:437). Nightingale evidently felt that she had to explain her interest in the subject: “You will be much surprised at my writing to you on this subject,” but tried to engage his sympathy by saying she had heard that he “would not throw aside any evidence (on either side) which could be offered you.” The letter was short, but firmly argued, “better 1000 times our hideous exposure of vice than the French legalized, protected vice,” which promised protection “where God has said that none is possible.”

Gladstone evidently replied (30 April), although the letter has disappeared, for Nightingale wrote him again (4 May 1862) responding to points on the employment of troops, the usefulness of “direct coercion,” the (further) evils of the “French system,” problems with the Corfu statistics and lock hospitals, especially their use in India. For purposes of developing public policy Nightingale compared prostitution with gambling: legislation prevented temptation in the public streets but did not try to stop gaming in private houses. She explained that prostitutes could not be prevented from exposing themselves “for sale,” but the state could penalize “the trade of one person exposing another person for sale,” or pimping (5:438). But the British Army had no intention of acting against brothels or pimps. Indeed it connived at the provision of prostitutes for the troops, and by severely limiting marriage and family life ensured the “need” for them.

Gladstone presumably replied again, although again the letter is missing, for Nightingale’s next letter below, to Harry Verney, refers to having “heard twice from Gladstone.” Gladstone in fact played no active role on the subject for some years. He answered a question in 1869 on the acts and spoke in the House in 1870 when the royal commission was considering the acts, supporting extension of its work. When the acts were finally suspended and then repealed (1883 and 1886 respectively) he was prime minister. He spoke in the House in both debates (7 May 1883 and 16 March 1886). In 1883 he even revealed that “he was a member of the government at the time they were passed, but he did not know how they were passed or by whom

they were carried through the House.<sup>26</sup> This is a telling point—no wonder Nightingale had difficulties finding out when debates were scheduled if a senior minister did not know!

After the exchange with Gladstone Nightingale approached Lord Stanley,<sup>27</sup> who was then chairing the royal commission on the army in India. It seems that she was successful in this, for no recommendation for compulsory inspection appears in the final report of the Indian royal commission.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/44

[18 May 1862?]

I am very much obliged to you. I have heard twice from Gladstone, who is evidently impressed by my facts *against* the French system, for which he was before in favour. Lord de Grey has told Sir G. Lewis, at my request, that there *is* money for the Portsmouth home, but I doubt anything coming of it. . . .

Colonel Higginson is going to open a soldiers' institute at Montreal, Canada. He wants help very much, he says. . . . As to the duke of Cambridge,<sup>28</sup> he has gone to the bad entirely since Albert's death.

Source: Incomplete letter, Liverpool Record Office, Der 15/4, note: September 1862 ansd.

Hampstead, N.W.

10 September 1862

*Private*

Dear Lord Stanley

I am very glad that you have time to take the trouble of looking over my "evidence." There is one painful point, under "soldiers' wives" (about lock hospitals and "police regulation") which I am very anxious about. I have the strongest conviction, founded not upon sentimental theory but upon minute statistical inquiry, abroad and at home, that these are useless (even were they not immoral) in preventing disease, their sole object.

26 Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* 7 May 1883:651.

27 Edward Henry Stanley, later 15th earl of Derby, took over as chair of the Indian royal commission on Sidney Herbert's illness.

28 The 2nd duke of Cambridge (1819-1904), the only grandson of George III, cousin of Queen Victoria and commander-in-chief of the British Army; he marriedmorganatically Sarah Louisa Fairbrother (Mrs Fitzgeorge).

Even in France, where they are carried out with most stringency, there is absolutely no evidence that they do prevent disease. Lately, a strong effort was made in our War Office to introduce the “French system” among our camps and garrisons at home. And, at the request of the W.O., I drew up the enclosed paper. I am told (by Lord de Grey) that it produced some impression there in the direction which I desired. I venture to send it you, only begging that you will be so good as to return it to me. With my late dear master, I had many discussions on this point, becoming as it is unfortunately too important. But it is obvious that I can scarcely hope to press it on any man as I could on him. [breaks off]

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45760 ff187-88

7 November 1862

Colonel Simmons is exactly like the French government who, in order that the men may not suffer from diseased vice, sets up an “opposition,” healthy vice. Hi! Hi! I wish your Sir G. Lewis, instead of writing a Latin squib on “Hey diddle, diddle,” would spend his time in exploding such doings as this, with a real bona fide pathetic hey diddle.<sup>29</sup>

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/88 and 90

10 February 1863

The important points in the course Sir G. Lewis wishes to take is what he intends by it. If the object is police regulation, after the fashion of the French, there are two objections:

1. It has still to be proved that that system has been *of any use* at all;
2. It has to be proven that the country will bear all that must necessarily follow such a change in the law.

Amongst other things, the House of Commons must declare prostitution a legitimate calling. If England will stand this, then England will stand the suppression of brothels and of all public prostitution, which is what we want. But we *have* proof that you cannot deal with this question in the way proposed. To show this, I send you a paper giving the results of army experience, as proved by their own statistics. I believe you have seen this before. Mr Gladstone has seen it. If you like to show it to Sir G. Lewis, and bring it back to me, pray do.

---

29 Presumably a reference to his *An Essay on the Origin and Formation of the Romance Languages*.

You will see by this what a case the opponents of any proposal for police inspection would have against ministers. And, depend upon it, the case should be used. The real remedy is to make the barracks more of a home. The most decent places the men have to go to now are brothels and beer shops. Give the men an additional room or two to sit and smoke and talk in at their barracks. In large garrisons give them clubs or institutes.

The real answer to police regulations is the passage (marked in red) in Captain P. Smith's letter. I have touched upon the subject at the end of my paper on Sidney Herbert, too. Do these things; see if you can't do without making your country a *licensed* house of ill fame as France is, and then without at all diminishing disease either.

CONFIDENTIAL. I am afraid it is utterly impossible for me to do as Mr Hastings asks. I have no paper ready and the beginning of the session is just my busiest time. No day passes without three or four papers from the W.O. and the Indian commission have chosen just this time to wind up their report.

20 February 1863

*Private.* Of course to me the wish of the war secretary is a command. And therefore I send you the document he asks for, but with this proviso: (1) I have seen such disgraceful opinions emanating from the W.O. on this subject that I mean to take farther means of making public my view of the question than merely submitting it to the war secretary and, therefore, he must not consider my doing so makes it a "confidential" document. (2) I would prefer his not showing it to anyone in the W.O. Or if he does so, he must communicate to me the counter arguments. You see it would destroy all its usefulness if it were said, "Oh! we've seen all that before—Sir G. Lewis has answered all that."

I *have* seen all the documents upon which the report, not yet printed, is founded. And I may tell you that there is not the most ordinary amount of intelligence brought to bear upon the subject. Evidence is adduced which would not stand the test of the most ordinary examination. We have heard all those arguments used *and all exploded* (except by a few old women) in the case of smallpox and plague and in favour of quarantine. *Now nobody* believes in quarantine, except Sir J. Liddell, and *he* is chosen to urge the cure of syphilis by quarantine!!!! Again, Dr Gibson admits the failure (of inspection) at Gibraltar. But he tells Sir G. Lewis that medical officers were bribed by these unfortunate women. Methinks, if this statement were made public, Dr



Gibson would not be many days director-general, if it were known that British gentlemen had been accused by him of such a thing.

My intention is, as soon as I have seen the report and all the documents, to collect together the contrary evidence, which is overwhelming, and of which my little paper is only an atom, to show the glaring folly of some of their statements, and to make it known (not under my own name, of course—that is impossible).

You will see now why I can only show this paper to Sir G. Lewis *as a friend*. Because he will go to Dr Gibson, Dr Gibson as a friend will “answer” (?) it all and the answers will *not* be submitted to me, though they will be *said* to have “convinced” the war secretary. I have no other copy but the one I send you.

ever yours

F.N.

Since I wrote this and after I had actually put up the paper for you, one faction at the W.O. has written to me, strongly urging me, for the very reasons adduced above, not to give up my documents to Sir G. Lewis *till* this disgraceful report is out, in order that we may see how to answer it. I think Sir G. Lewis will understand, if you will read him portions of this letter, that one reason is a logical one, and that the moment *he* sends *me* the report, *I* will send *him* the answer.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/98

Wednesday morning

[15 April 1863]

Could you take or send this to Lord Palmerston, so as to secure his reading it? In case you have yourself already spoken to him, would it be better if you found another messenger (someone who knows Lord P. equally well with yourself) to take it to him? I am actually going down to C. Row to be on the spot this morning in case you have anything to suggest to me.

**Editor:** Nightingale had already recruited Harriet Martineau to work on an issue of hers, implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Sanitary State of the Army in the East, when the regulation of prostitution became a public issue.<sup>30</sup> She had already

---

30 On their collaboration see Lynn McDonald, *Women Founders of the Social Sciences* 209-11, and Lynn McDonald, ed., *Women Theorists on Society and Politics* 158-65 and 199-202.

mentioned the “disease of vice” to her friend in 1861 when she realized the War Office was moving toward compulsory legislation, simply apprising her of the issue (see p 420 above). Not until 1863 did Nightingale ask for specific help, in a letter otherwise on sanitary measures in the American Civil War.

Martineau managed to get a number of articles published in the *Daily News*, but mild in tone, giving their perspective on the constructive alternatives to compulsory legislation. She published these later as a book, *The Contagious Diseases Acts, as Applied to Garrison Towns and Naval Stations*, 1870.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff208-11

Hampstead, N.W.

25 August 1863

I forget whether I have ever mentioned this disagreeable subject to you before. You perhaps know that for the last two years great efforts have been making by the War Office to see if “the country would bear” (that is, if the House of Commons was likely to listen to) any measure which would enable the system of French Medical Police to be introduced among the prostitutes of Aldershot and the other camps. Sir G. Lewis was decidedly in its favour. And Mr Higgins of the India Office proposed (or was proposed to) to “sound” the country by means of the *Times*.

The enclosed paper was drawn up, at Sir G. Lewis’s own request, by me. But, if he was converted, poor man! it was only by death. Since his [recent] death, Mr Higgins applied at the W.O. to know what he was to do and this paper was shown him. But Dr Sutherland’s name was put to it. An extremely abusive correspondence followed, between him and Dr Sutherland, which I did not see.

I have corresponded with Lord de Grey and Mr Gladstone (at their own request) about it. Mr Higgins, however, intends to pursue his purpose of “sounding” the world in the *Times*. There was a leader, vague and foolish, in the *Times* of the 19th (Wednesday). And since that there has been the enclosed letter in the *Times* of 22nd (Saturday) and another leader today, 25th, all three I believe by the same hand, and a letter by another hand today 25th. I am sorry to say that our director-general, a very silly fellow, is decidedly *in favour*.

I received a threatening (anonymous) letter from the Army Medical Department, Whitehall Yard—no need to trouble you with telling you how I knew its origin—in case I continued my opposition. I have

no idea—not that it much matters how they knew that I prompted the “opposition,” or how they knew that paper was mine. Sir G. Lewis himself volunteered secrecy. Of course, if I thought it right, I should go on all the more for their threatening letters. But I don’t. It is not a subject on which I *can* have such special knowledge as to head an opposition of this kind, with my name. However I may choose to go on working.

But I have been asked to ask you to put the *Daily News* to watch the *Times* and, if necessary, to answer it. The enemy has not one tittle of evidence as to the success (in abating disease) of the French Medical Police system, which would be admitted for one moment in a scientific inquiry or in a court of law.

ever yours

F.N.

You know Captain Pilkington Jackson. He became aware at Aldershot of what was going on and said, “to make the plan complete, the prostitutes who survive five years of this life should have Good Service Pensions.” And my brother-in-law, Sir H. Verney, said, “And Jackson should award them!” Certainly, this is logical.

Source: Notes, ADD Mss 45788 ff214-17

3 September 1863

POINTS:

1. The controversy has arisen on account of the prevalence of the disease among soldiers.

2. The soldiers enlist about, or under, twenty, and are free (after ten years’ service) about, or under, thirty. And, according to existing regulation, six out of every 100, besides sergeants, may marry at home—and twelve out of every 100, besides sergeants for India.

But the meaning is this: military law does not and cannot prevent men from marrying. Every soldier may marry if he thinks fit. But the proportion of married people, stated above, are permitted to have quarters in barracks, or lodging money at the public expense and to take their wives to India. The only bar to marriage is that commanding officers are required to discountenance marriages and to explain the “inconvenience and distress” accruing from them especially when regiments proceed on foreign service.

3. The first point that occurs is whether the soldier’s position in this respect is one of greater hardship than the working man’s. What percentage of the labouring class can marry before (or much before)

thirty, *if provident*? Yet it is not expected that every unmarried young working man should fall into vice and disease, even in our worst sea-port towns.

How happens it then that so large a percentage of the army become affected by disease? If the army is more immoral than the working class out of which it is taken, it is because its standard is more immoral. Surely in dealing with this, moral agency should be taken into account. If man were a mere animal, all the consequences of such an organization would have to be incurred, whatever they were. We should have to admit the “social evil” as a social *necessity*, which is what the *Times* correspondent (Mr H.) contends for, and all that follows from it: education, procuration, brothels, syphilis, registration of women, licensing, prosecuting counterband houses, etc. It would no longer be logical to put such a state of things under public stigma—society must *admit* into it what is *necessary*. Of course there could be no sin.

It will be seen also that what is necessary for soldiers must be extended over the entire community. Otherwise police regulation would fail. And hence we have this singular argument that, *because* a certain proportion of men, out of a whole army of (say) 80,000 men, get into hospital every year on account of their vices, *therefore* the present aspect of vice, in its social relations, as it is seen by 30 millions of people, is to be entirely changed by act of Parliament. The thing is absurd.

Such an act could only be the expression of a popular conviction, which does not exist. A few years ago, the legislature, in its wisdom, made vaccination compulsory without being asked to do so. The *Times* of today (3 September) states that “the laws now in force for the purpose of extirpating smallpox are not likely to accomplish their object, and that the system established by law for public vaccination works in an unsatisfactory manner” (extract from Report of Medical Officer, Privy Council). The same newspaper contains a letter on the subject of venereal disease which shows that, even in working a voluntary lock hospital, the medical officers have “the labours of Sisyphus” entailed on them. For the poor wretches rush out “as soon as a ship arrives.”

4. Under a police system like the French, *everything* would be a “labour of Sisyphus.” We should have to legalize what society now repudiates. This could only lead to one result, corruption, which again would engender more disease. And so the end would be worse than the beginning.

5. How much more sensible the opposite course! Let us by all means relieve misery and heal the sick even from vice. But let us inquire how far we might not prevent vice by treating the soldiers as moral agents—and not as animals. Hitherto their barracks have been as uncomfortable as possible. They have had no rational means of employing or amusing themselves. Vice, in their case, and especially in India, is simply the child of idleness. Let the soldier be treated as a man. Make his barrack as far as possible a home. Make it his interest to keep out of hospital by giving him some profitable employment. And we shall have done the best the case admits of. Better have an entirely married and stationary army for home service than licensed prostitution—even if by so licensing it, you could stop disease, *which you cannot*.

6. On the general question, all are agreed that the nightly exhibition of vice in the streets is a great cause of disease from temptation. If the existing law cannot put a stop to this, amend it. Then extend the means of medical relief by dispensaries and hospitals to the required amount. But why should government pay for this, any more than it should pay all the Poor rates? If a certain portion of the public wish to protect another portion from the consequences of their own vice, let them subscribe for the purpose.

7. In regard to the presumed moral results of separate lock women's wards, all nurses' experience agrees in this, that, in these wards, plans for future vice are laid and, if in a seaport town, the coming in of a ship "empties" the said wards, so much for the moral effect of these establishments.

8. Besides all this, it has *still* to be proved, not by medical opinion, not by bad logic, but by positive ascertained statistical fact, that police regulation *does* prevent disease. It has been stated, e.g., that every case cured under police regulation is so much disease prevented. Be it so. But you have set another machinery at work by police regulation in lowering the moral standard of society, which will infallibly increase the disease in another direction.

Source: From two letters to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 f218 and 224-27

Hampstead, N.W.

4 September 1863

Please look at "Correspondent's" letter in today's *Times*, 4 September (Mr H.'s). He has very much taken in "his horns." But he still advocates the French system, "*if necessary*." His figures are extravagantly

wrong. The *D. News* should certainly enlighten the public with a better principle; figures have nothing to do with it: the principle.

Hampstead, N.W.

17 September 1863

I saw the *Saturday Review* and was amazed at its audacity, unless it is simple stupidity.<sup>31</sup> The Malta case, as reported there, contains a statement said to be by the “deputy inspector-general of hospitals” leaving us to suppose that this refers to the army. It refers to the navy and is consequently a misquotation, as you will see at p 19 of the report I enclose. Therefore it does not touch the army question.

At p 25 N, look at the table for troops. It contains eight years of inspection, during which the average admissions were 12.52 percent. It contains one year—of inspection six months—non-inspection six months. For the six months’ inspection the average was 15.71 percent per annum. For the six months’ *non*-inspection the proportion fell to 11.02. And the next year of non-inspection it was 13.13. This is the latest published information.

This gives a very different account from *Saturday Review*. I have marked in blue on the margin the most important passages. Please show up the *Sat. Rev.* Please use the facts in the report and return it to me. There is no other copy.

I am sorry to give one suggestion for work while “Maria” [her niece] is away. I know the loss, for I have no “Maria.” I was glad to see in the article from the “Mountain,” in today’s *Once a Week*, an allusion to the want of hours for meals as one of the causes of ill health among hard workers. In these days when no one but the agricultural labourer, not even the agricultural labourer’s wife, has a digestion, I take it, *after* ill-ventilated bedrooms, the want of a complete hour for the midday meal is a main cause, especially among dressmakers, of the scrofulous or consumptive tendency. It is often alluded to but never strongly dwelt upon.

I mention my experience. If there cannot be a full hour for midday meal, then late dinner and a “snack by way of a damper” is the best. But in dressmaking and some other trades, the late dinner can as little be taken as the midday one free. Nothing, I am certain, destroyed my own health so much as this. For years my dinner was no interruption to my work—if ate at a table at all, it was ate as part of the contents of the table. And I went on during and afterwards with business just the same. Anecdotes are no use, but illustrations are. I am sure, from my

---

31 “The Sin in Scarlet,” *Saturday Review* 12 September 1863:352-53.

large experience, that twice the work and half the sickness would be the result of the full free hours for meals. Mistresses cannot give it to themselves. But they can give it to their workwomen, nurses, etc.

ever yours

F.N.

I may just add (about the first subject of my letter) that a D.I.G. of army hospitals told me, and one favourable to inspection himself, with reference to Dr Armstrong's statement that syphilis had disappeared in the navy during the time of inspection at Malta. "Why, there were no ships there at the time." I do not vouch for this. I tell it you as it was told to me.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/130

[19 September 1863]

I think you misunderstood my letter to Jowett when you say, as if you thought I was only planning whether "private charity" or state law were to cure these poor women. That is not my object at all. My object is to prevent these women being regulated by state law so as to enable (if they could, which they can't) prostitution to be as safe (to men) as marriage. You say, "where is law to step in and where not? Happy study." But should you feel any doubt whether there should be a law of this kind?

"You may murder as much as you please, provided you give no pain to the victim and do not hurt your own hand. If you do, we will put you into hospital to cure your hand, so that you may be able to murder someone else and learn to do it without giving him pain. You may commit as many burglaries as you like, provided you don't break your leg in scaling the house. If you do, here is a surgeon to mend your leg, *in order that* you may continue to be a burglar." This is exactly what they want to do about prostitution in the War Office, and what the *Times*, *Saturday Review* and Mr Jowett advocate, as of course the War Office cannot do it without Parliament.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, Add Mss 45761 ff208-09

9 November 1863

I send you four articles, which I have looked up out of back numbers of the *Daily News* and one out of the *Telegraph* on the subject of medical police regulation. (I believe there have been more.) Of course I do not send them for your information, but merely to show that Mr

Higgins is not going to have it all his own way in the *Times*. The *Times* has ceased its fire lately. And I believe it thinks it has not got much by its motion. Ditto *Saturday Review*. Pray show these to Lord de Grey. And pray return them to me, if you can.

ever yours

F.N.

The *Saturday Review* did not reply to the answer of the *Daily News* to its article, "The Sin in Scarlet,"<sup>32</sup> which was unblushing in its willful falsehood.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/1

2 January 1864

*Private*. I will just tell you how that abominable matter stands at the W.O. I think we have shaken their faith in the alleged success of the French system and, in consequence of my representations, one subsidy at least of £1500 to a lock hospital has been stopped. It was found merely to increase the disease among the men. But, the other side being vociferous, the W.O. thought it must do "something." So the discussion ended in a proposal being made to the Admiralty to appoint a committee simply to ascertain what the facts are, and we drew up tables and forms and sent them to the W.O. for the Admiralty for this purpose. Nothing I believe has been heard of the matter since but it will be necessary to keep a good look out.

It would not be wise to hurry the subject before the House of Commons unless we have to resist some government measure, which we have not to apprehend, so far as we know, at present. Lord Hartington<sup>33</sup> only is in favour, *I believe*.

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/4 and 12

16 January 1864

*Private*. 1. In regard to the Indian letter, he says what is true, that many men are invalided for syphilis, but he does not tell you how much of the invaliding is due to mercury and bad treatment; he does not tell

<sup>32</sup> Indeed the paper continued its campaign with "Prevention and Cure" 19 September 1863:392-93, which argued for including London as well as the garrison and seaport towns in the legislation.

<sup>33</sup> Marquis of Hartington, Spencer Compton Cavendish (1833-1908), a Liberal MP, later the 8th duke of Devonshire.



you (what we know) that the Indian doctors do not understand the subject and invalid men who would be cured in France. These invalids after arriving in England might, many of them, be cured and sent back to service instead of being discharged.

He says what is true, that spirit drinking destroys the men (we know to many times the extent that the other does) and that the liquor is mainly supplied by the prostitutes, whom he proposes to cure. Licensed sin in India is hence a main cause of the sickness in the Indian Army.

2. As to the Haslar authorities, they know as little about law and police as any *men* well can. They propose to take up public women, diseased, and keep them till they are cured; let them begin by defining a “public woman.” The French can’t do it; their system is carried out by *force majeure*. Are we prepared to give over suspected women in this country to the police? It couldn’t be done. But, suppose it could be done, what is the good that would result? The sin would be increased and with it the disease. This is fact.

In the Mediterranean stations this system has been tried and disease increased. If the women are forced in, they don’t go in; they try to conceal themselves, and succeed. And even the immediate good result expected of the measure fails while the immoral result, that these women are locked up on purpose to enable them to go on with sin, remains. Pray wait till the W.O. committee has published *the facts* as to the amount of venereal disease in the (so-called) protected armies.

Almost all naval and military men beg the question and take for granted that the “protecting” system *does* protect.

12 February 1864

*Private.* I rather dread the idea of a royal commission to inquire into the state of common women. What a few able men would do, and do well, and with immense advantage, would, if incorporated into the labours of a royal commission, only make the nation laugh, I am afraid. Unless you can get a competent committee to examine the *medical facts* (facts which have never yet been examined; men have only begged the question) I am afraid more harm than good might be done. I have an article here in the new *Medical Mirror* which tends to show what we have all along said, that the whole mischief is the result of vice, the whole remedy personal cleanliness. The article denies in the strongest terms that any medicine has any curative power. The gist of it mainly is that the best step is to prevent army medical officers from giving mercury.

Set them to press for trades and occupations in the strongest language you possibly can. This is the true prevention.

ever yours

F.N.

We could give you an instance of a boy (a gentleman) of sixteen committing vice twice in forty-eight hours for the first time with two women *not* diseased, and having *what is called* that disease.

Source: From two letters to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff257-59 and 260

25 March 1864

*Private.* The worst of it is that we do not know exactly what the measure is that they are going to bring forward. We believe it to be only that women who enter lock hospitals are to be locked up till well, which is nothing at all but a measure of hospital administration, just as you take precautions to prevent the insane and the delirious from running out into the streets (and which will end in nothing else but this: that you won't be able to catch your hare if you lock her up. She won't come in).

But we do not know and nobody knows and we cannot find out till people are come back to London, which will not be till Monday week. I will then let you know the moment I know anything certainly myself.

I am afraid it would answer no good purpose to communicate the evidence you have to anyone. We do not as yet know what they propose. And your flank might easily be turned if you were to argue from it against unknown proposals. (That evidence bears principally on the comparison between Mediterranean stations where there are police measures and other warm climate stations.)

A good pamphlet would do immense good if prepared so that, as soon as what the government scheme is to be is known, you can insert a criticism thereupon into your pamphlet, before the government scheme is launched. The main point which can be urged at present is that there is no evidence that police measures do good, even in diminishing disease (their advocates always take this for granted, which is just begging the whole question, physical) and that, before Parliament is called on to legislate, there should be evidence—not medical opinion—but facts showing positive decrease by police measures.

If, as we suppose, they simply propose that the poor women, once admitted into a lock hospital, are to be kept till cured, by law—then any general argument against a police system, which is a totally different thing, would be not pertinent.

31 March 1864

*Private.* We have not yet the information we want. But have you seen “the lock hospital dinner” in the *Saturday Review* of 26 March? There is the same dogged disregard of fact—the same self-contradiction (for if one of the statements or propositions is true, then all the others are false) the same “begging the question” as to the utility of a measure, and then going *bang* at it, without any knowledge whatsoever of the subject—that all Jacob Omnium’s articles in the *Times*<sup>34</sup> have shown—on this matter.

Source: Note on proposed legislation, ADD Mss 45762 ff114-15

[March-April 1864]

The Admiralty and War Office to appoint an inspector-general of hospitals to inspect hospital arrangements for diseased women. Police inspector may take up any woman notorious and whom he suspects of being diseased and take her before a magistrate. Magistrate may order inquiry and send diseased woman to hospital, where she must remain, till cured, on pain of being sent to prison.

(2) Any person or agent harbouring diseased women or keeping a house where they are harboured may be proceeded against summarily and imprisoned. Act not to interfere with penalties under existing law for keeping such houses. Act to apply to Portsmouth, Chatham, Plymouth, Aldershot, Devonport, Woolwich, Sheerness.

(3) Proposed to give redress by a summons before a magistrate (to any man injured) against woman or against *house*.

(4) Proposed to add Dover, Shorncliffe, the Curragh (but these are not under metropolitan police. F.N.)

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff263-64

28 April 1864

*Private.* I write in haste, merely to send you a copy of Sir M. Peto’s paper, which I must ask you to return. Sir M. Peto had not a copy left himself. I am carrying out an inquiry at Chatham by which I hope at least to procure a clause punishing *all* procurers *and* solicitors and also to call the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that justices won’t convict even on the existing law against “bawdy houses.”

On Monday I may be able to tell you about the duke of Somerset’s *second* draft.

---

34 Jacob Omnium, pseudonym for the satirist Matthew James Higgins (1810-68).

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff267-68

31 May 1864

I have the second draft of Lord C. Paget's<sup>35</sup> bill at this moment before me. (And I hope to have a copy to send you tomorrow.) Suffice it to say that its principle is just as bad as the first (as per enclosed) with the important addition of (2)—that I have, being desired to criticize, pointed out its dangers as strongly as I could (always dwelling upon this, that it is the *house*, not the woman, against which proceedings should be taken). Adding a proposition to the effect of (3), if they will have the bill, also pointing out that "*solicitors*," where the woman does not walk the streets herself, are not touched at all by the bill, nor beer houses where landlord is the intermediary.

The W.O. added clause (4). If these camps are added, Colchester should be added. Could you return me the enclosed? P 1 gives no summary of the bill. It is only written to remind you of the principle of the first draft. I don't believe any House of Commons will pass this bill. Any honest girl might be locked up all night by mistake by it.

**Editor:** "A Bill for the Prevention of Contagious Diseases at Certain Naval and Military Stations" was printed 20 June 1864, evidently amended from the draft Nightingale saw for none of the clauses coincide. It provided for any "common prostitute" in a public place for purposes of prostitution, within the limits of the act, to be brought before a justice of the peace if believed by the police to have a contagious disease. This first act was confined to major garrison towns and naval ports, which were listed. "Contagious disease" was then defined as "venereal disease." The magistrate could have the designated prostitute examined by a medical practitioner, and if found to have a contagious disease taken to a certified hospital, "there to remain until cured." She could be further sentenced to prison for one month or three months on a subsequent offence after release from hospital. If she quit the hospital without authorization she could be sent back and would be liable to an additional term of four months.

A physician conducted the internal examination, a painful process that women likened to rape. Men were not inspected or subjected to treatment at any stage.

---

35 Lord Clarence Paget, listed as one of three authors of the bill.

Source: From a copy of a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 f271

24 June 1864

On Monday leave was moved for to bring in the (enclosed) bill. Next Monday it is to be read—and “committed to a large committee—so large that the House will accept it without discussion.” I send you my copy, with heads of my remonstrances upon it (received and sent in today). Please return it to me at your convenience. (Ministers may be out on Monday.)

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/47

[July 1864]

No copy of the amended “Contagious Diseases” bill has been sent me. But a copy, left for a few minutes at the W.O., shows that they have avoided our original strictures but by placing the whole female population of the towns (in the act) at the mercy of the inspector of police, and with nothing but a pecuniary compensation for mistake!!!!

Source: From a letter to Dr Balfour, ADD Mss 50134 f124

13 July 1864

*Private.* I am extremely obliged to you for your sheet on the French Army Statistical Report, the which I have seen. Yours is a capital paper. It is a complete analysis and you have seen your way capitally through that labyrinth—and so I put the question on its proper basis. It is all that is necessary to prevent mistake.

I may whisper in your ear that your paper is the first thing which has in the least opened the (very blind) eyes of that very blundering House of Commons’ committee now sitting on the “Contagious Disease” Bill. But do not say I said so.

They have not a single *fact* in their possession excepting yours—and are too stupid to obtain anything but opinions. One of the mps who is on it, says that it is “a bill to enable men to sin at the public expense”—which is the truth.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff272-74

22 July 1864

This is only to tell you (what you know already) that we have lost, and the House of Commons have gained, the “Contagious Diseases” Bill (amended)—and that I will send you back your article, for which we were deeply grateful. The reason it has not been sent back already is that I lent it to one of the mps on the committee to read to

them. All the committee were against us except two: Sir H. Verney and Mr Ayrton.<sup>36</sup>

Lord Hartington said, quite gravely, to his master in the W.O., who told me: "The only way would be to attach a certain number of these women to each regiment *and to put them under religious instruction*" (sic).

I have been under such overwhelming anxiety in sending out sanitary schemes for Indian stations to Sir J. Lawrence, who has been soliciting us for them *for seven months*, that I have not been able to follow this committee as I could have wished—though I cannot reproach myself with having neglected to answer any of their questions. All in vain. I feel a kind of hopeless despair about our things: the W.O. is utterly demoralized. Sir C. Wood<sup>37</sup> does not speak the truth—the H. Guards deserve the V.C. for their cool intrepidity in the face of facts.

To return: I do not like to remind you of your thought of writing a pamphlet. But Colonel North in the House of Commons, and everybody everywhere, repeats the French have succeeded in banishing vice disease from their army. Now we have the facts: the French admissions from vice disease (in the army) are EXACTLY *the same* as the English (in the army)—the French inefficiency (or length of time in hospital) is *one tenth more* than the English—from the same.

I send you a paper, which we have just issued, and which please return at your convenience. Please read the paragraph I have marked. I would gladly write more about our things, but I am quite unable. And so are you, I fear.

Source: From a note, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/58

[ca. August 1864]

Heads of objections against the introduction of the (French) medical police:

1. Evils of introducing a new and utterly foreign system of dealing with a great moral question;
2. Abomination of licensing;
3. Degradation of practice of inspection, degrading to men and women alike;
4. Evil example as regards marriage and consequent arrest of population, as in France;

<sup>36</sup> A.S. Ayrton, Liberal MP for the Tower Hamlets.

<sup>37</sup> Sir Charles Wood (1800-85), secretary of state for India.

5. Abhorrence of whole thing to British habits as well as feelings;
6. Impossibility of carrying out continuously any efficient measure, its inquisitorial nature;
7. As regards soldiers, nothing should be done until they have been treated as moral agents and supplied with instruction, recreation, work. Lastly, total absence of proof that any good has accrued abroad.

And probability that address may be issued to all the congregations of the three kingdoms, urging them to petition against any such measure. It is suggested that Mr Ewart<sup>38</sup> may enter into this whole question on Friday.

Every extant evidence of advantage from legalized prostitution should be challenged at each step. The fact is there is none which would be admitted for a moment on any inquiry. And, if we are to have the foreign system introduced, let it only be after minute inquiry before a public commission. They know not what they say. The real fact is that our lower classes have nothing like the extent of disease caused by vice that they have abroad.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45762 ff175-76

Hampstead, N.W.

9 August 1864

The act prescribes that an inspector of hospitals should be appointed to examine and report on any hospitals or wards which may be offered by the hospital authorities. There are only eleven hospitals or sets of wards required. The occasional inspections do not require the constant services of a medical officer.

We must beg entirely to be excused from pointing out the man (in the terms laid down in Lord de Grey's note). Lord de Grey has the very adviser at his elbow whom he wants, viz., Dr Gibson, who is entirely in favour of his famous act and perfectly adapted by nature and education to appreciate its beauties and "make it succeed." As the whole duty refers to soldiers, the director-general will probably make use of a member of his council to do the inspections.

With regard to the general carrying out of the act: the act should be sent to, and the opinion asked of, the commanding officer at each of the stations named in the act. See Sir Richard Mayne<sup>39</sup> also. He is

---

38 J.C. Ewart, Liberal MP for Liverpool.

39 Sir Richard Mayne (1796-1868), police commissioner.

in favour of men being taught to commit vice at the public expense. We have really not to be called upon to give Lord de Grey information how to do this, because, if the act is applied in its true spirit and not strained illegally, *no* benefit can follow from it. If it is!??? I believe and expect the day will come when Lord de Grey will not find a single man in the Army Medical Department who would degrade himself to do the work. But then it will not be Lord de Grey who will be secretary of state for war then.

List of Hospitals with the *Total No. of Beds*  
for ALL Cases at Places named in the Act

	Beds
Portsmouth	61
South Devon Hosp.	80
New Devonport Hosp.	
Woolwich	none
Rochester	52 (syphilitic)
Sheerness	none
Aldershot	none
Colchester	94 County
Shorncliffe	none
The Curragh	none
(but Kildare	50) County
Cork	80
Queenstown	40

The inspector will have to determine how many of this very limited allowance of beds can be spared for syphilitic cases.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/54

Hampstead, N.W.

23 August 1864

I enclose two letters from the secretary at Malta, written in reply to a request for information as to their police system. Read No. 1 first. It gives an account of the system introduced three years ago. And, if No. 2 had never been written, it would have given a most erroneous idea of the changes introduced and the results.

No. 2, when read after No. 1, blows up the whole affair and converts the whole proceeding into a (very indecent) joke. You will see that the system which was given up (which giving up led to Dr Armstrong's outcry) was nothing more than the grossest corruption and



iniquity, and ended just as it ought to have done. It need hardly be said that such a system could be of no use whatever. Yet the loss of it was cried up (by such as Dr Armstrong) as so great a public calamity that, in order to get rid of his ignorant outcry, they passed the ordinance enclosed. which, No. 1 shows, is not acted upon.

“Surely the force of legislation can no farther go.” The very crimes to which the Maltese custom (not law) gave rise, are the very crimes which we all along dreaded from your new act. As for any protective efficacy, we have no hope. But this is the least evil likely to arise from it. Please note paragraph marked in red, bottom of p 7, No. 1. I think I never saw in so small a compass such a tale of corruption and horror. Governor LeMarchant<sup>40</sup> deserves all credit for having, without any fear or human respect whatever, raked out the whole subject, dismissed the unworthy officials and appointed no matter whom, Maltese or English, who was found worthy. “Inglott,”<sup>41</sup> whom I know, a Maltese, one of LeMarchant’s appointments, is an invaluable officer. Please return me the whole.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff275-79

Hampstead, N.W.

31 August 1864

*Private.* I was very grateful for Miss [Maria] Martineau’s kind letter, telling me just what I wanted to know. With regard to that dreadful act, the present state of things is thus: a commission has been named, of which Mr Skey is to be president, to investigate the whole thing *de novo*. And I was asked to name the W.O. member upon it, which I did, and to write the instructions, which ought to be much what coroners give at inquests, viz., to disregard all you have heard, to forget all you have read and to mind what you are about.

With regard to the working of the act, I was asked to name an army medical officer to work it, which I refused to do, and to indicate the way of working. But I also refused to teach men to sin at the public expense. The medical officer will not be named for a month. It will take him [an]other two months to come to anything. For there is absolutely not enough lock accommodation at the stations named in the act (for I drew up a list of all there was, at the W.O. desire) for him to do anything of what is prescribed in the act.

---

40 Sir Samuel Gasperd LeMarchant (1803-74), governor of Malta.

41 F.V. Inglott, minister of education.

In the meantime, we have received letters from Malta about the working of police inspection there (which tell a tale of corruption and horror such as I never saw before in so small a compass), which show that the medical officer and the police were actually in the pay of the prostitutes and levied unmercifully a tax on these women which, if they did not punctually pay, notice was given against them to appear just at the moment they were exercising their horrid trade, which show that the ignorant outcry made by Dr Armstrong and others against the cessation of the medical police was made against the cessation of a “system of prevention,” which *not* only did not exist, but which could not exist and was in fact a system of corruption and horror without parallel.

These letters I have sent to the W.O., but I mean to send them to you. What I feel is, with regard to Mr Skey’s commission, that, if they will really examine the whole subject *de novo*, that, and nothing less, will do. It is vain for us and two or three others to repeat the same thing. Every army and every navy man is committed to the contagious theory, culminating in the French police system. It is vain for us and two or three others to repeat that we do not go on the female morals’ principle, viz., that, if there were a perfect police system, vice/disease would disappear, but that we do not choose to have it because it would injure morals.

That is a question to be considered, but tomorrow. The question now is and one which everybody, *without the least* inquiry, answers in the affirmative—but which French Army statistics answer in the most decided negative: does police regulation (and quarantine) diminish vice/disease? Supposing syphilis to be the result of contagion and of nothing else, and never to be set up in the constitution by any other means—considering all this, would it not be better to postpone accepting your generous offer to write a pamphlet till some results and some decisions have been come to?

(I take into account your desire not to be called upon in October. But) my belief is that what will happen will be this: that not before three months at earliest will anything come out, and that then, if we are here at all, you will think it better to attack (them) in *D. News*. I have written so fast that I am afraid you will be only bothered by my circumlocution.

All through this month I have been quite beset with work—and I am so much feebler in every way this year. I cannot describe to you what the anxiety is of being single-handed here to urge people to

meet Sir John Lawrence's noble devotion to our cause. Our government always puts off now till after the Parliamentary session any trifles which concern the lives and morals of men only.

I am glad to hear that there has been some relief for you at least from suffering.

ever yours gratefully

F.N.

Have you seen the "Contagious" Act itself? If not, shall I send it you?

### **Further Legislation in the 1860s and the Beginning of the Repeal Movement**

**Editor:** A second act was adopted in 1866 to extend the area of application of the Contagious Diseases Act. Nightingale only noted it briefly, in the first item below. In debate on it Ayrton said that he had opposed the bill of 1864 "because while that measure ministered to vice, it made no provision for the reclamation of the unfortunate women" subject to it. However, the government "had profited by his advice" and many women had been "reclaimed." He moved an amendment which was negatived.<sup>42</sup>

Nightingale did not comment at all on the last stage of amendments made in 1869 but continued to work on treatment and prevention aspects.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Harry Verney, ADD Mss 45791 f33

Thursday

26 April 1866

Many thanks for the "Contagious Diseases" Bill clauses (Special Report). There is no practicality in the bill and it will not prevent a single case of disease. But an important principle is affirmed ("Moral and Religious Instruction," p vi, Mr Ayrton), not that, in my experience, it is possible to reclaim women in that way. Still, it puts a decided veto on the French system of legalizing vice (which this bill does not do). Otherwise the bill leaves the thing just where it found it. And neither army nor navy will lose one case of disease by it.

---

<sup>42</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* 26 April 1866:2176-78.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45764 f140

19 April 1869

As for the Herbert Hospital, I am almost glad that you do not mention a thing I have heard, viz., that Simon Magus<sup>43</sup> (Simon of the Privy Council Office) has been over to inspect it, and that there is talk of its being handed over to the Home Office for a hospital for 650 London prostitutes under the “Contagious Diseases Act.”<sup>44</sup> What a nice destination, worthy of the finest hospital in Europe, as it is!

Source: From a memorandum regarding sanitary progress at home and foreign military stations, Ripon Papers ADD Mss 43546 f141 and ADD Mss 45778 ff60-61

[November 1869]

The “*constantly sick*” in hospital have also fallen off in a remarkable degree. The “Queen’s Regulations” provide hospital accommodation for 10 percent of the strength, and on the supposition that this was formerly found to be necessary (at all events occasionally) we may assume it as an element in the comparison with recent years. In doing so, we find that in the years 1860 to 1866 the “constantly sick” were 5 percent, in 1867 4.24 percent of the strength. (But about 1.8 percent of this is due to syphilitic diseases, not influenced by the nature of the barrack and hospital accommodation.)

By deducting this from both terms, the “constantly sick,” who were 10 percent from all causes would become 8.2 percent from diseases not syphilitic, while at present the non-syphilitic “constantly sick” 2.4 percent. In other words the saving in efficiency and consequently in economy has been lately every year equal to a battalion of 729 men—that is, 729 men are every year in England alive who would have been dead (under the old death rate) and a division 5184 strong are on active duty every year who would have been always sick in bed under the old system over and above the present sick rate.

**Editor:** The third act, adopted in May 1869, seems to have instigated the campaign for repeal. Elizabeth Blackwell gave a paper on the leg-

43 A joking reference to John Simon; Simon Magus was a mythical figure, reputed to possess magical powers through a pact with Satan, and said to believe himself to be above God. The first account of a magician Simon is in Acts 8.

44 The fine new hospital named after Sidney Herbert was underutilized as a military hospital.

isolation at the meetings of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, Bristol, which brought the issue to the attention of progressive academics and writers. In late December 1869 Harriet Martineau published four (anonymous) letters, "by an English-woman," in the *Daily News* outlining the case against the acts and announcing the launching of a public campaign. The last letter, 31 December 1869, included a petition with Nightingale's and Martineau's names at the top.<sup>45</sup> Josephine Butler, the third signator, then took over the campaign for repeal in Britain and was a major activist for repeal on the Continent as well.<sup>46</sup>

Nightingale's friend Benjamin Jowett (1817-93), master of Balliol College, advised Nightingale that "some ladies" he knew "more or less, Mrs Butler and Co." were "getting excited about the contagious disorders bill." His advice, which Nightingale obviously did not take, was negative: "I hope that you have nothing to do with them, for they are not wise people and are, I think, on a wrong tack." He also argued that "The sole question for sanitary reformers is, I think, whether such measures are possible or successful. Miss Garrett's letter, whether you agree with her or not, seemed to me written with great tact and propriety."<sup>47</sup> Nightingale thought otherwise; her critique of Garrett's views in the two letters from "Justina" (below) is devastating.

Nightingale had her own reasons to be cautious in dealing with Josephine Butler, who was notoriously casual with facts. Butler's obvious inaccuracies in her own memoir of the work include a statement that Nightingale spoke to the House of Lords' committee on the subject,<sup>48</sup> which Nightingale did not (nor did she ever speak before any public body). But fundamentally the two were on the same side and Garrett was on the opposite. When other opponents of the acts could not get their letters to the editor published to refute Garrett, Nightingale succeeded in getting two of hers accepted, using a pseudonym,

---

45 See Lynn McDonald, ed., *Women Theorists on Society and Politics* 161-63.

46 See especially Butler's *Government by Police*, 1879 (excerpts are given in Lynn McDonald, ed., *Women Theorists on Society and Politics* 241-42); Butler edited *The Dawn* for the Ladies' National Association for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice and *The Shield*, the official organ of the British Committee of the Federation for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice; see also her memoirs, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade*, 1911.

47 Letter of Benjamin Jowett 30 January 1870, in Quinn and Prest, eds., *Dear Miss Nightingale* #224, 184.

48 Josephine Butler, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* 4.

Justina, one of the very few times in her life she used a false name. When the secretary of the London National Society for Women's Suffrage, Clementia Taylor, wrote Nightingale shortly thereafter (to thank her for her subscription to the society) she also thanked her "most cordially for your admirable letters in the *Pall Mall* signed Justina" (in *Society and Politics* 5:406).

Nightingale's "Justina" letter opens disingenuously, stating that she had looked "anxiously through your columns" hoping that "some 'person' more competent than myself would have undertaken to answer" Garrett, knowing full well that the journal had been sent letters with the women's objections and declined to publish any of them. Even her first sentence is mischievous, that the *Pall Mall Gazette* had "done great service in facilitating discussion of the Contagious Diseases Acts," for it had not, but only published the case for them. Garrett had not understood the differences in categories used by the U.K. and France and even misunderstood the meaning of the English term "invalided" (see p 467 below). Nightingale even accused her of supporting the licensing of prostitutes, which would have rankled. Although Garrett had stressed that no certificate was given to the prostitutes, Nightingale pointed out that the police held the certificates for them, that there was no meaningful difference with the French system. Garrett had "paltered with the truth." Nightingale's two letters are vintage political analysis and sizzle with sarcasm.

Source: Justina [Florence Nightingale], Letter to the Editor, "The Contagious Diseases Acts," *Pall Mall Gazette* 3 March 1870:3

Sir, You have done great service in facilitating discussion of the Contagious Diseases Acts by publishing Miss Garrett's letter on the subject, and each day I have anxiously looked through your columns in the hope of finding that some "person" more competent than myself would have undertaken to answer it. But, as no one has yet done so, I now venture to ask you to publish the following observations.

Miss Garrett, in the third paragraph of her letter, says the question, is legislation necessary? is "strictly a professional question upon which the opinion of trustworthy witnesses ought to be accepted as final," and she adds, "it may fairly be asserted that the verdict of an immense majority of the profession has declared legislation to be necessary." Now, Sir, in the United Kingdom there are upwards of 17,000 medical men, and of these, according to the last published report of the Association for Promoting the Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts, only a few hundreds (the report gives a list of the members of the

association and the total number is below 800, but of these many are clergymen or laymen, so that the medical members of the association probably do not amount to 500)—have given their names as supporters of these acts.

The evidence of Mr Paget, Sir William Jenner<sup>49</sup> and Mr Prescott Hewitt, given before the committee of the House of Lords, and relied upon by Miss Garrett, affords no indication that those gentlemen have acquainted themselves with the effects of legislative control of prostitution where that system has been tried and, if they have not, their opinion as to the expediency of such control is of very little value. Mr Paget distinctly stated to the committee that he had “no personal knowledge of the system on the Continent.” Sir William Jenner advised the extension of the Contagious Diseases Act, but he did so while confessedly ignorant of its effects where already applied. When asked, “Do you know anything at all of the operation of the present act referring to this disease?” he replied, “Only generally.” And when Mr Prescott Hewitt was asked by the committee, “Can you say whether it (the disease in question) is an evil existing to such a degree as to require, if possible, a legislative remedy?” he also admitted his ignorance of the effects of the system of legal control practised in Paris. When this question was put to him, “You cannot, then, give us any information as to the effect of those regulations?” he answered, “No, I hardly could.” Now, in the name of common sense, I ask of what value is the opinion of even these eminent men on a subject of which they are ignorant, to the extent revealed by their own confessions?

If, on the other hand, we ask counsel of men who have really studied the subject, and whose opinion ought, for various reasons, to be most weighty and authoritative, we learn that their verdict is precisely opposite to that of the three distinguished witnesses just quoted. Mr John Simon, surgeon to St Thomas’ Hospital and chief of the Medical Department of the Privy Council, has earnestly considered the question, as in his official position it behoved him to do, and he has become so strongly convinced of the inexpediency of extending the Contagious Diseases Acts that in his last annual report he has, in the course of ten pages devoted to the subject, advanced an earnest plea, supported by various cogent arguments, for the non-extension of

---

49 Sir William Jenner (1815-98), eminent physician, notably to the royal family, discoverer of the difference between typhus and typhoid fever.

those acts, and has expressed his conclusion as follows: "The broad result in my mind is that I very decidedly refrain from recommending any change in that neutral position which English law has hitherto held in regard to the venereal diseases of the civil population."

Again, Dr Balfour, FRS, deputy inspector of military hospitals and head of the statistical branch of the Medical Board, who has had, as he told the committee of the House of Commons, "opportunities of seeing the returns made from different stations," and who has "been called upon at different periods to prepare statements showing what the operation of the act has been," protested against the principle of the Contagious Diseases Acts before the first of them became law, and, in July 1869, declared that he had no reason to alter his opinions "in the main."

I learn from a statement recently made at the London Medical Society that out of the fifty-nine medical men of Nottingham—the only provincial town in which, so far as I am aware, medical opinion on this subject has been thoroughly agitated—fifty-six have signed a protest against the Contagious Diseases Acts. I also learn from the *Medical Mirror* for February that Mr Holmes Coote, surgeon to St Bartholomew's Hospital, Mr R.W. Dunn, surgeon to the Farrington Dispensary, and Dr C. Drysdale, physician to the same dispensary and to other charitable institutions—gentlemen whose names are in the list of promoters of those acts—have withdrawn from the association and have disavowed both its principles and objects. The same journal states that Dr John Chapman's name was inserted in that list without his knowledge or consent, and that he never was a member of that association; and I have reason to believe that even the number of medical men who consented to allow their names to appear in that list will steadily lessen.

At a crowded meeting of the Medical Society of London on 31 January, convened to discuss the Contagious Diseases Acts, the feeling of the majority of the members appeared to be strongly against them and, of the eleven who spoke, six were certainly opposed to them and one was neutral. There are five medical papers published in London: of these three have distinctly pronounced against those acts, one is "halting between two opinions," and one only represents the opinion which Miss Garrett advocates.

Miss Garrett's remedy is the extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts. She quotes from the evidence of several medical men given before the committee of the House of Lords, statements to the effect that "contagious diseases" are very widely diffused and that they do



an immense amount of injury; she also quotes hospital statistics to the same effect and, having filled quite half a column with this evidence, Miss Garrett seems to think that her readers will immediately conclude that legislation is necessary. But I fail to see in the existence of a great amount of disease, however baneful its effects, a proof that legislation is necessary for its repression. It may be so, but certainly Miss Garrett had adduced no proof, and no semblance of a proof even, that it is so.

Miss Garrett appeals to actual experience of the beneficent effects of the act, and I must say she has shown great skill in weaving the few scattered threads of advantage into a substantial-looking piece of stuff, with which she has succeeded in hiding from the eyes of a large number of your readers how really naked of good results the act is. She says that “a decided diminution (of disease) is observed in all but one case, where the failure of the act was due to special causes,” and that “officers in charge of the stations before and after the act came into effect assert emphatically that the act has done great good in every one of the protected places.”

As Miss Garrett has not furnished your readers with any example of what she calls “a decided diminution” of disease, your readers are precluded from forming a precise idea of what, in her opinion, the words “a decided diminution” really mean. I will, therefore, endeavour to help them to form a definite conception of the facts which she denotes by that phrase.

The following table shows the admissions into hospital per 1000 of mean strength for venereal diseases at the stations named for the four years 1865-68:

<i>Stations</i>	<i>1865</i>	<i>1866</i>	<i>1867</i>	<i>1868</i>	<i>Date when act commenced</i>
Devonport and					
Plymouth	360	317	312	280	10 Oct. 1866
Portsmouth	329	359	378	348	8 Oct. 1866
Chatham and					
Sheerness	292	326	277	275	6 Nov. 1866
Woolwich	204	219	255	191	6 Nov. 1866
Aldershot	302	233	261	237	12 April 1867

It thus appears that while at Devonport and Plymouth the amount of venereal disease in 1867 was very slightly less, viz., 5 per 1000 than it was in 1866, and while at Chatham and Sheerness the ratio of admissions to hospital in 1867 was 49 per 1000 of the strength lower than in

the preceding year, there was during 1867 a positive increase of disease at the other three stations mentioned. If the numerical results at the five stations be added together and an average struck, it will be seen that, on the whole, the average ratio per 1000 of admissions to hospital on account of venereal diseases in 1867 was 296%, whereas in 1866 the average ratio per 1000 of admissions to hospital at the same stations was only 290%. A comparison of 1868 with 1867 shows, however, that in 1868 there has been a slight decrease of disease at all the stations named in the table. It is worthy of remark here that Sheerness, which exhibited a considerable fall in the number of admissions during 1867, and which, being to a certain extent isolated, is held up by Miss Garrett as a convincing illustration that "success has everywhere been in proportion to the isolation of the protected district," is precisely the station where the least diminution of admissions to hospital is observable in 1868: there were only two less in that year than in 1867. The average ratio per 1000 of admissions to hospital at all the stations was, however, reduced to 266½, or 24% per 1000 less than in 1866, and 28 per 1000 less than the average ratio per 1000 of admissions during the two years of 1865-66, before the act was in force. In other words, about one-eleventh part of the total amount of disease previously existing seems to have been subdued by the operation of the Contagious Diseases Act. I say *seems* to have been subdued, for the fact is venereal diseases were actually lessening at the stations in question before that act came into force. The average ratio per 1000 of admissions into hospital during each year from 1860 to 1865 inclusive is as follows:

<i>Average Ratio per 1000 of Admissions to Hospital</i>						
Years	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865
Ratio	421½	408%	361%	363%	296	297%

It will be observed that, in 1862, the ratio per 1000 of admissions to hospital were 37½ less than they were in 1861, and that this diminution is 13 per 1000 greater than was the diminution in 1868, under the operation of the Contagious Diseases Act, as compared with the ratio per 1000 of admissions in 1866, the year before the first compulsory act came into force. It is thus evident that the statistics relied upon by Miss Garrett and the other advocates of the Contagious Diseases Act are worthless as an argument in its favour, and that had the diminution in 1868 been even greater than it is, experience would justify the ascription of it to causes quite independent of the operation of that act. In presence of this official and authoritative information,

Miss Garrett's appeal to the vague assertions, however emphatic, of "officers in charge of the stations" in confirmation of her statements may be summarily dismissed.

There are several important points in Miss Garrett's letter which, for want of space, I have been unable to advert to on this occasion.

Source: Justina [Florence Nightingale], "Miss Garrett on the Contagious Diseases Acts," *Pall Mall Gazette* Friday 18 March 1870:6

Sir, Accept my thanks for publishing my previous letter, in which I adverted to the advantages alleged by Miss Garrett to be conferred by the Contagious Diseases Acts. I shall now feel obliged if you will publish the following observations on two (I have not space in which to advert to more) of her replies to the charges which have been preferred against them.

Of the numerous arguments adduced by Miss Garrett in favour of the Contagious Diseases Acts there is one which has, I fear, seemed to the majority of your readers absolutely conclusive and unanswerable. She says the truth of the opinion that disease is much less prevalent on the Continent, where legislative measures for the sanitary control of prostitution are resorted to, than it is in England "is confirmed by comparing the proportion of the household troops invalided annually from this cause in London, Paris and Brussels. The proportion is 1 in 4 in London, 1 in 33 at Paris, and 1 in 56 at Brussels." The argument advanced in the shape of these statistics, or others substantially the same, is the stronghold, not only of Miss Garrett, but of nearly all advocates of the principles of the Contagious Diseases Acts; it is triumphantly appealed to as unanswerable by the most influential of the non-medical weekly journals, and by the *Saturday Review*, which adopts it from Mr Acton,<sup>50</sup> "whose great Continental experience renders him," Miss Garrett assures you, "the first English authority" on the subject.

It must be admitted that this argument does look very strong indeed. Still, the cause which I advocate, the freedom of my sex from the possibility of personal violation at the suggestion of policemen, is so sacred that on behalf of this cause I shall venture, although a woman, to attack even that strongly fortified citadel. And, in the first place, I will give Miss Garrett the benefit of a correction in the statement of her argument. She speaks of the number of troops "*invalided* annually," the word "*invalided*," when used in the Report of the

---

50 William Acton (1801-?), author of several works on prostitution, venereal disease and control measures.

English Army Medical Department, means discharged from the service as unfit for duty. What she intended to say, or should have said, is "admitted into hospital."

And now with respect to the argument itself. In the first place, I must observe that the French regulations, according to which diseased soldiers are classified and the statistical records of their diseases are kept, differ so widely from those adopted in England that any inference based on a comparison of the two is worse than worthless—it is positively and grossly misleading. "In the British Army a soldier, if unfit for duty by sickness, of however trifling a description, is taken into hospital for treatment," whereas, "in the French Army only the more severe cases are admitted into hospital. The slighter cases, including" both forms of venereal disease, "a large proportion of skin diseases, etc., are treated in the regimental infirmary and in quarters (*à la chambre*).” The French hospital into which the more severe cases of disease are received is not a regimental but a divisional establishment and, in the French statistical reports, those diseases by which the admissions into the divisional hospital have been occasioned are alone enumerated, "while no information is given as to those treated in the regimental infirmaries and in quarters," or *à la chambre*. Both kinds and all varieties of the disease in question, except that which is at the same time both constitutional and of serious character, are ordered to be treated "dans les infirmeries régimentaires" [in the regimental infirmaries]. (See Statistical Sanitary, and Medical Reports issued by the Army Medical Department.)

Now, during 1867, of the troops serving in the United Kingdom, 11,293 were admitted into hospital suffering from venereal diseases, comprised in the group consisting of constitutional affections and those of kindred nature; and 10,106 suffering from venereal diseases comprised in the group of the non-constitutional kind; or, stated in another form, the admissions were 153.8 per 1000 of the former and 137.7 per 1000 of the latter. Therefore, in order to approximate to a fair comparison between the French and English reports, the whole of the cases comprised in the last-mentioned group must be ignored; and not only all these, but also all the cases of uncomplicated constitutional disease comprised in the first group. And, as it is well known that these *uncomplicated* cases form much the largest proportion of the whole, it is reasonable to conclude that, were they deducted, the remainder of the admissions, viz., those of soldiers suffering from grave and complicated forms of the disease, would not exceed the

number of those admissions into the French divisional hospitals which are alone reported as cases of venereal disease in the French army.

I frankly admit that, though the inference just expressed is fairly made and very probable, it is but an inference and is incapable of incontrovertible proof by means of the facts I have already mentioned. But, however short of proof the conclusion now reached by means of those facts may be said to be, I am fortunately able to adduce facts of a different kind, which, in my opinion, render that conclusion absolutely unquestionable. Though no record is published of the number of cases treated in the regimental infirmaries and *à la chambre*, a complete one is kept of the number of French soldiers rendered non-effective by these diseases, whether they are treated in the divisional hospital, in the regimental infirmary or *à la chambre*; and as a record is also kept of the number of English soldiers rendered non-effective by the same diseases, we possess in the records of these facts the elements of a just and reliable comparison, and I invite your especial attention to the instructive result.

In the French Army the average constantly non-effective from the diseases in question during 1862 was 2846 or 11.11 per 1000 of those present, *i.e.*, not on leave; while of the troops serving in the United Kingdom during the same year the average constantly non-effective from those diseases was only 844 or 10.82 per 1000. It is thus indubitably established that those diseases actually disable a greater proportion of French than English soldiers, and this truth, combined with those just previously mentioned, seems to me to demonstrate that the number of admissions of French soldiers for treatment on account of those diseases is at least as great as, and is probably greater than, the number of admissions of English soldiers on the same account. And this demonstration is, if possible, rendered still more decisive by the fact that in the French Army a large number of the men, amounting on the average of the year to nearly one sixth of the strength, are always absent from the corps (*congé de convalescence, de semestre, permission, détentions*, etc.); and as a large proportion of these men are invalids, many of them probably through venereal disease, and as they do not appear in the hospital reports, those reports appear still more favourable than they otherwise would do.

Miss Garrett's statement that at Brussels only one soldier in fifty-six is affected with venereal disease is only a little more astonishing than many other statements contained in her letter, but, happily, it can be very quickly disposed of. She gives no authority for it, and the valu-

able evidence adduced by the writer, whom she pronounces "the first English authority on such a point," directly contradicts it. The following information concerning the amount of disease in the Belgian Army is taken from the tables supplied in the second edition of Mr Acton's work; and he is indebted for them, he says, to the earl of Clarendon, who, when secretary of state for foreign affairs, obtained it through H.M.'s minister at Brussels.

During the ten years ending 1867 the average number of troops in Brussels was 3340, and of these the average number affected each year was 361, or about 110 per 1000. During 1868 the number of cases treated at the military hospitals of Brussels was 333, and these formed 9 percent of the whole Brussels garrison. So that, during the ten years ending 1867 more than one in ten, and during 1868 a little less than one in ten of all the soldiers at Brussels were affected. I may add that, of all soldiers in Belgium during 1868, 90 per 1000 were thus disorderd. So much for Miss Garrett's statistics.

But though about one in ten, instead of one in fifty-six, are infected, the actual proportion is so much more favourable than is that existing in Paris and London that it deserves a passing explanatory remark. The garrisons of Belgium are, as a rule, I believe, stationary. Now it is well known that the movement of troops is always accompanied by a considerable increase of disease; and, as such movements seldom take place in Belgium, the developments of disease incidental to them are avoided. Again, a rigorous medical inspection of Belgian soldiers takes place every week, and this procedure cannot fail to contribute in a great degree to the early discovery of disease and to the prevention of its spread. By way of comment on the indirect effects of the governmental control of prostitution in Belgium, I will add here a few words from Mr Acton, a persistent advocate of the Contagious Diseases Acts: "Truth," he says, "compels me to avow my opinion that, however much the virulence of venereal disease may be abated, and the health of the Brussels garrison been improved within twenty years, there is no marked improvement in the general tone of morals there." Indeed, as proved by indisputable evidence in the last number of the *Westminster Review*, marked deterioration, instead of marked improvement, has been steadily proceeding during that period.

Miss Garrett has informed you that "no certificate of any kind, or at any time, is given to the women," and she and the other pleaders for the extension of the acts virtually exclaim, "We are not as Continental rulers of prostitution are; we do not give to each prostitute a

certificate of health which she can use as an assurance of security and as a licence to carry on her trade unmolested; we give no legal sanction to sin; our regulations are simply prohibitory."

Throughout the "protected" districts in the United Kingdom no prostitute who has been in the hospital for treatment can leave it until the hospital surgeon has given a certificate that she is free from disease, and no prostitute in respect to whom such a certificate has not been given can continue to practise her profession. But the surgeon is compelled to give a certificate of health in respect to every woman whom, after medical inspection, he believes to be free from disease; and when such certificate has been given, the woman is free to pursue her career of prostitution. The sole difference between the practice on the Continent and that in England in respect to certificates is that, on the Continent, the prostitute keeps her certificate herself, whereas in England it is kept for her by the superintendent of police, who, so long as it bears the needful attestation that she is healthy, practically recognizes her right to pursue her career in perfect freedom. Only when diseased is she imprisoned in hospital, in order to be again fitted to resume her profession without danger to those who resort to her.

Now, Sir, with a genuine disposition to look at this question from Miss Garrett's point of view, I confess myself unable to discern any difference in the moral complexion between the Continental and the English system of licensing prostitutes to act as such, and I cannot but think that, in resorting to the kind of arguments above exposed, the advocates of the Contagious Diseases Acts have paltered so much with the truth as to have sacrificed a great deal of dignity and not a little honesty during the process. The fact is their temptation is great, and therefore, perhaps, our forbearance should be great also. They know—none know better—that were the people of this country asked in express terms to sanction a law by which prostitutes who are to be disinfected and kept free from disease at the public expense shall each receive a certificate that they may be resorted to with safety, the answer would be at once an indignant refusal and an irresistible appeal to Parliament to repeal the present acts. Ashamed to avow the real object of those acts they veil it by saying "it is entirely and simply prohibitory."

And fortunate it is for this country that its healthy moral feeling, its religious beliefs and its most enlightened convictions as to what can alone constitute the true basis of the sexual relation are sure to co-operate in refusing that legal recognition of prostitution as an indis-

pensable national institution, which is implied in the existence of the Contagious Diseases Acts. Such a recognition would be the strongest possible, because a thoroughly practical denial of Christianity; it would be national despair of moral and social progress, expressed in an act of Parliament; it would pronounce the inevitable and continuous degradation—generation after generation—of a large proportion of my sex; it would suffuse the dawning minds of the youth of England with the accursed doctrine that fornication is necessary for the preservation of their health; it would virtually sanction, as well as facilitate, the most unrestrained indulgence of the passions, divorced from the hallowing influence of affection. And, finally, while really increasing instead of decreasing those physical diseases which are developed and diffused by promiscuous and unbridled indulgence, it would at once stifle all aspirations after a higher state of social existence and would contaminate, corrupt and deaden the moral life of the whole community.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/6

17 January 1870

I should have been much interested in rereading the medical volume but found, after keeping it a fortnight, that I had not a chance of even cutting its leaves, so sent it today by linen box. I read the addresses at the time they came out as reported in the newspapers. The only one that is considered of any scientific value is, as I dare say you know, Professor Haughton's.

Dr A. is called "Barnum" by the authorities. He wrote to me (about a fortnight ago) about the "Contagious Act." I answered, gravely and circumstantially. A benevolent lady of indistinct ideas and of total ignorance of her subject, who appears to be the wife of Dr Rumsey of Cheltenham (one of Dr A.'s colleagues) wrote me a day or two afterwards a violent declamation against myself for my signature of the petition against the "act." I answered calmly with statistics, which I knew she was quite incapable of understanding, but which I administered on the principle that Sir S. Baker<sup>51</sup> gave a dose of tartar emetic to all his Arab importunates for medicine—the which choked them off for a week at least. My letter appears to have had the same effect on Dr A.

---

51 The explorer, Sir Samuel W. Baker, described Holloway's pills as "most useful to an explorer as possessing unmistakable purgative properties," which convinced the patient of their value; see his *The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia and the Sword Hunters of the Hamran Arabs* 68.



### The Royal Commission 1871

**Editor:** The next letters show Elizabeth Blackwell’s taking the initiative to ask Nightingale first for information, then specifically for advice on her projected appearance before the royal commission appointed to investigate the working of the acts. The point which she had been invited to address was a limited, technical one, the physical examination of the prostitute, for which her status as a woman and a physician was clearly germane. She wanted to do much more. Her views as to public policy, however, were for Nightingale either too extreme ever to be legislated (making the spreading of the disease a criminal offence) or futile, to investigate the causes of prostitution (already known) or have women rather than men run the lock hospitals (equally bad) (see p 480 below). Nightingale gave her many objections and Blackwell did not, in fact, appear before the commission. She published her views much later as “Medical Responsibility in Relation to the Contagious Diseases Act” and “Rescue Work” in her two-volume *Essays in Medical Sociology*, 1902.<sup>52</sup> Nightingale consulted Dr Sutherland on her reply to Blackwell and used his draft word for word. Both the draft and the actual letter are given here for comparison (items dated 3 and 6 May 1871 below).

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, Library of Congress

1 February 1870

*Private.* I have had to search up old documents as well as new in order to reply to your question. Will you accept this as an apology for the delay of one so overwhelmed with business as not to know ten minutes’ leisure, and with illness increasing every year and making me a complete prisoner to bed, in answering an old friend?

Inspections of troops for syphilis were [a] matter of regulation before our royal commission, presided over by Sidney Herbert, in 1857, and were carried on throughout the service. Under this system the following were the results:

	1857-58	1858-59
Admissions for Venereal per 1000 Strength	441	463

The practice was abolished by our new medical regulations issued by Sidney Herbert in October 1859 after he became secretary of

---

<sup>52</sup> Excerpts are given in Lynn McDonald, ed., *Women Theorists on Society and Politics* 243-46 and 247-48.

state for war. (N.B. Medical officers objected to the practice as degrading and useless. They preferred trusting to voluntary application on the part of the men.) The following were the results of the new method:

	1863-64	1864-
Admissions per 1000	307	291

The Foot Guards have their own usages; inspections are carried out in two of the regiments, not in the third, with the following results:

	<i>Admissions per 1000</i>	<i>1865-66-67</i>
	<i>Primary Syphilis</i>	<i>Secondary Syphilis</i>
<i>Inspected Regiments</i>		
Grenadier Guards	195.4	19.5
Coldstreams	159.2	33.5
<i>Non-inspected Regiment</i>		
Scots Fusiliers	75.5	20.2

This evidence, as you will see, strongly confirms the view held by nearly all who really understand the subject, that the “inspections” were as utterly useless as they were degrading to the men and to the officers and that voluntary application and appeal to honour have greater success [lines cut out]

advocates should be in total ignorance of the very elements of their subject and should publish as facts what the slightest acquaintance with statistics would show to be falsehoods.

But I have neither time nor strength to enter into this. I wish I had! (In sending the above figures, I have left out the aggregate strengths and extraneous matter which would only puzzle a person unacquainted with army methods here.)

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, Library of Congress

7 February 1870

In reply to yours: the difficulty is that you have to study out the case. It never has been done. Opinion has been substituted for *investigation* and this on both sides. A very few, who have some knowledge of French and English statistics, have steadily asked for *facts*. Let us have facts. Then and then only will you be in a position to legislate. But, hitherto, their voice has been almost in vain. Some men specially engaged in the matter have said that, in their *opinion*, legislation is necessary, and that in their *opinion*, legislation will do what is required. (This without facts, or even in spite of facts.)

There are men on the other side who deny both conclusions altogether. Who is to decide? Clearly there must be inquiry, a real investigation into facts, *not* a controversy of opinions. (Controversy, as Faraday<sup>53</sup> said, never did any good.) In answer to your question, the only evidence of any use is the real statistics of Paris police regulation (which you probably have) and, in this country, what Dr Balfour, of the Army Medical Department, could give you. Write to him and ask to see him. T. Graham Balfour, MD, D.I.G., Army Medical Department, 6 Whitehall Yard, S.W. (Dr Parkes, about whom you ask, goes, I believe, the whole length with the advocates of legislation.)

What is wanted is not the opinion of physicians, however eminent. It is not a professional or medical question at all. It is a question:

1. of what is *fact*,
2. of what is expedient and practicable.

What is wanted is a *clear connected statistical detail* showing: what is the amount of syphilis among a population “unprotected”? what is the amount under “protection” and, lastly, what results when “protection” is withdrawn? (The reasons for giving up the inspections of men are in Deputy Inspector-General Dartnell’s evidence, page 294 of the report of the Royal Commission on the Sanitary State of the Army, 1857, published in 1858.)

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/15 (the material omitted here is the same as in the letter to Blackwell above)

Thursday [ca. 8 February 1870]

Thank you for your notice about Mr Bruce.<sup>54</sup> We were quite aware that there were as many medical *opinions* on the one side as on the other. But that is just what we deprecate—that is just why the best men will not allow themselves to be used as witnesses. . . .

Who is to decide? Clearly there must be inquiry—a real investigation into *facts*, not a controversy of *opinion*. . . . *Opinion* has been substituted for investigation. (Miss Garrett has fallen into this error to that degree that men who *have* knowledge say of her that she willingly and knowingly writes for those who are ignorant, too ignorant to understand her fallacies.) If Mr Bruce is merely going to accumulate more *opinions*, he had better let it alone, surely, don’t you think?

53 Michael Faraday (1791-1867), physicist; see *Society and Politics* (5:670) for other comments on him. His methodology involved a judicious mixture of speculation and experimental observation.

54 Henry Austin Bruce (1815-95), Liberal MP, home secretary; he had been under home secretary when the first act was adopted.

Source: Draft letter in Dr Sutherland's hand, in response to a letter from Dr Basten of the Eye and Ear Hospital, Bradford, 11 February 1870, ADD Mss 45802 f119

[ca. February 1870]

I have not the slightest hesitation in giving you my opinion as to the probable results of introducing cases of syphilis into a small eye and ear hospital. In doing so I could not in the slightest degree wish to insinuate that every care should not be taken of these important cases. But this is not the question. It is whether you should take these women into such a hospital. As you are responsible for the [illeg] of I say at once, No. I should advise your remonstrating again with the committee and, if you fail, it will be for you to consider whether you will continue and, if not, you should state the circumstances to the committee before tendering your resignation.

Source: From a letter to Dr Balfour, Balfour Papers, ADD Mss 50134 ff137-38

14 July 1870

I will venture only one question at present. Is the evidence about the "Contagious Diseases Prevention Act" any more conclusive than it was? Unless its efficiency in results is proved, it would be worthwhile to compare the saving to the army, if any, pecuniarily with the outlay on the hospitals, would it not?—so that it might be known exactly where they are in money as well as in figures.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland with his response, ADD Mss 45755 ff40-41

22 August 1870

7:00 A.M.

*Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts.* What do you advise me to do about "giving" my "name as vice-president"? My feeling is this: my horror of this legislation is, if possible, yet stronger than ever, there being, as I believe, scarcely a tittle of evidence in favour of its doing what it promises. But it appears to me that, if anything *could* have supported the objectionable legislation, it is the blunders of this association—especially their public protest *against* an inquiry. They and I go on different ground.

Mr Bruce declared himself "much impressed" by my letter. He also declared himself "much impressed" by the deputation BUT THE OTHER WAY—he said "*they were not up in their facts*"—and "inclined" him rather *in favour* of what they were *against*. (At the same time, I believe that they are practically right in deprecating an inquiry, for

there is not a single person in the House of Commons now capable of conducting an inquiry as we conducted our royal commissions. And the “inquiry” might very probably end in *confirming* legislation.)

But, as to my assisting the association in collecting *their* evidence, it’s a thing I won’t do. They are perfectly incapable of accuracy in facts. And there is scarcely a person of the least weight among them—the more’s the pity. I should not like to join them as “vice-president.” Yet I should not like to *refuse* to join them, without telling them that *I am unchanged in opposition to the C.D. Acts*. But above all I don’t want a correspondence with them. I have suffered too much from Mrs Butler. *And what to say?*

yours very faithfully

F. Nightingale

**JS:** I agree that you must decline the vice-presidency. I would write to Mrs Malleson to decline, and tell her that you do not decline from any falling off of interest in the subject, but that your health is feeble and what little strength you have is at present devoted to other objects.

Something of this kind, quite short, would do. A vice-president or any office bearer is supposed to direct and be responsible, and you can’t.

yours faithfully

S.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland with his response, ADD Mss 45755 ff46-47

12 September 1870

7 A.M.

They have written to me again (as per enclosed) to ask me to be a vice-president of the Anti-C.D. Acts Society. The more I see of them, the more determined I am in future to keep clear of them. I understand that Mr Bruce has threatened to prosecute them for indecent pamphlets dedicated to him under Lord Campbell’s Act<sup>55</sup> (this while he is favourable to me).

---

<sup>55</sup> Lord Campbell’s act was for compensation for wrongful deaths. The threat here in fact came to nothing. The material was later referred to in the House of Commons as “‘literature’ on an indelicate subject,” described as necessary to publish to show the ill effects of the acts (Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* 31 July 1871:354-55).

Had I better tell them that, while more than agreeing in their object, I wholly disagree with their methods but am unable to advise or direct or take any part?

**JS:** Therefore decline.

**FN:** They will never let me alone.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, Library of Congress

13 October 1870

7 A.M.

In reply to your note (which excuse my urgent press of business for not having answered before), Mr Maclaren's charge against the workers of the C.D. Acts is a far too serious matter, in my opinion, for individuals or amateurs to deal with. It is a distinct charge against the police and Admiralty and as such can only be dealt with by the royal commission. Mr Maclaren should put it in evidence. And then they (the accused officials) must rebut it. Neither you nor I nor any private person nor any doctrinaire can judge in any way between the parties.

I have greatly deplored the doctrinaire, not to say amateur, mode of action of the association, not because I feel less but because I have a stronger conviction than any of them against the C.D. Acts. (When I compare the thorough action of the two royal commissions which I worked, in which every fact or so-called fact or statistic was sifted to the backbone, in which no *opinion* of any kind, certainly not medical opinion, was admitted as mere opinion, in matters which were not of facts, I feel a sort of despair at the working of the association, in which hardly anything but *opinion* is invoked.

The other side is no better, which is a comfort. But it will be a mere Battle of the Frogs and Mice, i.e., of mere talk and opinion.

Believe me, Mr Maclaren's evidence is too precious, *if it can be sifted and found undeniable* to be treated by amateurs in this way. If the association require professional assistance, they should refer the police report, with Mr Maclaren's statement, to some disinterested statistical authority, Dr Farr, for instance, and ask his conclusions.

I wish so well to every opponent of the C.D. Acts that I regret that they do not take it up (e.g., as I did army sanitary reform, i.e.) not as subsidiary or magazine or newspaper work but as the most serious work of life to strain every nerve for, as a general does in a campaign, with professional ability and devotion—without which they will do little good. And I regret that I am entirely unable, overdone as I am with business, for this most urgent war and most dreadful crisis ever known

in the history of civilized mankind [Franco-Prussian War], to put my experience in the only way it would be worth putting, at the disposal of the association.

Source: Letter from Elizabeth Blackwell, Add Mss 45802 ff222-23

6 Burwood Pl., W.

3 May [1871]

Confidential

Dear Miss Nightingale

I have consented to testify before the commission on the C.D. Acts to the cruelty of *compulsory*, physical examinations, such as the acts demand. It is a small point but it is true, and therefore I am willing to give it, but, as the opportunity may thus occur of making any suggestion of importance I write to ask if you have any such suggestion, which I would gladly make. If not, will you kindly tell me whether you think it would be well to suggest (if opportunity occur) either of the following measures, which seem to me to promise good results: first, a commission to inquire into the causes and remedy of prostitution; second, to make the voluntary communication of contagious disease a penal offence; third, the establishment of lock-up houses managed by women, under the superintendence of a lady who is a government officer and responsible for her subordinates.

Do not think me presumptuous in thus planning to offer suggestions. I have tried in vain to make our society take up the consideration of radical measures; they will only unite on destruction, i.e., opposition to the law. I find also that, in the evidence, suggestions are offered by some witnesses and the government is sorely perplexed what to do.

If we could get a commission on prostitution appointed it would give time to unite men and women who will consider this subject carefully, and mature suggestions. If that be hopeless, then it does seem to me extremely important to get the assistance of intelligent women, invested with authority to deal with the vicious and criminal classes of women. And my third point may be worth considering, viz., getting in the small end of the wedge. If the police had directions to clear the streets of prostitutes, at night, they might do so to a great extent by locking up numbers of them; but such [line cut off] by women carefully selected, where a certain kindness should be exercised over the wretched women, and if such a lady as Miss Carpenter, Miss Twining<sup>56</sup>

---

56 Social reformers Mary Carpenter (1807-77), on whom see p 813, and Louisa Twining.

or others who could be mentioned, became responsible for the judicious management of these stations, it might lead to external order and moral reform; female police might after a while be formed. I see much and increasing good that might arise from the entrance of good women into police work.

There is no need of enlarging on these points to you—you will understand them at a glance, and yes or no will suffice to advise me whether to confine myself to my direct point of evidence or add any suggestions. I remain,

very truly yours

Elizabeth Blackwell

P.S. I shall probably be called next week, on Friday or Saturday.

Source: From an exchange with Dr Sutherland on the above letter, ADD MSS 45755 f235

3 May 1871

Please, what am I to say to the enclosed?

**JS:** All this is well intentioned, but the only practical matter in it (which I hope she will adhere to) is the cruelty of forced examinations. Be a woman ever so vicious she has inalienable personal rights,<sup>57</sup> which none but such idiots as our social legislators would dare to interfere with. As to suggestions, I think as follows:

1st. The act should go. Government may get rid of its perplexity in a moment by ceasing to interfere beyond its function. In going out of its way for any foolish purpose it necessarily becomes and remains perplexed.

2nd. I am sorry to say the causes of prostitution are perfectly well known: they can be dealt with mainly by moral means only. In distinct cases of seduction the man, not the woman, should bear all the weight. All “procuring” should be felony. The law however would only meet a minority of cases.

3. It is impossible to make “voluntary infection” a crime. It would extend to both sexes, and the *animus* could never be found.

4. Compulsory locking up under women is as bad as under men. The great bulk of the prostitute class are not accessible for locking up.

5. The police law at present allows the police to clear the streets, and known houses can be shut up.

---

<sup>57</sup> The expression “inalienable personal rights” appears in the American Bill of Rights, but had not then been used for women. It gradually came into demands for rights by women as well as men. It is used in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945 and many other documents since.



The only suggestion she could make is the one founded on human duty to the erring and diseased, i.e., making provision by means of dispensaries and wards under the Poor Law for the treatment of all poor women who present themselves voluntarily—taking means through the police to inform the poor creatures of the provision made for them—and then let Christian women take their share in dealing with their fallen sisters in the way of gentleness and considerate charity.

The act has failed in India, at least it has produced no sensible effect as you will see in Cuninghams<sup>58</sup> report, and in spite of Balfour it will fail here.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Blackwell, Radcliffe College, Schlesinger Library, Blackwell Family Collection Box 5:70 (draft by Dr Sutherland above)

6 May 1871

7:00 A.M.

*Private.* In reply to your note and question, I think, after much consideration, that I hope you will adhere (in your examination) to the only practical matter, viz., the cruelty of forced examinations. (Be a woman ever so vicious, she has inalienable personal rights, which none but such idiots as social legislators would venture to interfere with.)

You kindly say that you wish me to answer only yes or no, but I do not like to answer No curtly to your further suggestions without at least submitting my reasons to your consideration, as follow:

1. The act should go. Government may get rid of its perplexity in a moment by ceasing to interfere beyond its function. For in going out of its way for any unwise purpose, it necessarily becomes and remains perplexed.

2. I am sorry to say the causes of prostitution are perfectly well known. They can be dealt with *mainly* only by moral means. In distinct cases of seduction, the man, not the woman, should bear all the weight. All “procuring” should be felony. (The law, however, would meet only the minority of cases.)

3. It is impossible to make “voluntary infection” a crime. It would extend to both sexes, and the *animus* could never be proved.

4. Compulsory locking up under women is as bad as under men. The great bulk of the prostitute class are not accessible either for locking up.

---

58 Sir James McNab Cuninghams (1829-1905), surgeon-general and sanitary commissioner; Nightingale here and often elsewhere (as did others) misspelled this as Cunningham.

5. The police law at present allows the police to clear the streets, and known houses *can* be shut up.

The only suggestion that can be made is the old, old story—the one founded on human duty to the erring and diseased, i.e., making provision by means of dispensaries and wards under the Poor Law for the treatment of all poor women who present themselves voluntarily, taking means through the police to inform the poor creatures of the provision made for them, and then let Christian women take their share in dealing with their fallen sisters in the way of gentleness and considerate charity. The act has failed in India. At least it has produced no sensible effect, as you will see in the annual report of the sanitary commissioner with the Government of India. And in spite of Army Medical Department, it will fail here.

I have written as soon as it was possible.

Source: Postscript to a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome Ms 9005/107

25 November 1871

Could you send me the blue book of the commission on contagious acts?

Source: From an exchange with Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45756 f76

27 November 1871

*Female Suffrage* What am I to say to these women?

F.N.

**JS:** This is very much a matter of personal feeling. I am sure you ought to have a vote. And Mrs Butler ought to be in office. The only point is whether you should have a political iron in the fire seeing that iron of this kind is very hot just *now* and you require all your strength for other matters.

**FN:** C.D. Acts. As you have read the Contagious Diseases Acts' evidence, could you tell me whether you think "we" (the anti-acts people) have established our point, viz., that the acts do *not* diminish the disease?

**JS:** There is so much assertion on both sides and so little fact on any side that the question you put admits in my opinion of but one answer, viz., that the advocates of the act have failed to prove that these acts have done any good, or at least that the changes which have taken place under them are due to them. Mrs Butler has clearly proved that other far more important agencies have been stirred up and have done admirable work. The only statistical facts are Dr Bal-

four's, but he misses the point, in my opinion, by giving the statistics of "protected stations" in contrast with those of "unprotected stations," both in a lump, whereas the law of syphilis requires for its investigation that each station should be given separately. It would then be seen whether the average is made up of periodical local excesses and local deficiencies, which is really the law of syphilis where no acts are in operation, as for example in India.

The contagious diseases results for which the acts were passed are "not proved" and this is quite sufficient.

### **The Repeal Campaign and Treatment Measures in the 1870s**

**Editor:** An "Act for the Prevention of Certain Contagious Diseases and for the Better Protection of Women," introduced in 1872, would have repealed the previous three acts but substituted similar compulsory treatment. Part 2 of this bill prohibited carnal knowledge of any girl under fourteen, making it a felony in the case of a girl under twelve. It instituted the offence of indecent assault, with prison for up to two years, and inducement to a girl under sixteen to be in a bawdy house or room. When Nightingale in 1873 condemned the government's "filthy bargain" (see p 483 below), she perhaps had something like this bill in mind, making the price of stronger measures to deal with the men who got young girls into prostitution, which she favoured, the continued targeting of women for compulsory inspection and treatment. The bill was introduced into Parliament but withdrawn without debate.

In 1873 the Contagious Diseases Repeal Bill (Bill 29) was introduced and debated 7 February 1873. Further repeal bills were attempted in 1876 and 1883. Nightingale was not involved in this work but continued to act on treatment and prevention. The paper referred to in the following letter is not extant, nor is the "anonymous paper" referred to a year later, which may or may not be the same (see p 489 below).

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, scrapbook of Ruth Verney, Claydon House Bundle 443

3 January 1873

I have with some difficulty got two copies ready for you (at least they *will* be ready on *Monday morning*) of my *paper on C.D. Acts re Portsmouth Lock Hospital* (with personalities struck out), one copy I presume for

*Mr Cardwell*<sup>59</sup> *privately*, one for *Mr V. Lushington*<sup>60</sup> *officially*. *Where do you wish them to reach you?* (I understood you to say that Mr Cardwell had asked you to make this inquiry and that he had some sort of leisure now; therefore you wished me to make haste.)

May the New Year bring you the highest blessing!  
 ever yours affectionately  
 F.N.

Source: From two letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/49 and 50

8 July 1873

*Contagious Diseases Acts*. The enclosed will interest you. It is from a Miss Cameron, probationer and “sister” of ours at St Thomas’, now matron of *lock wards* at *Portsmouth Hospital* (100 beds). (She is from Sutherlandshire, daughter of a minister.) Any remarks of yours will be welcome.

She asks me to write to her. She is too good for the government’s “most filthy bargain.”

10 July 1873

*C.D. Acts*. Should you care to show the enclosed letter of Miss Cameron’s to Mr Bruce? Should you care to see me today and if so what hour?

Source: From a letter to Annie Hill,<sup>61</sup> Wellcome Ms 5482/98

14 July 1873

*Miss Cameron*. First of all, let me tell you how very much interested I am by Miss Cameron’s letter. I should tell her clearly my view of the enormity of the C.D. Act, but it appears as if this “Act for the Immunity of Sinners” might, while it lasts, be used for reclamation.

The government may say what they like, but the act makes no practical provision for any reclamation. You might ask Miss Cameron what she thinks of such a scheme as that of St Michel; it is this: to let the government for the present stick to its own “most filthy bargain,” but to separate the subjects into classes: sick class, education and work class, with religious training class, and with the various agencies for

59 Edward Cardwell (1813-86), secretary of state for war, later viscount.

60 Vernon Lushington (1832-1912), second secretary, twin brother of the husband of Nightingale’s cousin, Beatrice Smith.

61 Annie E. Hill (c1830-77), nurse, Highgate Infirmary.

strengthening the wills and souls of the poor girls from the awful future contest, and then placing them out, either at their own homes or to gain an honest living. This is what I mean by using the act for reclamation.

The government assert that their object is not to “provide healthy prostitutes” but to shield these poor girls from the danger of seduction, and, when seduced, diseased and cured to send them back to their homes and place them under the best influences. Will you ask Miss Cameron what steps the government can take to further the objects that they have in view?

If the efforts of the government have been unsuccessful, do not let Miss Cameron believe that to “license and regulate sin” is their object. Let Miss Cameron consider well and consult with any she may think right, and then say what steps the government can take, whether they are ill served, *what in fact can be done*.

P.S. One thing proposed is to bring *both* sexes under the C.D. Acts, seeing that no individual, man or woman, is justified in spreading disease, and the man or woman who, being diseased, has connection, ought to be punished. Ask Miss C. what effect she thinks that such a law would have. It is thought that it might prevent many a man, by a wholesome fear (I do not myself hope much from such or from any act).

If Miss Cameron could spare a day and night *within the next three weeks*, or from Saturday till Monday, I could give her a bed. And it would perhaps be more agreeable to her to *talk* all this over with a *woman*, like me, who has had but too much experience of these matters. She must kindly give me several days’ notice, if she comes, because I am so busy. She would of course kindly allow me to bring her up and back without expense to her. God speed the work which will not brook delay!

Source: From a note to Dr Sutherland, Add Mss 45757 f116

8 August 1873

*C.D. Acts* (MANAGEMENT) (*reformatory*). You will remember the correspondence with Miss Cameron, Sir H. Verney, Mr Bruce and you, and what you said. What do you say to the letter enclosed? What should be said?

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/53 (note: using Dr Sutherland's draft Add Mss 45757 f116-17)

Lea Hurst  
Matlock

16 August 1873

*C.D. Acts: Reformatory Management.* You will remember the correspondence with Miss Cameron (our ex-“sister,” now matron of the Portsmouth Lock Hospital) which you read to Mr Bruce. I sent her all your remarks and Dr Sutherland's and invited her to come and stay with me (at South St.) when you said you would like to see her. (She was not able to propose coming till the day *I* was to have left London and, though my going was put off day by day on account of harassing and unusually painful business, yet, as I had sick “sisters” unavoidably staying in the house, I was unable to receive her till I return in October, when she will come.)

In the meantime comes this letter from Mrs (Lady) Grant. I have submitted it to Dr Sutherland. He says, “You will see that these good people have no acknowledged standing in their work. It will not do to have our government curing these women and leaving them to this kind of casual uncertain agency. What is wanted is that persons *who have had any experience* in introducing the moral and religious element in connection with the lock hospitals *should prepare a scheme of reformation* which should be the basis of the act of Parliament and not the prevention of disease solely, as at present. There are two alternatives by which the present noxious ‘act’ might be replaced:

1. To repeal the act and pass another making acknowledged prostitution a basis of reformation, of which hospital treatment is only one agency.

2. Passing a collateral act by which the legislature would make provision for reformation, paying the costs. I don't think any voluntary scheme of reform working alongside a compulsory medical scheme can do more than tend to weaken the moral tie. If the compulsory medical act were abolished, and the whole reform made voluntary, then I think the St Michel scheme or something like it would be practicable and might include medical care.

The enclosed letter is itself a testimony to the comparative nullity of *combined compulsory* and *voluntary* effort. At the same time she is right about the reformatories. No reformation can be worked by agents who think themselves holier than others, or who trust to compulsion for reformation. They forget Him who knew no sin, and yet

was *made sin* for us;<sup>62</sup> they forget that Christian reformation must be tied to Christian liberty. If the writer were a month or two in St Michel, she would see how little could be done by the “ladies” she can get. This is not the way. (I doubt not that some of the most efficient agents in the St Michel reform have been themselves reformed there. Indeed provision is made for this agency in their constitution.)

I submit all this to you. Please tell me how far you agree or disagree, what answer you would wish made to the writer, as it is you who, if anything is done, will have to be the medium with the government. I will only add: (1) that I think Mr Lowe will be more inaccessible than Mr Bruce; (2) that I cannot answer to government for anyone’s work but my own; (3) that I am rather sorry Miss Cameron has dragged me in with unknown correspondents, as I have far too many eggs to hatch of my own to make it right for me to undertake to hatch other people’s eggs, which are always ultimately left to me by the parent birds.

Still, if we could do anything in the matter of this most pressing evil, it seems wrong to neglect the opportunity, though it be but a *chance*.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/58

14 November 1873

*C.D. Acts Lock Hospitals. Refuges to be attached.* You will remember our correspondence and your kindness in applying to the Home Office. Latterly, a memorandum has been sent me from a clergyman, and formerly a chaplain with some experience of these poor creatures. He asks whether under these acts *a home could not be attached to each “C.D. Acts Hospital”* where, *under the name of convalescence, a month’s COMPULSORY residence should be required from each patient on her discharge* cured, and where all the means of fitting them for and finding situations, communicating with friends, testing their repentance, for emigration and other modes of restoration to society, could be tried?

May I say, first, what occurs to myself? *Of course*, in my opinion if, under these acts prostitutes are to be cured *compulsorily*, they ought *compulsorily* to have a chance of reforming their lives. *Of course*, in my opinion, the *compulsory* takes away the best part of the chance. (In all countries, with all persons of real Christian experience in this cruel subject, the agreement is the same: that *voluntary* entrance on the part of the penitent was the one thing needful<sup>63</sup> for self-reform.)

---

62 A paraphrase of 2 Cor 5:21.

63 An allusion to Luke 10:42.

My chaplain's plan involves the whole question of legislation. Of course, if the "convalescent" month is to be *compulsory*, there must be an act of Parliament. The object of the present C.D. Acts is simply to fit sinners to sin again. It has nothing to do, though the Home Office pretends it has, with their moral reform. (A chaplain of experience wrote to me to the effect while Christ said, *Go and sin no more*,<sup>64</sup> these acts, being interpreted, say: *Go and sin again*.)

There are but two alternatives: (1) to repeal the acts; (2) to pass a new Act for the Reformation of Prostitutes, *taking all into custody, passing them into a home for reform and restoration to society and treating the diseased*. Would not the mischief of an act (merely to enforce the plan above mentioned *in memorandum by the chaplain*) be to have this moral effect: "Oh then, prostitutes may practise prostitution, if only not diseased." One cannot see one's way at all to tacking on (*to an institution for making prostitution safe*) a home to try to wean them from prostitution. (It would be the intensified reverse of the *voluntary* system. And none would find it out sooner than the women themselves, would not they?)

I am sorry to say that *Miss Cameron*, our "sister," the matron of the *Portsmouth Lock Hospital under the C.D. Acts*, is going to leave, though she has established discipline where there was none before: she finds it such a hopeless task. E.g., she cannot get a workroom. And the lady who comes to teach work, if called out of the ward, cannot leave her things for ½ a minute in the ward or half of them would be stolen. This is only one of the things which show the utter humbug, the ignorance, if not hypocrisy, of the Home and War Offices and C.D. Acts people generally, in pretending that these are to be means of *reclaiming prostitutes*.

Actually, in our poor Highgate Workhouse, we do reclaim many, thank God. When you come really to know these *C.D. Acts' hospitals*, you find they reclaim none. Another thing is that the *matron's salary* is so low in these *C.D. Acts' places* that you cannot get women of a high tone, who usually have family claims on their earnings, like *Miss Cameron*, to take or to keep these posts. (She is the daughter of a highland Presbyterian minister, dead, her mother living.)

If you are good enough to advise upon this letter, perhaps it will be less trouble to you to return it to me, as I have no memorandum of it.

---

64 John 8:11.



Source: From an incomplete letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45757 f214

21 November 1873

*Reformatories and C.D. Acts.* Sir H. Verney is coming up to see Mr Lowe about this: specially about the *Portsmouth Lock Hospital* that you know of. *Can you tell me whether or what "refuge" or "home" there is already at Portsmouth?* I cannot imagine that government will go to the House of Commons for fresh powers, nor of course do I wish it. If they do anything for Sir H.V., it might be a small grant-in-aid.

Source: From a letter to J.J. Frederick, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/74/1

8 January 1874

I was extremely obliged to you for your great kindness in having the three copies of the "C.D. Acts paper" made and in sending them to me so soon. As well as for your careful suggestions, which I have scrupulously adopted, erasing "Hansom," etc. It is always very kind to put one on one's guard against any possible inaccuracy, however trivial. (The person who gave that part of the evidence *viva voce* certainly said "Hansom cab." It would be dreadful if this meant a *gentleman's* open cabriolet.) But what I write for now is to ask you to be so very good as to tell me how and what I am to repay for the work so well done?

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/77

1 March 1874

*Portsmouth Lock Hospital.* I enclose, as you desire, (1) a copy of your letter's "anonymous paper" to the Admiralty; (2) the Admiralty's remarkable letter itself. (The War Office say the Admiralty is just as much a "local caste" in this as any in India.)

Pardon me for reminding you that you thought it best *to see the place first, then* to write to V. Lushington and say that you had not waited for their lordships' invitation to see the place for yourself, and that you now gladly accept their invitation to see it with their inspector. This would only delay your answer one day to V. Lushington. Of course it is well to see and hear *all* sides (and pin one's faith on *none*). "The clergyman of St John's Church, Portsea," is *said* to be one of the "local caste." (God speed you on your mission). I am sorry that I am so overdone with appointments that I could not see you as I should have liked.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/80

3 March 1874

*Miss Cameron's Salary.* Surely there ought to be people at Portsmouth who should move in such a case and have moved long ago, if there was urgency in it. Why does not Mr Grant move in it? You will remember that, in our very first communication (and ever since June or July) on this subject, I urged and you offered to endeavour to get Miss Cameron's salary raised and in two of your communications to [Mr] Cardwell, the War Office and, I believe, one to the Admiralty you did this. I have *always* strenuously urged keeping Miss C. at Portsmouth by a higher salary and spoken to you about it.

My idea was, as you know, to attach a home to the hospital, with a salary of £40, and make Miss C. matron of both. This is also in my "anonymous" paper. I should only injure Miss C. by writing to V. Lushington after his notice of that paper to you. We should be prepared to support Miss C. at Birmingham but were much more anxious to keep her at Portsmouth by raising her salary.

I have letter upon letter of yours, speaking of what you meant to do about this, in answer to mine. I have not a moment. I telegraphed to you this morning. In greatest haste.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/83

8 March 1874

The W.O. people, who saw my paper before and who know of the Admiralty letter to you say: "What is wanted is simply for Sir Harry Verney to write a *reply* to the denial of the Admiralty. The materials are now in Sir Harry's hands and these with F.N.'s annotations will do. The reply should begin by reciting the denial *in its own words* and then to cite briefly the statement in the original paper and the result of the inquiry.

We do not at all agree with Sir Harry's idea of making the acts popular. Here is the latest Indian news from Bangalore:

1. acts in operation several years;
2. absolute magisterial power;
3. lock hospitals;
4. no diminution of supplies;
5. local committee advises the establishment of public brothels at the expense of *government* as the only remedy. And the deputy inspector-general concurs!!!"

Source: From a letter to Miss Cameron, Wellcome Ms 5482/99

14 March 1874 (night)

I am going to write to you to offer you a *matronship* and, at the same time, it gives me the greatest *pain* to do so. I fear that you will accept it. It goes to my heart to think of your leaving Portsmouth, for then farewell to all the good you are doing. And I feel almost sure that the Admiralty will raise your salary, if you stay, perhaps by annexing a home.

We are asked for a matron to the Soho Square *Female* Hospital in London, salary £80, rising to £100 per annum, and we are asked for an immediate answer.

Source: Letter to Kate Coulin, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C111

23 April 1874

I have just received your note and, though overworked and ill as I am, I am generally compelled to decline all intercourse with strangers, yet your object is one of such interest to me that I cannot help trying to aid you in it.

In the first place, we cannot employ in the hospitals and workhouse infirmaries which we nurse any but those who have had a year's training with us, for this is the first stipulation always made by *our* employers. This year's training you probably neither could nor would undertake to pass through.

But your mention of "workhouses" and "refuges" suggests something else to me. Our great difficulty and great "call" in workhouses is to provide means for reform for all the poor bad girls who come in from disease, when cured. This is a fearful strain upon our matrons, who have quite too much to do, even with assistant matrons to help them, in addition to the getting out our poor magdalens to "homes" and corresponding with them. What should you think of assisting one of our matrons in a large new sick asylum near London with the *magdalen* department? (She is a woman whom anyone might be proud to help.)

Another thing would be: I do not believe that a greater good could be done than by an independent lady keeping a small refuge for penitents. (I do not see that either of these occupations would prevent your doing "work" with your "pen.")

I wish you Godspeed with all my heart and soul. I cannot but think a way will be opened, if you are serious in wishing it. I will write at once to the "sick asylum" I have mentioned. Pray believe me, Madam,  
ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** Ellice Hopkins (1836-1904) was a well-known activist and author when she approached Nightingale for assistance in her “rescue work.”<sup>65</sup> Her 105-page *Work in Brighton; or, Woman’s Mission to Women* had already gone through many editions. A small, frail woman, she was also an inspiring public speaker. Nightingale, evidently with some hesitation, agreed to let her name be associated with the cause. She drafted a preface, which was duly published with slight modification in the ninth edition, in effect the printing of the 9000th copy. The slight changes in the text from her initial draft are indicated.

Source: From a letter to Ellice Hopkins, Wellcome Ms 5483/7

27 May 1877

I have already sent copies of your *Work in Brighton*; all have read it with “entire sympathy” and will send about copies in their turn.

A young married lady, a relation of my own, says, “I have always felt that having such a happy life as wife and mother is the strongest reason for me to do something to help those who have no home and no happiness.” This, I am sure, many will now feel.

O God, who has in His mercy made us all, these poor prostitutes as well as the happy homes, He will help your associations, or whatever scheme He judges best, to save them.

It is not altogether from the dislike I have to presumptuously giving my poor name where I cannot give my work, that I hesitate, considering what would be best for the cause in considering your request. Indeed I do not think it recommends a cause for me (or anyone) to give as it were an advertisement or a testimonial “on a slip” in the way you propose. Still I will do as you like. But would it not be better, if you print a new edition, that anything I should write should be introduced somehow by you in a preface.

I enclose something of what I think might be said, though if it is to be put as a sort of “avant-coureur” advertisement, the part about “prostitutes” and also perhaps the words “pure” and “sacred” and “imperilled” will for the reason you give have to be left out. I re-enclose your own slip and will acquiesce in what you think best. May God be with the prostitute and her helper!

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

---

65 On Nightingale’s collaboration with her see Sue Morgan, *A Passion for Purity: Ellice Hopkins and the Politics of Gender in the Late-Victorian Church*.

Source: Florence Nightingale, "Preface to Ninth Edition," in Ellice Hopkins, *Work in Brighton; or, Woman's Mission to Women* (London: Hatchards 1877) iii-iv; draft, ADD Mss 45805 f78

London  
October 1877

From my own experience in long past years I am quite sure that the way as indicated in *Work in Brighton* is the only true way, and I would entreat the women of England to read the little book, and then judge, each for herself, how best to use that influence, never to be forgotten, lost or set aside, of every pure woman in the cause—an influence which must one day tell for or against, whether she will or no. She cannot be neutral.

This is the cause, one would think, of every Englishwoman, for to every Englishwoman home and family, here imperilled, with or without her knowledge, have a sacred name; the cause of every wife and mother, for the happy wife and mother (as was truly said by one of these) has the strongest reason to do something to help those who have no home and no happiness; the cause of God, who is the Father of the poor outcasts [prostitutes] as well as of the happy homes.

In these holy [great] names I beg you to look at this work.<sup>66</sup> What is character given us for, but to help those who have none? I bid the work "Godspeed" with all my heart and soul and strength.

### International Work on Repeal

**Editor:** Early in 1877 Josephine Butler sought Nightingale's support for a large international congress to be held in Geneva (29 September 1877) to promote the repeal of contagious diseases legislation internationally. Butler's request was to "do us the honour of giving your name as a member of the committee of honour of the Geneva Congress, of which I enclose a prospectus. Your acceptance of this will not entail any work or responsibility; it only means your adhesion to the principles of our federation." She added that members included men and women of all nations, and hoped that Nightingale would be able to come to Geneva.<sup>67</sup>

---

66 Omitted from draft: I cannot think how gentlewomen can call it "loathsome."

67 Letter of Josephine Butler to Nightingale 28 February 1877, Woodward B.20.

Nightingale was evidently still miffed with Butler over what she considered sloppiness and poor tactics in the earlier repeal campaign for England. She was reluctant to give her name, as the exchange with Dr Sutherland immediately below indicates, but acceded. Butler duly acknowledged her letter, which “filled me with thankfulness.” A further letter thanked Nightingale for contributing a paper.<sup>68</sup> The letter to Dr Sutherland, immediately below, contains a draft of his final paper. This final paper was published in French but is translated back into English here.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45758 ff57-59

22 June 1877

Geneva Congress: Abolition of Government Regulation of Prostitution. I enclose you four papers to show what is the question: I took no notice of No. 1 till the other day, when I rather unwillingly gave my name. I told them it was quite impossible I could give a paper. I am at least two years in arrear of things which I am engaged to do, but I wrote Mrs Butler a few lines saying that experience confirmed me every year in, etc. Then comes Mrs Butler’s letter No. 3. I do not know what she alludes to p 3. To this I made no answer.

This morning comes printed paper No. 4 in which you will see I am pledged to a “Lettre sur les institutions hospitalières,” which I have never been asked to do, and when I had declined writing *any*; it is a pure imposture. I should simply write complaining of their want of faith, and desiring them to strike out my name at all events. But, would you like to do this? Would you like to put down a few words such as you and I have often said together upon the subject: as to evidence adding as to every year’s experience confirming as she puts on her p 4 and as I did write to her and send it to me for me to do as she wishes? (I do not care about it. I mean I do not care about putting in an appearance at Geneva—it may be exactly as you wish.)

yours very faithfully

F. Nightingale

... Are we “to contend against the social evil of prostitution”? Every woman who takes the trouble to think and to feel answers Yes. And is “government regulation of prostitution” successful, even in the one matter in which it professes to be successful, viz., the prevention of

---

68 Letters of Josephine Butler 5 June and 1 July 1877, Woodward Biomedical Library B.24 and B.25.

disease? Official experience which can be quoted says, No, while “regulation” covers and increases evil by a fancied and false security. It is a gratuitous assumption, in my opinion, that the consequences of immoral action are or can be prevented by equally immoral legislation. Experience confirms me every year in the opinion I held so long ago.

Overworked and all I will cite only one fact, but a large one, viz., the result of “contagious diseases” legislation in that greatest of dependencies, India, where it can be enforced by absolute government. Here it is after about thirteen years of work: “In spite of a very general introduction of the rules for the prevention of (venereal) disease among European troops, the results hitherto have been a failure x x. The stations with lock hospitals have established no decided superiority over those without them. It is argued that the disease is now of a milder type than it used to be, but no facts have been adduced in support of this statement, nor does it appear how such a result could have been attained unless it be admitted that the disease is contracted from the registered women, for the others are under no surveillance and cannot have been affected by the system.

It is very disappointing to be obliged to acknowledge that the lock hospitals have failed. They were introduced at the recommendation of the sanitary department; year by year their working has been carefully watched and suggestions have been made by that department in the hopes that success would yet be attained, but so far these hopes have not been realized. It is very evident either that the women who are the real source of evil still escape detection, or, and this is a danger which does not appear to be sufficiently appreciated, that registered women to all appearance healthy are yet capable of propagating disease” (Twelfth Annual Report of the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India, just issued).

This is the *government* which speaks, no private person; this is the government’s evidence about its own measure. Fact and authority cannot be denied; it is a test fact: “contagious diseases” legislation, like some other legislation of a similar kind, has been founded on a limited and one-sided appreciation. The sooner it is succeeded by a careful inquiry into causes and remedies the better both for our sense and for these poor victims. Other means should be sought and actively applied for remedying these social evils and their consequences to society than such false principles of legislation. As the matter stands at present, much of the so-called sanitary law might have been suggested

by the enemies of all improvement, for it stands directly in the way of sanitary progress and of true morality and civilization.

Florence Nightingale

Source: Florence Nightingale, message to the "Assemblée générale de la section," translated from French, 19 September 1877, Fawcett Library

The general commissioner forwards to the executive committee the following letter addressed to the conference as a token of sympathy by Miss Florence Nightingale, co-ordinator of the nurses in Crimea.

Should we, without distinction of sex, combat the social evil called prostitution? All women endowed with intelligence and heart will answer, Yes.

Has the regulation of prostitution succeeded in reaching the particular goal it had set to itself—to prevent diseases from spreading? On the basis of my own experience and that of the government which cannot be doubted, I answer, No. Regulation under cover of alleged security only increases evil. To believe that it is possible, by means of immoral laws, to avert the consequences of immoral actions, is an unwarranted assumption. Every year experience confirms that opinion which I have long held.

Worn out by work and illness, I shall only mention one fact, one capital fact, namely, the result brought about by regulation in India, the largest of British possessions and the one in which government, being absolute, can legislate with sovereign power. Here is the result of thirteen years' experience.

In spite of the full introduction of preventive rules concerning venereal diseases, the expected results have been null and void. The sanitary state of cities with lock hospitals is not better than the state of cities without them. It is asserted that the disease is less serious today than it was in the past, but not a single fact can be presented in support of such an opinion. . . .

It is most unfortunate to have to confess that the measures in question have failed. They were adopted upon recommendation of the sanitary department and their effects have been carefully assessed year after year. Several innovations were even suggested in order to produce a good result but up to now that hope has been deceived. One of two explanations ought to be right: either women at the source of the disease slip by supervision or, and this is a danger that seems not to have been sufficiently taken into consideration, monitored women, while apparently healthy, are able to spread the disease. (See the 12th annual report of the sanitary commission of the Government of India.)



These are the words of the *government*, not those of some private person or authority, which could be questioned. Such is the government's statement concerning measures it has itself taken. Those facts and that authority cannot be challenged. Those facts are *proofs*.

The regulation of contagious diseases, like many similar regulations, was based on an exclusive concern, on an incomplete and hence inexact assessment of the problem. A serious inquiry is necessary to place this question back in its true light, and the sooner the better both for our honour and for the unfortunate victims of that system. Means other than these wrong principles ought to be actively sought for in order to find a remedy for such social evils and their terrible consequences.

In the present state of affairs, one might think that many of the so-called sanitary rules have been put forward by the very enemies of all progress, for they but prevent all progress toward morality, civilization and public health.

### **Suspension and Repeal in the 1880s**

**Editor:** The Contagious Diseases Acts were suspended in the United Kingdom in 1883 and finally repealed in 1886. Nightingale took no active role in either of these last stages. She continued to be involved in issues of treatment, aware that the end of compulsory treatment did not end the need for (voluntary) treatment. She supported Ellice Hopkins's new campaign and the organization that promoted it, the White Cross, which stressed sexual abstinence to men before marriage as the best means of preventing sexually transmitted diseases.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/146

New Year's Day

[1 January 1883]

I wish that I *had* letters of introduction to give Dr Acland for Paris in order to help him to "make inquiries into the working of the "Contagious Diseases' laws," etc., that terrible "working" which is at once the outcome and the ruin of French society and morals. For such introductions would show him the real state of things, as no three days' visit could do. But alas! I am the survivor of all my French friends—doctors, medical directors, male and female heads of hospitals with whom since the Crimean War I have been so intimate. Pasteurs, etc., all are dead. Many died during the siege.

Source: Copy of a letter to C. Acland<sup>69</sup> from Dr Curtis, senior surgeon, in charge of lock hospital, Cork General Hospital, Add Mss 52427 ff33-38, with comments by Acland and Nightingale indicated

Cork Hospital

21 February 1887

The greater the privacy, the greater the success in persuading the present class of prostitutes to enter a hospital or home for them; attaching lock wards to existing hospitals could never be done here. A small house in a quiet place capable of working from twelve to twenty beds, in fact a cottage hospital, and call it a magdalen home. (No: F.N.) In a week every prostitute in Cork would know what it was for, and then the proper (i.e., the bad) cases who would rather rot than go to the workhouse or any other hospital would go there—the young particularly—disease would gradually lessen. x x

I have done my best to work the hospital here since the compulsory clause was withdrawn, as a voluntary hospital, and was very much disheartened, applicants with only trivial diseases applying, trying to make it a place of rest, the cases that were doing most injury never coming near the hospital. It had been so long a compulsory and government hospital that they shunned it. It is a younger class of females employed in public houses, stores, shops, etc., that are now doing the most mischief, the old hands during the continuance of the acts having gradually passed away.

Mr C. Acland: whether any proper hospital accommodation had been provided at Chatham for female lock patients and if so what?

Dr Curtis: Take any twenty cases in any of our public hospitals; the cure in fifteen out of twenty is retarded by syphilis, either hereditary or acquired. x x The real good the compulsory clause of the C.D. Acts did was its deterrent power in preventing young girls from becoming prostitutes. x x

A young prostitute is more prone to disease than an old one. A young girl gets seduced; her first step is to plunge into drink and take refuge in a brothel. She soon gets disease and, if she wishes to get cured or give up sin, and that there is no proper place for her to go to, she remains spreading the disease broadcast. What I mean by a proper place—I don't mean a union hospital or workhouse or any public hospital—for the nature of the sin makes her shun publicity.

---

69 Charles Thomas Dyke Acland (1842-1919), Liberal MP.

They rather die rotten than go to such a place, perhaps to be taunted by their former friends.

2. What is the best and cheapest method of saving young prostitutes both body and soul? Voluntary “magdalen home” for the cure of disease, largely subsidized by government, twelve to twenty beds £500 a year, fifteen at £33 a year, less than half what it cost government under the C.D. Acts.

Source: From two letters to Amy Hawthorn, ADD Mss 45776 ff229-33 and 219-23

3 March 1887

Anent [regarding] the poor prostitute in the “infirm” ward at Lambeth Workhouse, one of our surgeons, Mr Croft, has, on my stating the case, “arranged for the poor young woman’s admission to the special ward for such cases at St Thomas’.” I enclose his order for admission. Please tell the patient to show this envelope on arriving at the *patients’* entrance of the hospital. It will procure her admission. If possible, she should be there by *eleven o’clock* A.M. I earnestly hope that she may derive benefit. To me the main object of these special wards is, as with you, reformation—getting them out, when cured, to homes.

Had we had our old magdalen ward, I should have said, with some trust, I earnestly hope that this will be a turning point in her poor life, her poor young life. But now we only have in block No. 8 the “infectious block,” erysipelas, scarlet fever, etc., wards, one ward of about six beds for lock women. The wards are good—nothing to say against them. The BLOCK is *now* under the charge of a trained lady (who has been one of ours for many years) of the hospital rank of assistant matron. The nurses are now almost all our own trained nurses.

Still, it is a different thing from having one large magdalen ward in sole charge of one trained sister-matron devoted, body and soul, to the bodies and souls of these never-to-be-enough-pitied, poor degraded creatures. The difficulty was there not to keep them in but to get them out. Not that they were petted—far from it—there was none of that unwholesome romance allowed about them. It was like heaven to them to know that their souls and bodies were dearer to their “sister,” who was always there, day and night, than her own.

I should not dwell upon this, for it is past, but that I feel so sure that (not sisterhoods, but) this sort of businesslike thing must answer best, viz., the professionally trained *nurse* who is always with them, a refined gentlewoman being their mother-missionary.

I am inquiring of several about what lock wards there are in London hospitals. I shall have one of our own sisters, now serving in another hospital, with me tonight and shall ask her too. I think of your difficulties and your gallant stand day and night. God bless you.

A friend sent me a report fuller than Mr C. Acland's of the deputation to the Local Government Board.<sup>70</sup> Farnham Union, which takes in (I did not know it) the diseased women of Aldershot, attended and complained. They said that they were going to take over the lock hospital *in* the camp. You justly say that the sound of the bugle sets all these poor women going, whether in hospital or "home."

Do you think that a lock hospital in Aldershot Camp, or it may be in Aldershot *town*, is so objectionable that one ought to remonstrate, or at least get hold of the chaplain-general about it? Poor Mr Stigant seems to have got no "rise" out of the Local Government Board at all for *Chatham*. O may you get your St Bartholomew wards!<sup>71</sup>

Excuse this scrawl. I want to get off my "admission," which I only received this morning, at once. Poor girl—may she be blessed!

5 March 1887

*Private.* Thank you very much for your letter. I am so glad that there is a good prospect of a ward of St Bartholomew's to reward your unwearyed exertions.

Could you give me the address of *Mr Slogget*, the superintendent of lock hospitals?, for *Mr Acland*? He wants it. I had a long talk with him yesterday afternoon—I do not think we shall get much out of *this* bill, which is to be brought forward end of next week. Messrs Stansfeld and three barristers, etc., Mr Acland has been consulting with. They think this is all the House of Commons will swallow just now, that is, Mr Stansfeld's adherents, including Mrs Josephine Butler, who commands Mr Stuart, would vote against anything else. They have an insane horror of ANYTHING being done to mitigate the results, physical or moral, in hospital or home, of vice.

I send you the proof of the bill. Please take notice that [clause] 6 (p 8 to end) is cut out entirely now and that at [clause] 4 (p 3 "twenty" is substituted for "*two* inhabitants"). The gist of the bill now is that the superintendent of police, or head constable, or whatever he is called, for all Kent may be called in for Chatham, or for all Devon-

70 The Local Government Board, successor to the Poor Law Board, had central responsibility for the many local workhouses and workhouse infirmaries.

71 Mrs Hawthorn was then at St Bartholomew's Hospital.

shire may be called in for Plymouth, etc., this putting it out of the power of the local bribeable police to burke [cover up] evidence or appeals from civilian inhabitants.

I showed Mr Acland the chaplain-general's letter and discussed where we thought he was wrong. He, Mr Acland, quite sees that putting "out of bounds" is no remedy at all for what we suffer from. Mr Acland wants to see you, the chaplain-general and General Philip Smith and Mr Sloggett. I stuck to the homes and hospital provision. I said (but there is no need to tell you what I said). Mr Acland seems now convinced that it is mere useless cruelty to turn these poor wretched girls out of brothels and public houses, if you make no provision for them, body or soul. It is, as you say, like shaking a feather bed.

Alas, that the War Office ought to be "poked" to do what it can so well do, with only the present Criminal Amendment Acts, those of 1885-86 and "Sale of Food and Drugs" Act, and previous acts. All that we want for Aldershot could, I believe, be done with our present machinery.

Mr Acland has evidence that, though perhaps not *all* the good that has been claimed by Glasgow has been done, yet that *by the co-operation of the citizens and the police* an immense change has been wrought in Glasgow for the better.

Mr Acland proposes to have another bill, with a clause for "searching" brothels and to make it a "misdemeanour" if a diseased man solicits an innocent girl at the corner of, say, Regent Street, or any street, day after day and ends by communicating disease to her. I will not enter into this now.

He also, but this was an idea of the moment (suggested by my suggesting to him several plans for obtaining a provision of hospitals and homes) laying it for instance upon the sanitary authorities, thought of asking the secretary of state for war whether, supposing a home were attached by private or municipal means to any lock hospital, etc., the W.O. would give a grant. I stuck to it, however, as you had so wisely suggested, that the homes must be interchangeable (Devonshire and Kent) for example.

In order to post this in time for you to get it tonight I must close, though I have not told you half what passed. But the important thing is for *you* to tell me. Would you kindly return me this imperfect proof of the bill and the—though I am ashamed to ask it—these miserable notes, as I have no notes of his conversation and I should like to complete these for you.

God speed the work. God save these poor things.

Source: From a letter to Ellice Hopkins, ADD Mss 52427 ff39-44

5 March 1887

I fain would say, what I cannot, how deeply touched and greatly interested I am by your work and your letter. It is so kind of you to write me such a letter. It will inspire me to my life's end. God speed your brave work and give you health to pursue it.

It is a work indeed in which all the women of England should unite. You who *can* to address the men and form the White Cross,<sup>72</sup> others to influence the wives and mothers to keep up a higher standard, and to rouse those who have none to make as the standard for men as for women, others to get legislation if legislation is needed, or to get it enforced. For example, there are two acts, most useful ones, under one of which drugging beer could be prevented and under the other harbouring prostitutes in public houses, but neither is often enforced; others to help poor women who live by handwork and eke out their most scanty wages by the wages of sin, to do good work and obtain the market value of good work, by all means including combination [trade unions], for the starvation pay of women's work is one great cause of *her* vice, and to help them by a house of call for industries, by good lodgings and the like not to run into temptation while yet innocent. *You* are on the right tack who try to *prevent* it—others to make a life, for soldiers and sailors especially, which will make it not so easy to sin—others to bring civilians in co-operation with the police.

The subject is as large as womanhood and embraces all the relations, all the doings of womanhood. It is inextricably intermingled with all that women have to think and say and do. It is not like any other sin which you can “go at” by itself. It is with us from the cradle to the grave. For the question of a nation's health, the sanitary point of view, lines and doubles the warp and the woof, the web all through. Prevention is more hopeful than cure.

In hospital work it meets one at every turn. Every nurse knows that in a large number of cases this horrible disease is the complication which delays recovery or carries to the grave the health of infants who can have done no sin. *There* is our cradle question. Foreign traffic in women is another cruel subject.

---

72 Founded in 1883, initially the White Cross Army, later the White Cross Society, taught sexual abstinence before marriage to boys and young men; it opposed both the double sexual standard and the Contagious Diseases Acts. Hopkins's speeches brought large audiences of workingmen to tears.

The new short service in the army—that tells against us. Prostitution takes younger women and women of a somewhat higher class than it did, we are told. Poverty and love of dress are the more common incentives. Everywhere, at every turn, this question—no question but this evil—starts up and meets us. You who have the touch of the Ithuriel's spear know this. Then, it is so interwoven with drink, with the public house business. The drink bill, the gigantic interests of capitalists and brewers mixed up with the drink bill, war against us.

Here are but a very few of the relations, touching us at every moment of our lives almost. If we could each do the part of our work which God, miscalled circumstance, has placed before us, as nobly as you have. But, with regard to your request, I think you must let me go my own poor little way. Will you kindly thank Lady Laura Ridding<sup>73</sup> for doing me the honour of wishing for me to be upon her league, and ask her to pardon me and say that I think I must keep to my rule of not giving my poor name where I cannot give my work.

I am an overworked invalid, hardly ever going beyond my rooms or even my couch—with far more to do than I can do justice to—seeing only those with long-standing claims of business upon me. I could not join in any meeting, could not indeed see any of those whom I so honour. I grieve more than I can say for your suffering, but while I have but too much sympathy with the longing for rest, I cannot but hope that you will have those “ten years’ more work” which you are so generously willing to live. Surely that willingness to live will be accepted. It is harder to live than to die.

Hurrah then for the White Cross and the lady of the White Cross. Your letter is so inspiring while so suffering. “Who follows in her train?” I say, “a noble army, men and boys. The matron and the maid”<sup>74</sup> will be your recompense.

I have to ask you a question: Mr Acland MP, who is, as you perhaps know, going to bring in a bill, about which he has consulted Mr Parey Bunting and others—I do not enter into the contents of that bill, because you probably know them—asks “whether Miss Hopkins is

---

73 Lady Laura Ridding (1855-1939), daughter of the earl of Selborne, wife of the headmaster of Winchester, later the bishop of Southwell; she supported women's suffrage, work, emigration and social purity. It is not clear what “league” was at issue for Ridding was a Conservative and supporter of the Primrose League, which was both pro-empire and pro-Tory.

74 From the hymn by Reginald Heber, “The Son of God Goes Forth to War,” which was sung at Nightingale's own funeral.

opposed to making general in our towns the power of search of bad houses, provided that civilians are in co-operation with the police.”

Source: From a letter to Amy Hawthorn, Add Mss 52427 f57

6 March 1887

Mr Acland brought me some interesting letters last night—I have to return them tonight with my criticisms, so could not send them to you. But I have made some extracts for you and me (though we should neither of us concur with all the letters) if you care to read them—and here they are.

Dr Curtis is a C.D. Acts’ man. I am obliged to ask you to return me these pages with your criticisms or information, if you will be so good. Excuse greatest haste.

F.N.

Closing brothels without a provision of lock hospitals and homes is simple cruelty. What is to become of these poor women, our fellow creatures? They suffer for us and we suffer by them. But the lock hospital is to lead to the “home” and to rescue, not to re-entering prostitution. Please return to F.N.

Source: From a letter/draft/copy to Miss Crossland,<sup>75</sup> Add Mss 52427 ff58-59

9 March 1887

Could you tell me what was the staff of magdalen ward in Miss Rye’s time? for say *twenty-eight*? beds and *two*? beds small ward. (I am not wishing to include the ovariectomy cases or attendants.) Was it Miss Rye: trained nurse, lady, one day nurse, one night nurse, query: were these two always *trained* nurses? one ward maid—was there one? one probationer—was there always one?

They had their meals, I presume, from the general kitchen but drinks, etc., from the ward kitchen? They were generally BAD cases? I suppose, not allowed to do ward work?, nor allowed to syringe themselves, or dressings even under supervision? Were operations performed in the lavatory? Were they allowed to attend chapel *without* being in a gallery where they could not be seen, as at Kaiserswerth? What objections would you or Miss Rye make to *any* of these arrangements? Was there any objection to the students?

I am troubling you because, though I have a particular dislike to giving advice, I cannot well refuse in this instance—a particular friend

<sup>75</sup> Mary S. Crossland (1837-1914), home sister at the Nightingale Home.



of mine, a colonel's wife [Amy Hawthorn], in one of the worst garrison towns in England, having thrown herself into the work, which she does admirably. If you return *this* to me I hope it will not give you *very* much trouble writing the answers.

God bless you.

ever yours affectionately

Source: From a letter to Amy Hawthorn, Add Mss 45776 ff224-28

10 March 1887

Many, many thanks for your most interesting letter, which I will not answer *now*, but only do as I am bid, as I always do when bid by *you*, although I am very much afraid of giving advice to people. If you can make any use of *any part* of the scrawl I enclose, pray do (I think I had rather it should not be left in any hands but yours). I do so sympathize in your great noble efforts that I would gladly get any other information you would like.

I cannot dwell too much on the necessity of character in the “sister,” firm, sympathetic, gentle, kind, deep but not demonstrative, a trained nurse, and set upon the *moral* training of her patients, actually breaking her heart if *one* went wrong. That makes such an impression on them.

In answer to questions put: “These cases,” it has been found by experience, could well be admitted to a “general hospital,” if no other is available. (In some respects indeed there is even an advantage in this.) The ward or wards for “these cases” should be entirely separate from all others, it is almost needless to say, any intercommunication being made impossible.

As to nursing: it has been found by experience that a good nursing staff for from twenty to twenty-eight beds, if all in one ward with, say, one very bad case, in a small ward occasionally is:

one trained nurse, a gentlewoman, call her head nurse, “sister” or matron, as you will, but she must do the duties of a head nurse. We prefer the title “sister”;

two (day staff nurse, night staff nurse), both trained, is best, but a capable, middle-aged, good woman trained by “sister” is feasible for a small hospital for day or night nurse;

one ward maid, a really steady, superior sort of woman;

(a probationer might be added, a well-educated woman, whether gentle or simple, in a hospital of twenty-thirty).

It is difficult to diminish the staff of four, because magdalens must of course never be left alone (one nurse must always be with them), for a hospital of eight or ten only of these cases. Yet the same staff would do for twenty-thirty, if in one ward. But eight or ten, if in two or three small wards, would hardly be served properly even by the staff of four. The girls must never be allowed to gossip together over their past lives, or indeed to talk of them to the nurses; in one hour they may ruin all that has been done for them.

The head nurse (or matron) *must* be a *trained gentlewoman* for the purpose of maintaining discipline by a high influence, of keeping the prospect of reformation and return to an honest life before the girls, and of getting them out to “homes” when cured. All depends upon this; experience has shown that, though without any power of compulsory detention (but we do not pronounce *against* this) the power of loving sympathy, which makes the matron (head nurse) mourn as for a daughter, if *one* returns to a life of sin or leaves the “home” found for her after cure, will keep the girls in the magdalen ward till cured, and will, in far the greater majority of cases, restore them to an honest life (*not* cure them *for sin*).

As for details: the dinners may be sent up from general kitchen, breakfast, tea and supper made in the *ward* kitchen, which must be attached to the magdalen ward, a sort of scullery with hot and cold water and small range, etc. As a rule the cases are severe. They should never be allowed to syringe themselves or to do their own dressings. “Operations” should be performed in their own bathroom. W.C.’s, bathrooms, lavatory should all be attached to the ward. Those who are able may take part in keeping the ward brushed, dusted, etc.

The matron’s bedroom should be between the large ward and small ward, best with an inspection window for night. If the matron (head nurse) sees fit, she might bring some six or eight of them to chapel, sitting in front row of female patients of general hospital or in a gallery where they could not be seen. This is, of course, a matter for special judgment.

N.B. The worst thing that can be done with these poor cases is to put them, even if they will go, into the wards of those workhouse infirmaries or workhouses where they are not kept *entirely* separate from all other patients or inmates, with a quite distinct nursing staff of their own, which should be, whether gentle or simple, of a superior moral character.

## Contagious Diseases Legislation in India

**Editor:** The Contagious Diseases Acts had come into force in India during Lawrence's viceroyalty; Nightingale was not involved and seems not to have protested. As noted earlier she had worked to keep out a recommendation for that legislation in the royal commission report. In the late 1880s data became available indicating an increase in sexually transmitted diseases among soldiers in India after repeal of the act. A letter to the editor by "F.H.W." argued that, since repeal, diseases had increased from 1.77 percent to 3.50, and the percentage to total sick, often under 12 percent in 1883, and never over 30 percent, in June 1889 had risen to over 50 percent in thirteen stations.<sup>76</sup> Nightingale consulted Douglas Galton on the matter. Dr Sutherland had retired in 1888 and died in 1891; his firm views were remembered but he could not be consulted. Nightingale perhaps did nothing at this stage; there are only three short items to indicate that she was following the issue in India in the 1880s.

The last action we know of by Nightingale, in 1897, has her taking a public stand, albeit qualified, in favour of compulsory legislation in India. She signed a "women's memorial," published in the *Times*, that reversed key tenets of her long-held position. Listed in order of social rank on the memorial were one princess, seven duchesses, three marchionesses, eighteen countesses, three viscountesses and thirty-eight ladies; the matrons or lady superintendents of the Lock, Middlesex, London, St George's, Magdalen, Park and Westminster Hospitals, the Chelsea and St Marylebone Infirmaries, the Westminster Hospital Nurses' Home and the Lock Hospital Rescue Home. Two prominent women physicians signed: Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, an old supporter of the acts whom Nightingale had opposed, and Mary Scharlieb, a colleague on Indian health matters. The titled women listed included such old allies as (the dowager) Lady Lawrence and Lady Wantage. Nightingale's esteemed nursing colleague, Florence Lees, appears under her married name as Mrs Dacre Craven (the Vicarage, Great Ormond Street). Nightingale's signature, and one other, was given subject to the condition of an inquiry being conducted.

Evidently a number of the signatories were women who had previously opposed the legislation. The memorial even gives polite recogni-

---

76 "The Cantonment Bill," *Pioneer Mail* 8 September 1889, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC2/V68/89. Interestingly F.H.W. suggested that the women should have the choice of treatment or expulsion from the cantonment, but did not advocate compulsory treatment.

tion to those women who did not change their minds, those who, “notwithstanding the appalling statistics” sincerely hold “that the evil of rendering vice safer and the risk of degrading women outweigh all other considerations.”

Biographer Cook reports that Nightingale was subjected to much criticism for changing her position, even “prayers” were said for her!<sup>77</sup> Josephine Butler criticized her publicly, but Nightingale dismissed this in a letter to Douglas Galton: “The shouting ladies in England must be avoided, who shout about *C.D.A. off* and *C.D.A. on*, which is all nonsense.”<sup>78</sup> Ellice Hopkins and her White Cross organization may have been an influence in the change of view, for they advocated the legislation for India, where soldiers effectively could not bring their wives, and were discouraged from marrying, while opposing it for England.

Source: Note, ADD Mss 52427 ff130-32

[1886-87?]

*Despatch.* In twenty cantonments where Contagious Diseases Acts, over the supervision of prostitutes *was* in force still, ratio of admissions *rose* in 1885 (from the last decade and in one of these, Bareilly, rose to 527 in 1885, more than half the entire garrison in the course of the year; men once affected with the more serious diseases have to be invalided within three years. But (he argues) it's because act not *sufficiently* put in force while in Calcutta, where act is suspended, it's because it *is* suspended: 31 per 1000 of population treated for venereal within Calcutta hospitals in 1885—only 7 in 1873.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton ADD Mss 45766 ff8-9

9 June 1887

I hope he has seen you—I sent him what you said the day after I saw you, though he had not then returned to London (142 Sloane St.). And he answered: hoping to see you and sending me his terrible memo on contagious diseases of the army. *Shall I send you this?* The first part of the report of the Calcutta Public Health Society, of which Mr Cunningham is president, has been sent me by someone. Will you have it? *He* is active, while we are doing nothing. I am afraid he will steal a march upon us.

<sup>77</sup> Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:408.

<sup>78</sup> Letter to Douglas Galton 24 November 1895, ADD Mss 45767 f158.

Source: From a letter to Douglas Galton Add Mss 45766 f270

Claydon

[ca. October 1889]

A propos of H. Cunningham's paper on Indian syphilis, put in or rather "taken as read," asks me whether he shall "write" to "*Lord Cross, Sir F. Roberts,*<sup>79</sup> or *Lord Dufferin*" about it? *Shall he?* I don't know. You know Sutherland and Dr Cunningham both declared that the legislation did NOT diminish the evil. But it is vain to write to either about anything now—I suppose that that opinion is now exploded and that the evil is terrible. *What do you advise me to say?*

Source: "Women's Memorial," *Times* 25 May 1897:12

We desire to express our anxious hope that effectual measures will be taken to check the spread of contagious diseases among our soldiers, especially in India.

We appreciate and respect the opinions of those who, notwithstanding the appalling statistics to which a competent committee, appointed by government, has recently given authority, are opposed to us on this subject. We believe that they hold, in all sincerity, that the evil of rendering vice safer and the risk of degrading women outweigh all other considerations.

But, speaking as women, we feel bound to protest against these views. We believe not only that preventive measures, if exercised with scrupulous care, do not cause any real danger to women, but that they constitute a valuable safeguard of women's virtue and afford a great opportunity of escape from a life of vice.

We feel that it is the duty of the state, which, of necessity, collects together large numbers of unmarried men in military service, to protect them from the consequences of evils which are, in fact, unavoidable in such a community and under such conditions. And with the deepest earnestness we call on the government to do all that can be done to save innocent women and children in the present and future generations from the terrible results of vices for which they are not responsible.

The signatures of Miss Florence Nightingale and Mrs Humphry Ward<sup>80</sup> are given subject to the addition of request that: "An independent inquiry be at the same time set on foot at the several stations in India, as recommended by the Governor General of India and

---

79 Frederick Sleight Roberts (1832-1914), later 1st earl.

80 Née Mary Augusta Arnold, on whom see p 820.

Council in the military despatch to the secretary of state for India, No. 184, dated Simla, 4 November 1896, appended to the report of the departmental committee.”

### **The Treatment of “Penitents” in the Convent of the Good Shepherd**

**Editor:** When in Paris in 1853 Nightingale had the opportunity to examine the rules, constitution, schedules, devotional materials, etc. of a number of Roman Catholic religious orders, both men’s and women’s, including the material extracted here from the Convent of the Good Shepherd, a women’s community that sought to rehabilitate prostitutes. Much of this material, which would not normally be seen by persons outside the community, has already been published in *Theology* (3:298-318). The material is published here somewhat as an appendix as it did not play any significant role on the police regulation of prostitution.

The Good Shepherd material is nowhere expressly referred to, although there are places where it seems Nightingale might have been influenced by it, which are indicated. By contrast Nightingale did comment approvingly of Kaiserswerth’s “penitentiary,” whose methods were very different, although a deep change of heart was also the means for reform. She tried to get a young woman into a Good Shepherd institution outside London in 1852 (see *Theology* 3:245-46), however that was before the Paris experience.

Nightingale was, however, greatly influenced by the careful description of positions within religious orders, their reporting structures, rights and obligations, especially on relations between the hierarchy (bishop, archbishop and chaplain) and the community (mother superior). We have already seen her compare unfavourably the Anglican St John’s House with French orders (see p 41 above). The careful separation of functions and delineation of mutual rights we shall shortly see are in sharp contrast with the interference of male clerics above.

The daily schedule of the institution seems to have applied both to the penitents and the nuns. Its rigours not only show the dedication of the women who freely undertook them, which Nightingale respected, but also how incompatible such a life was with the practical professional demands and long hours of work in nursing.

Nightingale’s extracts are hard to read. Some folios are missing and many were torn. The extracts themselves mix French and English,

presumably combining simple copying with on-the-spot translation. We have reordered as well as translated to make the material comprehensible, beginning with the schedule which gives a quick overview of the daily life.

Source: Extracts from the schedule, rules, by-laws and devotional material of the Couvent of the Bon-Pasteur [Convent of Good Shepherd], Add Mss 43402 ff113-19, 125, 129-30

[1853]

#### Day of the Penitents

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 5           | Dress and do their rooms.  |
| 5:30-6:30   | Prayer (in chapel), oraison and office.  |
| 6:30-8      | Work and silence.  |
| 8-9         | Bread. Mass and giving an account before one another of their good thoughts during the silence.  |
| 9-10        | Work. They sing <i>Veni Creator</i> at 9 to honour the descent of the Holy Ghost at that hour on the day of Pentecost. Half an hour's reading aloud and giving an account to the sister of what they have remarked in the reading. |
| 10-11       | Work. Recite litanies of Jesus, sing commandments; one quarter hour reading aloud.   |
| 11-11:30    | Work. Rosary. Examen particulier [examination of conscience] in which they accuse themselves aloud.  |
| 11:30-12:15 | Dinner.  |
| 12:15-2     | Recreation and a little "lecture" [reading].   |
| 2-3         | Work, recite Vespers and silence.  |
| 3-4         | Work, Adoration of Jesus dying (kneeling); in a prayer give an account of what they have thought during silence.   |
| 3:30        | Bread, one point of lecture, silence.  |
| 4-5         | Work. Compline, singing for half an hour as in the morning, one point of lecture, one quarter hour silence.  |
| 5-6         | Work, half hour reading, talking of it as in the morning.  |
| 6-7         | Work. Rosary. Examen and prayer.   |
| 7-8:30      | Supper. Recreation or work in silence and a little talking.  |
| 8:30-9      | Reading, prayer, bed.  |

Chapter held once a week, for an hour, by the superior for each to accuse herself in turn of exterior faults. It is begun by *Veni Creator*. Then all stand, and the penitents who are to speak have their names called in turn by a sister, as all have not time to speak. But if any has

done anything considerable she is to come of her own accord. They accuse themselves on their knees, loud enough to be heard by all. To excuse oneself at the chapter is a “considerable” offence, and all the community will prostrate itself as a reparation. (Nothing can be said out of chapter of what has been said there.) But at all the three exams [examinations of conscience] daily, a penitent may accuse herself to a sister and ask for penitence.

The penitents undress within their curtains. They will be changed from one bed or dormitory to another without asking any reason but the desire of their perfection.

At 5 o'clock a sister rings the waking bell and says, Sisters, here is Jesus Christ who is coming, and all answer, Let us go to meet him. If any is not ready at 5½ she must dress on the stairs, for the room will be locked. One sister sleeps in each dormitory, locks the door at night (after seeing that all are in their beds) and puts the key under her pillow.

The sisters take no vows, no engagement; she is admitted by the chaplain, the superior and four advisors (together). After a time of probation, she is admitted by the *chapter* by a simple majority. Then three days of retreat to ask God's will, then she is solemnly received. She kisses the penitents all round, then she serves at dinner and kisses all their feet, to show the engagement she has taken to be their servant.

No distinction between the sisters and penitents either in food, lodging or dress, except in the cap—their only distinction a more perfect life. The sisters must be the living rule for the penitents; they must ask nothing of them but what they practise themselves, and the penitents will not find it painful. God alone being the beginning and end of their friendship, there will be no partiality. The sisters will not love the penitents for partiality's sake,<sup>81</sup> but only for Jesus Christ's sake, who preferred the most forsaken.

Scandals will arise from probationers and patients dismissed who give the establishment a bad name. This must be expected. Let it be borne with tranquillity. If God is with us who will be against us?<sup>82</sup> If He is not, the establishment will fall of itself, if He is, we are too happy to suffer innocently. Would you rather suffer being guilty? I do not believe they wish to hurt us, for we wish to hurt no one; on the contrary, we would wish to do good wherever we can. And the Lord for-

---

81 An allusion to 1 Tim 5:21.

82 A paraphrase of Rom 8:31.



gives us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.<sup>83</sup> Indeed we have nothing to forgive, for they have only abused us from not knowing us. Do not say you are tired. How happy are those who are tired at night in the service of God!

Conference with the nurses every Friday to ask their advice about any change to be made in the house. No conversation ever to be allowed about the patients among each other, nor to the superior, unless she questions them, much less to the servants. The superior will observe the patients for herself.

The superior will let the nurses see that she knows their trials with the patients, if they have any peculiar one, will assume it herself, will caution the nurses against any partiality among their patients but, as the price of each soul is equal before God, will encourage them to equal attention for each, that, if any preference is to be shown, it should be for those who want support the most, either from their temper, which renders them the most unfortunate, or for their impatience, which makes them the most to be pitied, and for those for whom the nurses feel least inclination. In order to be able to do this, they must often have recourse to God to ask Him to enable them to look at Jesus Christ and to act as he would have acted, not after their natural sentiments but after his, of profound pity for the human.

The superior should accuse herself of her faults before the nurses, not at these conferences but with each in private, and should endeavour to lead each to do the same with her. With drunkenness she must be inexorable, instant dismissal, because it might cost the life of a patient, but with no other faults.<sup>84</sup>

She should always ask the nurses' advice about the probationers, consult them whether and how much they can be spared for their lessons. Every evening she must give them spiritual instruction herself. The reading and other lessons may be given by others. The nurses must give an account every night to the superior of the probationers.

The superior must be willing to eat the remains of the nurses' dinner, to eat anyhow, must wait on the nurses when ill, must guide them by example more than by words. If a nurse complains of her dinner, let the superior eat it. Let the superior do what the nurse objects to.

---

83 An allusion to Matt 6:12.

84 Nightingale evidently agreed with this; certainly in the Crimean War drunkenness was cause for immediate dismissal.

She must find in meditation what she will afterwards give to the sisters. "I cannot think how they can listen to me. I who have never learnt in a community, how can I conduct a community?"

She must discern the dispositions of the sisters, the employments which suit them, whether they are sincere and likely to persevere. There are certain decisive moments in illness only known by the first doctors, where the remedy must neither be delayed nor precipitated. These, the time and the manner to take minds, must be known to a superior.

Never reprove, except in private; praise the penitent for her first fervour; make her confess that she has been wrong; ask her what *she* will do to correct it. [To] share, if possible, the correction with her [is] misleading, like taking another person's medicine. The first thing in conducting is to gain the heart, if they could but come of themselves to tell their fault.

Postulate for from three to six months. Then a short time en retraite [in a retreat] before beginning, during which time their dispositions were observed by the surveillantes soeurs [supervising sisters]; then the life was told them exactly that they might not be surprised at its austerity, then five years' novitiate before taking any engagement, which engagement is only for a year.

Never with penitents allow them to speak even to you, even out of humility, of their past life, much less to one another.<sup>85</sup> Never, however necessary the occasion may seem, reprove them with it. Let them forget it. Let them not remember what God has forgotten. These dangerous images might become a temptation. Silence on it all. Never let strangers speak with penitents or give them any marks of particular favour.

Who eats my flesh, etc.,<sup>86</sup> I in him and he in me, i.e., he who communicates is a Jesus Christ himself, which cannot be unless he is humble and suffering like him. He who communicates is changed into Jesus Christ and this change makes him a Jesus Christ himself so that he will love nothing any more but humiliation and suffering.

Do not confess often. A quoi bon? [For what good?] For either it shows a continuation of sin or of scrupulosity. If you confess always the same crimes, what good is confession? You must only go to confes-

---

85 Nightingale echoed this prohibition of penitents talking to each other of their past life in advice she gave in 1887 (see p 504 above).

86 An allusion to John 6:54, 56.

sion when you have committed some sin and, after having confessed it, you must not commit it again. So it is *not* for the fear of offending God that you don't commit a crime, but it is for the fear of losing yourself.

[trans. from French] One could say that s/he was entirely swallowed up in God, and that though living on earth, his/her conversation is in heaven.<sup>87</sup> [English resumes] Humility, you can't say anything so bad of me that I don't deserve it. Always answer thus.

Uniform dress necessary that the poor may not be despised, nor the rich flattered, [as] if Jesus Christ only died for that parish or for my own family, when she was told only to admit those of her own parish, only to care for her own family. She never took a penitent with a "pension," however small. The first gown only is provided and *the penitent* receives no alms from strangers. If we observe His laws, it is necessary/essential to His goodness to support us; if we don't, we don't wish to be supported. Never ask for money. Keep the penitents for life, or place them well.

[trans. from French] God will look after me if I die. Jesus Christ cannot die. . . . You will understand that it is not me but God alone who supports the house. [English resumes] Christ did not choose to be raised above the body but to suffer all the troubles.

Every week one penitent chosen to say all the prayers, one to do the reading at the work, one at the refectory and the little readings are done by a sister.

Each house of the Bon-Pasteur under the jurisdiction of the bishop and archbishop of its diocese. The archbishop names the chaplain. The sisters may represent it to the archbishop if he does not suit. He must not be under forty, zealous, gentle, prudent and strong.

A temporal mother *au dehors* [from outside] must also be found, who will examine every three months the accounts with the spiritual mother, and append her name. She must be a lady of well-known reputation. The sisters choose the superior by a majority, with the consent of the archbishop.

The superior assembles the sisters every month to concert with them the means of preventing a relaxation of discipline. She has several assistants, whom she consults about receiving, placing, dismissing. Easter Sunday they will rise one hour earlier than usual to seek Jesus risen again like the women in the gospel.

---

87 An allusion to Phil 3:20.

At bread time one sister says, Remember, Sisters, that God is here present, and all answer, We believe it and we adore Him with all our hearts. The sister says, Let us work in His holy presence for the love of Him and for the expiation of our sins and they answer all, Amen.

In winter, as so much work is not done as in summer, and yet, as the penitents must gain their bread by their work, they work till 10 P.M. and therefore do not get up till 6 A.M. If anyone feels sleepy at the sermon she will kneel down to wake herself. At recreation they will not speak either of their own sins or of anyone else's, nor of their temptations and difficulties, nor of the conduct and government of the house, but they will be cheerful, though not boisterous. . . .

To act thus recourse must often be had to God to ask from Him His Spirit of goodness and wisdom. Jesus Christ must be looked to, how he acted (and never but for his Father); it is the only way. The penitents will learn this from the sisters. They will learn to conduct themselves as children and not as slaves, to do good for the love of it and not from fear of punishment. Then, nothing will cost them anything.

The sisters, when they have to reprove, must first ask of the Spirit of Love and Wisdom what to say, then humble themselves by the recollection of their own faults, lest they should be tempted by pride or anger in reproving. They must be calm, *never doing from zeal* or temper what must be done *purely from charity*, patience having its perfect work.<sup>88</sup> If the reproof must be public, the person who has erred must be disposed and prepared to undergo voluntarily the confession she has deserved.

If the sister has not authority enough in herself upon the mind to persuade to this, she must address them to the superior, whom she will inform, *with* a consent of the penitent who has erred if possible, of the species of fault of and the remedy to be applied. No sister ever to be reproved before a penitent, even if wrong. The part of the penitent is never to be taken in their presence against the sisters, however right they may seem, but the penitents to be exhorted to silence, the sisters to be advised in private. The sisters to treat one another with mutual deference as an example to the penitents of civility.

There must be a confidence in the superior suitable to the task in which God has placed her, in order to soften the burden of the superintendency.

---

<sup>88</sup> An allusion to Jas 1:4.



**WOMEN FRIENDS, RELATIVES,  
COLLEAGUES AND  
ACQUAINTANCES**

---



## WOMEN FRIENDS, RELATIVES, COLLEAGUES AND ACQUAINTANCES

---

Nightingale had a large number of girl and women friends as a child and young woman, largely the daughters of family friends who visited the Nightingales and whom they visited. There is correspondence surviving to and from only a few of them: Henrietta Wyvill and a Swedish friend, Selma Benedicks, in *European Travels* (7:35-39, 48-51, 626-69), Fanny Brydges in *Life and Family* (1:428) and Louisa Ashburton, Georgina Tollet, Elise von Tunzelmann, Maria Otter, Miss Strutt, Susan and Joanna Horner below. Nightingale makes reference to numerous other young women, including extended visits, to Helen Richardson and other members of the Strutt and Otter families, but no correspondence survives. Selima Harris was an acquaintance from the Nile trip with the Bracebridges with whom Nightingale remained in some contact afterwards (but only one letter to her survives).

Much more correspondence with older women friends, notably Selina Bracebridge and Mary Clarke Mohl (both family friends), survives; Harriet Martineau (eighteen years Nightingale's senior, and, while known to her family, a colleague on issues); and her contemporary Elizabeth Herbert, whom Nightingale met in her twenties. There are smaller amounts with the spouses of colleagues and an enormous range of women who contacted her for assistance on various things, tenants and cottagers, former employees, etc.

The youthful correspondence that is available is largely descriptive of day-to-day life; sometimes it relates dreams and aspirations, but largely it shows the constraints imposed on Nightingale by her family. Nightingale had experienced a "call to service" in 1837, at age sixteen, which became in a few years a serious preoccupation and source of frustration when her family would not allow her to pursue it. When she finally was permitted to work, becoming the superintendent of the Establishment for Gentlewomen in 1853, the correspondence



changes completely. There are no more lengthy descriptions of people and events about her and musings about life and death: life itself, as she wanted to live it, had finally begun—sixteen years after the “call”!

Nightingale kept in touch with these early friends through occasional (generally brief) letters, which often contain apologies for not being able to see them. Messages went back and forth via her sister. Two of the closest friends from this early period (Anne Dutton Dunsany and Selma Benedicks) died early, hence a natural end to those exchanges. But even in old age Nightingale remembered and cared about her early friends, as references in correspondence with her sister show.

From the time Nightingale began to work, her friendships came to overlap work associations. That is, people whom she saw or with whom she corresponded on “business” became friends in the sense of being people she cared about overall, not just the business at hand. Gifts go out to them (and are received from them), greetings go to spouses, children and people close to them. Inquiries are made about their health, aspirations and positions. Nightingale tells them she has prayed for them (sometimes in response to a direct request). Assistance is given on matters of health, opportunities for their children, etc. Jokes and warm wishes abound.

Friends, of course, have families, so that friendship with someone entails concerns about their own parents, siblings, children, etc. Not only are there inquiries about this wider circle in correspondence, sometimes there is correspondence with a relative about the person in question. For example, Nightingale wrote relatives of Elizabeth Herbert with inquiries about her and evidently received letters from them.

Nightingale’s post-Crimea illness, as well as her vocation, was a major constraint on purely social contacts. From 1857 on, or only after one year of fairly normal health after her return from the Crimean War, she experienced considerable pain and fatigue. Naturally she used her best time for work, and we know how much she valued work and how long she had waited to be permitted to do it. She found seeing people enormously stressful and was advised to limit such visits to one person at a time. Hence for most of her working life seeing people in a group was quite exceptional. Even her parents visited her one at a time. When receiving visits from family members she would schedule separate times for husband and wife or parent and

child. Odd as it sounds, this became standard procedure in her family and was accepted. Colleagues who wanted their child to meet her were told that said child would have to be received alone. This indeed was done and the children seemed to have been quite pleased with their solo meetings.

A few of the early friendships survived the change in Nightingale's work schedule and illness, but only those with shared concerns about social reform, religion or charitable work. Selina Bracebridge, Elizabeth Herbert and Louisa Ashburton are the most important examples of friendships which lasted, although that with Elizabeth Herbert significantly diminished. Some of the people who were enormously important to Nightingale in her youth, notably "Clarkey" Mohl, did not remain on the same tier as Nightingale's working life began, although contact was maintained.

Sometimes the wife of a male colleague became a good friend in her own right. Dr Sutherland's wife is the best example, the "best of my wives," as Nightingale joked (see p 601 below). Of less intensity was the friendship with Sir John McNeill's wife and family. McNeill was an important colleague, like Dr Sutherland going back to the Crimean period, and a person Nightingale greatly esteemed—she stayed with the McNeills in Edinburgh in 1856 en route to Balmoral Castle.

At a time when even important officials had small staffs, wives often wrote letters for their husbands. There is some direct correspondence then with the wives, sometimes after the death of the official (notably Lord Lawrence). In some cases Nightingale corresponded with the official's secretary (Louisa Gaster, for Lord Lawrence). Typically she not only dealt with the content of the letter but sent personal messages to the wife, too. Numerous examples appear in the India volumes.

Wives had babies, and Nightingale took a great interest in their "confinements," realizing the danger and pain involved. Messages on childbirth, congratulations and relief on a safe delivery appear often in correspondence. So also are there messages of condolence on the all-too-frequent deaths of young infants.

Nightingale's democratic philosophy, based as it was on her faith, is another factor shaping her friendships. She herself was a member of a wealthy family, her father a gentleman, but she loved to have friends from the working class, lower middle class and the rural poor, including cottagers and tenants of the family estates. Cottagers and tenants at Claydon House later became friends when she began to spend time

there in her old age. Nightingale referred to these people as “friends” and exchanged letters with them as equals. This can be seen notably for Mrs Broomhead, Mrs Holmes, Mrs Truelove and Mrs Robertson. She sent them gifts of books, sometimes with inscriptions and advice as to special passages. Often, but not always, these were people with whom she shared religious sensibilities. It is perhaps noteworthy that when Nightingale could not find time or energy in 1877 to receive Julia Ward Howe, she did see her Lea Hurst cottager friends.

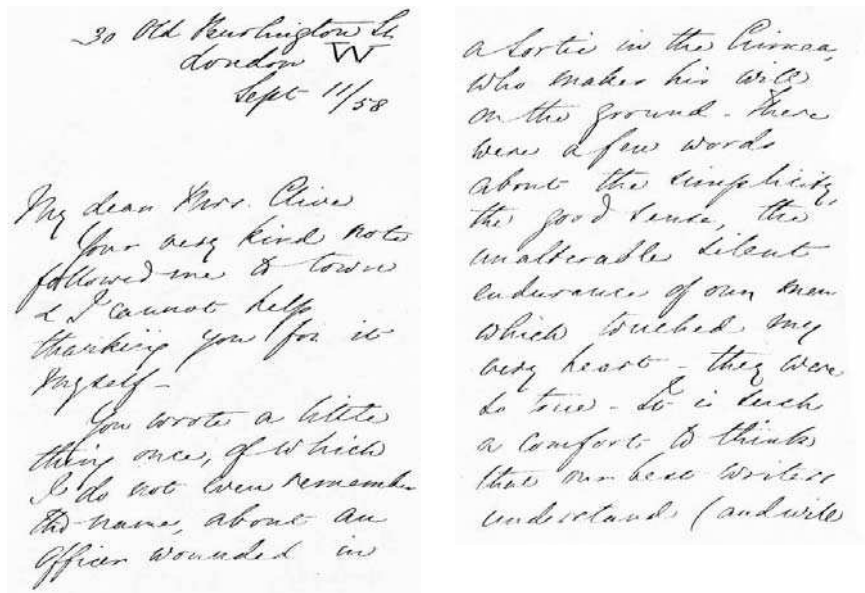
Another peculiarity in this correspondence arises from Nightingale’s being confined to her home, even her room and bed, so much of the time. She was enormously dependent on her domestic servants who, with the exception of one male messenger, were women. Those servants who stayed with her for a long time became, hardly friends, for they were dependent on her for their living and did not share her educated culture, but something akin to that. Nightingale took responsibility for their health (as a good employer did) and often, too, that of their relatives. Much correspondence relating this has already appeared in *Life and Family* (1:766-802). For the young servants (some started at age fourteen) Nightingale was in loco parentis and took an interest in their broader welfare. With older ones she became a confidante on their family’s troubles. Some former servants kept in touch with her, so that there were visits in her old age and even visits with their children.

Much of Nightingale’s “caseload” of medical and related referrals for these last two categories of people is given in *Public Health Care* (6:623-71). Here we give some further instances, involving both friendship and the giving of practical assistance.

In addition to providing care for people with far fewer resources than she had, Nightingale was often called on by her old family friends for practical assistance in their illnesses. She often obliged, going to some trouble to find private nurses and arrange other kinds of care for this quite privileged group. Indeed there must often have been conflicts, for Nightingale was well aware that the diversion of the best nurses into private care meant even greater scarcity for the public institutions of hospital and workhouse infirmary. The correspondence with Louisa Ashburton, for example, has instances of assistance given and others of Nightingale begging off for lack of contact with private nurses.

The material in this section begins with friends older than Nightingale (often her mother’s contemporaries), through friends of her

own age. Correspondence with and about a variety of notable and royal women is placed next, again organized (roughly) from older to younger. These correspondents tend to be acquaintances rather than friends, although some letters show warm and affectionate relations. Letters to friends, again including relatives, now younger (by at least ten years) then resumes. This is followed by correspondence with a wide set of servants, former servants, villagers, tenants and the like. Lastly comes correspondence with nuns (Roman Catholic and Anglican), most of it from late in life.



This page and next: Nightingale letter to a friend, novelist and poet Caroline Clive (on whom see p 554). Courtesy of Dr Judith Shamian, Toronto.

not let it be forgotten  
the real nobility  
the conduct of our  
men. Our 18,000 who  
out there in the  
Hospital Cemetery  
of the Crimea, &  
not by the sword  
by slow & painful  
disease -

You said a few  
years after the  
which struck me  
the same way -  
there are thoughts

are & some such  
frightful spectres  
that they wonder their  
can be & others the  
occasion of shedding  
a few tears -

These true words  
touch us to the quick,  
who feel but cannot  
write, shewing us that  
there are those who  
can write, & feel what  
they have not seen.

It would be a  
very great pleasure  
& me if you have the

kindness to remember  
you often to send  
me anything else  
you & read - We  
will find I shall  
appreciate it all  
the more.

Yours very sincerely  
& gratefully  
Florence Nightingale

## OLDER WOMEN FRIENDS

---

### Selina Bracebridge

**T**here is relatively little surviving correspondence with Selina Bracebridge (1803-74), given the length and importance of their friendship. Mrs Bracebridge was Nightingale's "spiritual mother," a supporter of her vocation when her family was most hostile, a woman who shared her faith and took her on wonderful trips. Were many letters destroyed or merely lost? There must have been much more correspondence although during key periods of Nightingale's pre-work letter writing they were travelling together (the winter in Rome 1847-48, Egypt, Greece and Europe 1849-50), hence there was no occasion to write. A biographical sketch of Selina Bracebridge (and her husband) appears in the Appendix of *European Travels* (7:775-76).

Selina Bracebridge was an older woman friend who shared Nightingale's faith and her liberal politics. Indeed, as is evident from the Rome trip, she was an even more ardent supporter of Italian independence and secular government than was Nightingale (see *European Travels* 7:184). The relationship was warm from the beginning (the Bracebridges were family friends) until Mrs Bracebridge's death in 1872. In 1847 Mrs Bracebridge took Nightingale on a workhouse visit (Mr Bracebridge was a workhouse guardian), again not an activity her family promoted. Mrs Bracebridge was a member of the ladies' committee at Harley St., so there is correspondence with her on Nightingale's first nursing venture (in the first nursing volume) as well as in the second item below. Nightingale wrote the letter here when she was considering how to set up a nursing institution, including a Protestant community for the nurses.

Both Bracebridges accompanied Nightingale to Scutari and assisted in much practical work, letter writing and account keeping (Mrs Brace-

bridge indeed kept in touch, like Nightingale, with the nurses from Scutari). When Nightingale became ill while at Balaclava Mrs Bracebridge went up to be with her and brought her back. Hence there is correspondence between the two in the Crimean War volume.

Selina Bracebridge also wrote to other members of the Nightingale family. Her letters (in the Claydon House collection) show her acting tactfully as a mediator, supporting Nightingale's aspirations, reporting on her health and generally trying to ease the way. Mrs Bracebridge wrote in 1849 to Mrs Nightingale stating that she has the address of a "duenna," or a lady who could accompany Nightingale to "Pye St. or wherever."<sup>1</sup> A letter from Mrs Bracebridge to Nightingale while she was at Kaiserswerth is excerpted in *European Travels*. Again this shows support for Nightingale's vocation, "if indeed it be God's will," while generously explaining that there was no need to write back (7:491). The Bracebridges visited Nightingale at Kaiserswerth on both her stays there. Letters Nightingale sent her family were sometimes sent on to Mrs Bracebridge. See, for example, one with "what it is her right to know" (1:254).

Nightingale stayed at the Bracebridges' in 1852 en route to the funeral of her great-aunt.<sup>2</sup> Mrs Bracebridge was Nightingale's recommendation for "lady visitor" at King's College Hospital (see p 162 above). Nightingale continued to consult her friend on professional matters. On a difficult nursing personnel matter in 1868 she showed the papers to her because "she is a good judge" and reported her opinion to Henry Bonham Carter.<sup>3</sup> Selina Bracebridge for some years spent the anniversary day of Sidney Herbert's death with Nightingale.

Selina Bracebridge, with her husband, supported Nightingale's social reform causes, as two letters below show regarding an (apparently) unsuccessful attempt to organize work opportunities during a bad economic downturn.

It was to Mrs Bracebridge, not her own mother, that Nightingale turned regarding her last care, when she thought she was terminally ill in 1864 (see p 535 below). When Mrs Bracebridge was in her last days, in 1874, Nightingale regretted that she could not go to nurse her friend. Nightingale remembered both Bracebridges in her will (both predeceased her):

---

1 Letter c1849, Wellcome Ms 9038/60.

2 Letter to Frances Nightingale [December 1852], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8993/129.

3 Letter 28 August 1868, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC18/14.

To my beloved and reverend friends Mr Charles H. Bracebridge and his wife, my more than mother without whom Scutari and my life could not have been, and to whom nothing that I could ever say or do would in the least express my thankfulness, I should have left some token of my remembrance had they as I expected survived me. (in *Life and Family* 1:856)

Nightingale's reasons for this gratitude appear right from the first item below. Following that is a letter outlining Nightingale's ideas, which were not pursued, of a type of Protestant sisterhood for women nurses at Harley St.

Source: Extracts from a missing notebook, excerpted from I.B. O'Malley, *Florence Nightingale 1820-56: A Study of Her Life Down to the End of the Crimean War* 125, 126 and 132

[1846]

Truly do the meek inherit *this* earth,<sup>4</sup> even in this life the meek—those who, thoughtless of the immediate effect upon themselves, have a keen unselfish appreciation of whatever is pure and beautiful and lovely and high-minded,<sup>5</sup> whether in God's world or man's, and love the possessor of it, whether he is kind to them or no—they have their heart opened to all God's blessings.

I wonder whether she knows what a difference she has made in my life. The very fact of there being one person by whom one's thoughts are not pronounced fit only for a dream not worth disputing, who does not look upon one as a fanciful spoilt child who ought to take life as it is and enjoy it—that mere fact changes the whole aspect of things to one. Since one has found that there is one person who does not think that society *ought* to make one happy, I have never had that sinking of spirits at the thought of the three winter months of perpetual row. From the moment one ceases to say to oneself that it is a very wicked thing not to be very happy in it, it ceases to make one *unhappy*, and one does then really first begin to take it as it is. There is no danger of sympathy ever making me discontented; since I have known you I have shaken hands with life.

But in general I do think that we ought to seek sympathy for what we *do*, not for what we suffer, except in cases of overwhelming agony, when our Saviour himself needed an angel from heaven.

<sup>4</sup> A paraphrase of Matt 5:5.

<sup>5</sup> An allusion to Phil 4:8.



As long as one believes that one's inmost self, i.e., the ideas which make one's life, are hollow, there is no support from within or without. The praise and blame of others alike discourage one. God Himself is at a distance. But given one heart of fellow-feeling and the scene changes.

\*

Lord, sanctify to me  $\Sigma$ 's friendship—let it not mislead me to represent before her, but let me think more of her approbation as it will be when she knows me spirit to spirit than as it is while she only knows me face to face. And if I have any other dangerous friendship which leads me to vanity, do Thou, Lord, purify it and defend me. Oh, God, no more love. No more marriage, O God.

\*

I had never opened my heart to her [Selina Bracebridge]; I had never *told* her that I was wretched. But if at any moment the cup was too full, she never said, "Why is it thus with you?" She never told me that life was fair and my share of its blessings great, and that I *ought* to be happy. She did not know that I was miserable but she felt it. And, to me, young, strong and blooming as I then was, to me the idol of the man I adored, the spoilt child of fortune, she had the heart and instinct to say: "Earth, my child, has a grave and in heaven there is rest!"

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Selina Bracebridge, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/3/3

120 rue du Bac

Paris

14 February [1853]

I have been a long time answering your kind letter. For why? Because I seem to myself like a man writing a play without the *Dramatis Personae*—the play of Hamlet with the character of Hamlet left out—not only but all the other characters. How can I make a plan without knowing who is to work in it? If the ladies of the committee were going to offer themselves as nurses, or if they would say, "So and so are to be the nurses," it could be a starting point for planning. But, without such a starting point, I seem like the chemist at Brighton who makes artificial mineral waters. He combines and combines and analyzes and puts together exactly the right quantities, but the life is wanting—it is never the real mineral water after all.

Plans are the fault of England. Rules and committees are her "ruination," without workers I mean—rules are very good things *after-*

*wards*. But do you think Fliedner would have done what he has, if he had begun with a paper of rules? Without knowing, therefore, who there is to work, nor what there is to work with, one cannot make a plan, and I will be as short and rough as I can. I would keep as near to the *Dalston* plan as possible, which is the beau ideal of hospitals—with the following modifications, necessary for a beginning.

I would begin with taking a small house in some of the (now forsaken) streets of London, like Great Ormond St., Bloomsbury. Camberwell is a very good place for good houses cheap. But it will not do to be out of the usual beats of the surgeons, otherwise they will not come. The house (84 Norton St.) would do very well for a beginning, but not to go on with, as there are not small rooms enough for a sanatorium, nor for sisters' rooms, every one of whom ought to have a den of her own, however small.

The house obtained—the thing might be begun with ten or twelve patients in three wards—never more than four in a ward, two or three “sisters” and one maid of all work, who should cook and clean the house, the sisters answering the door when she is busy. I have been making my calculations and I think this might be done for (from £30 to) £35 per an. per head all round—rent inclusive. The principle should be that of a family, the patients to be the guests. One of the sisters should be called “Mother” and should have the moral guardianship of the whole concern. She ought to pay a sum I think, not less than £50 a year or more than £100, to the affair—because she ought to be a woman of education. She must dress herself, but in an uniform. She receives nothing but her board and lodging and washing for that sum. Another sister should be called “superintendent” (I think it important that these two offices should be separate), who should have the entire housekeeping, accounts, direction of the sisters' time and material guardianship of the place. She should be responsible for her accounts to the gentlemen's committee or to the secretary, as the ladies may appoint, should receive a monthly sum for housekeeping, but should not have her accounts overhauled weekly unless by the “mother.” What woman will stand its being implied that she ordered in this chicken or that pint of port wine for herself? Unless you can trust your housekeeper, better have none at all.

At the same time, though the “mother,” I think, ought not to have any *démêlé* with the committee about the accounts, she ought to know enough about them to be able to say “the surgeons ordered that patient isinglass or that other wine,” in order to be able to account for

incidental expenses. The “mother” and “superintendent” must for a long time do all the work in the wards themselves, till sisters offer themselves, when they become the trainers. Till there are enough sisters, night nurses must alas! be hired, as with only three people in the house, it would kill them to sit up every three nights. But I should aim at all the work in the house being done ultimately by the sisters. There will require very little night hiring, as, unless there is a bad surgical case, sitting up, in a very small hospital, only disturbs the patients. I would hire a nursing sister from Mrs Fry’s,<sup>6</sup> if help were wanted.

To return. The superintendent should dress herself (I would not even insist on the uniform for *her*) but receive board and lodging, washing and travelling expenses, of course, *free*. The maid of all work receives wages. The sisters, if any come, receive board, lodging and dress free *and*, should the institution become permanent, a home for their old age. This is absolutely necessary if *all* classes are to be admitted (as I hope) as sisters. This might become an inducement to servants out of place to come in, without any serious vocation. And no Catholic order (a name I hardly dare mention in your presence) not even the St-Vincent-of-Paul, receives those who have been in service, as sisters.

But I would have an *aspirancy* of three months, during which the aspirant should receive nothing but board and lodging, and should clothe herself. I would then have a novitiate of two years (call it probation, if you will) during which she might receive merely her upper clothing, her board and lodging, and not till after these two years and three months should she enter into the full privileges of a sister, i.e., receive everything free, a yearly sum for clothing, wear the uniform, be entitled to a home for her old age, and have her vote in the Council of Sisters. Without unanimity on the part of this council, which shall always assist the “mother” no “full” sister can be received and none dismissed. A probationer may be received or dismissed by the mother and superintendent together. But she must have a certificate of good character from her minister, one of good health from a medical man, and be able to write a short account of her own life for the “mother” (and her only) to read.

With regard to the patients, all denominations should be received, and each be attended by her own minister, the Roman Catholic by her priest and the Jewess by her rabbi. (I should be inclined to admit all

---

6 Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), prison reformer, established an institute of nurses in 1840.

denominations, *Protestant*, into the sisterhood, who would submit to the teaching of the chaplain, but I very much suspect that, if this were done, the Wesleyan would predominate. They are so much more in earnest than the Church of England.)

The patients should be allowed to refuse visits, if they like it, from anyone and should be asked beforehand, Do you choose to see so and so? for the patients are to be treated as guests and not as prisoners. And the same time they must, of course, submit to all the dietetic and physical regulations. Those who have no choice may be visited by the chaplain twice a week.

I would begin with three wards of four patients each. If to this the ladies choose to add “pay” patients, I would have different prices, the lowest possible patients at 7/ a week, who should not have a separate room, but be three or four together. (These would be chiefly servants, whom their mistresses pay for), patients at 10/6d a week, who should have a room apiece, *no* common sitting room; all must eat and live in their own wards. If the house be large, there might be patients up to £1.1, but not in the beginning. For the class you really want to serve, the poor governesses and “unprotected females,” are *not* accommodated by it.

The sisters must all dine together, as even the maid of all work, with the “mother” and superintendent. With regard to the other meals, if the mother and superintendent should be very busy, and should choose to fetch their own tea and breakfast into their own rooms or wards, and the maid take hers into the kitchen, I see no objection. The other sisters, should there be any, will probably have these meals together. But, as there must be always someone in the wards, while the house is so small, there will not be many to do so. Each sister must have a room to herself.

There will be a chaplain, of course. And till it is known who this chaplain is, his duties can hardly be defined. He ought to give the sisters scriptural instruction, at least three evenings in the week; he ought to hear, one other evening in the week, what they have been reading in their wards, and to direct them how to go on, besides visiting the patients. But instead of this, he will perhaps send the sisters to church twice a day, which will certainly save him a good deal of trouble, at the expense of the patient. One evening in the week, a *singing* lesson for the sisters. Each *full* sister ought to read the scriptures, sing and pray (if possible) morning and evening in her own ward. (While the hospital is so small, the mother may do it.) She ought to note down in a book what she has read and to show it to the chaplain, who

will instruct her as to the plan of reading she is to pursue. She is never to read without a plan or preparation the night before. Should the chaplain be such a man as can direct her, she may, besides, keep in a book a weekly account of each patient's conduct and dispositions, to be shown to the chaplain only or to the "mother." She will, of course, not read anything in the wards to which any of the patients can object.

Each sister will keep a daily table of the diet and medicine of each patient, according to the medical direction.

As many of the probationary sisters, should the institution increase, will be uneducated, these will receive lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework, the scriptures, from a sister appointed by the "mother," or from the "mother," who will have the especial charge of the probationers, till there are sisters enough for a mistress of probationers to be appointed.

The washing to be put out at first, but ultimately to be done at home, every sister, full or probationary, receives her washing gratis.

The "mother" attends all operations herself, until there is a sister sufficiently trained to do so.

With regard to the material of a hospital, if I were asked for the model of a bed, I should say, bed 3 ft. wide, 6 ft. 2 inch long wrought iron, sacking with brass eyes to draw tight and brass eyelets in the wrought iron, 2 standards (made hollow at the bottom) to drop on 3 ft. high, with print (black and red) or brown damask between, lined with white calico *and* two pockets. Foot-posts 3 ft. high, with shelf between for medicines and the little comforts of the patient (see bed in Lansdowne Ward, Salisbury). Mattresses in three or four thirds, so as to have always a spare third, with funnel, etc. Beds out from the wall, with a little space for washing, etc., divided by either curtain or beard, 4 ft. from the wall, table, stool, washstand, with all necessary implements inside, or two beds close together, board between and door on the other side,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deal, 6 ft. high. This is the method adopted at the great Lyons Hospital and is essential to decency. A frame to raise patients who cannot be moved is necessary in all hospitals.

The superintendent and mother should always be able to send for a nurse from the nursing sisters. The maid of all work belongs to the superintendent, is engaged and dismissed by her.

It is not right to take subscriptions for needy sick, and spend them on the attendants when the sick are not there, which, I understand, has often been the case in English sanatoriums. I would therefore have only the superintendent and the maid of all work (the "mother" pays for her-

self) till the institution extends itself. The future object, of course, will be to train sisters to undertake wards in the London public hospitals.

At the same time, any persons who chose to come in, *keeping themselves*, i.e., paying for their board, might be admitted as sisters, under the training of the superintendent and mother.

The Bunsens,<sup>7</sup> I believe, have some idea of making a beginning, and might perhaps be induced to furnish a sister.

Any call for nurses may be answered by Mrs Fry's nursing sisters till the institution is fairly at work, and if nurses are to be taken to train, they must pay. The Roman Catholics make them pay, when they take them to teach, with very few exceptions, unless they do menial work.

Very much depends on the chaplain, *very* much on the medical men. If the committee chose to take a house which could afford to give two or three rooms rent free to a medical man, who might follow his ordinary business, but be called in *gratis* when wanted, there would be no objection to having such a man attached, but *with no power* to enter but when sent for. The surgeon must never be master of the institution.

I knew a painter once, an Italian, to whom one of my countrymen went to order a picture—the subject was to be the Mediterranean. The Englishman took a little bottle of blue in his pocket and said, “I never see a picture which gives me any idea of the sea in Italy and I have brought you this blue which I beg you will make your sky and sea out of.” I always think of my friend in this making of plans. People bring you a bottle of blue and desire you to make your work out of it. And an artist knows that it is impossible.

You will, therefore, excuse the roughness of this plan. I think the “superintendent” and “mother” should each be requested annually to take three months to spend at home, as they will probably both be persons with families, who could not be expected to consent without this stipulation. They must take their three months at different times (from each other) and their place must be supplied by the other, a nursing sister coming in to help. Should more sisters join, it would be most desirable to unite with the Hospital for Sick Children, or the Female Hospital in Soho Square, as it would be a farce to set up a staff

---

7 The Bunsen family: Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen (1791-1860) (later Baron), German minister in England and Egypt scholar; his English wife, Frances von Bunsen (c1790-1876); and their children, one at least of whom was a clergyman. Christian von Bunsen first told Nightingale about Kaiserswerth.

to wait upon three or four “ladies,” which has often been the sum total of patients in [an] English sanatorium.

No visitors to be admitted, except at prescribed hours, and then only if the sick wish to see them. Housekeeping to be conducted by a certain sum allotted monthly at so much per head. Accounts overlooked annually by a regular accountant and (if not satisfactory to the managers) superintendent and “mother” may be dismissed or requested to depart. To look into the weekly bills will be impossible, excepting for the “mother.”

In calculating the expense, much must depend on what the rent the committee will be obliged to give. The Dalston Hospital, which stands at a rent of not more than £150 per an. and has from forty-five to fifty beds, calculates each bed at about £42 per an. *Without* rent and taxes, which cannot be calculated without knowing the committee’s wish, I think each person might be placed at £25 per an. per head, sick and well.

Source: Typed copy of a letter to Selina Bracebridge, Add Mss 43397 f193

6 June [1860]

I sent last night to Mr Bracebridge the whole mass of the Lancashire correspondence. I have since had some more. Everything at that end is ready, nothing at ours. I have had a letter from that same Mr Savage of Nuneaton, asking me “to put him in communication with persons in Lancashire” in order to get employment for Nuneaton people. I have not yet done so. The fact is, I have been so “let in” by these Spitalfields people who have entailed upon Mr Adshead<sup>8</sup> and me an immense amount of labour and correspondence without doing anything that I can ask Mr Adshead for nothing more till I am pretty sure of my people. I have written to him about Nuneaton. I would write to him about sending a man to your secretary of the Land and Building Society, Coventry, if you feel pretty sure of your man. I doubt very much whether writing to him from Manchester is of any use. We have had such a deal of writing. If you knew two intelligent men among the operatives themselves who would go to Manchester, I would gladly introduce them to Mr Adshead and pay their journey. You will see in a letter from Blackburn that it itself proposes this from Spitalfields.

ever your

F.

---

8 Records show Nightingale wrote a £10 cheque to Joseph Adshead 21 May 1860, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital Nursing School C.54.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Selina Bracebridge, ADD Mss 43397 f194

8 June 1860

It is just like Mr Bracebridge to go and see about the matter himself. Pray God he may be successful. I will only add that, in several letters I have had since from Mr Adshead, he has always enjoined "secrecy for very obvious reasons in this movement."

Whether Mr Bracebridge had better write to him direct, or through me, Mr Bracebridge is a much better judge than I am. But I would rather, if he does write direct, he should not mention that I have shown Mr Adshead's correspondence, although there is nothing confidential in it. Mr Adshead has always begged me to prevent a "*miscellaneous* flow into the districts without previous concert and mutual arrangement, it might most materially interfere" with the willingness of the Lancashire manufacturers, he says.

If therefore all could be transacted *through him* and he (and even I) be kept *cognizant of all, he would like it better.*

Source: From a letter to Selina Bracebridge, ADD Mss 43397 ff195-96

January 1864

Dearest Mrs Bracebridge, you know that I always believed it to be God's will for me that I should live and die in hospitals. When this call He has made upon me for other work stops, and I am no longer able to work, I should wish to be taken to St Thomas' Hospital, and to be placed in a bed *in a "general" ward* (which is what I should have desired, had I come to my end as a hospital matron). I beg you to be so very good as to see that this my wish is accomplished, whenever the time comes, if you will take the trouble as a true friend which you always have been, are and will be. This will make me die in peace because I believe it to be God's will.

Should, however, anything so unforeseen happen as that I should have an acute illness, such as fever, in which removal would be probable death, good nursing at home would give a possibility of return to work, then I should think it my duty to ask you to have Mrs Roberts,<sup>9</sup> who, I know, would come to me at once (and whose address Mr Whitfield of St Thomas' Hospital always has) to nurse me at home till the issue was determined. But should the issue be a period of incapacity

---

9 An esteemed colleague from the Crimean War, "the only nurse St Thomas' gave us who was of use"; Mrs Roberts nursed Nightingale when she was ill.



of work before death, when removal would no longer frustrate my *chance* of return to work, then I should still wish to go to St Thomas’.

ever your grateful affectionate

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** Mrs Bracebridge left directions: “*Private*. In case of F.N. surviving me, this letter to be given to Mrs Sutherland at my death. S.B.”<sup>10</sup>

On a visit of Mrs Bracebridge to London, probably several years later, Nightingale sent a note to her sister (living next door) asking her to come in to see her, “if it is worth your while . . . *now at once*.”<sup>11</sup> Another note to her sister, probably in 1869, reported that Mrs Bracebridge was coming at 3 to take the sacrament with her (Nightingale had a priest friend, Benjamin Jowett, conduct communion services for her at home).<sup>12</sup>

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/128

2 December 1869

Mrs Bracebridge I saw as she went through London. I thought her *slightly* better and less lame than last year. She told me not to write directing to *Folkstone* till she sent me her address, as they should move if they did not like their quarters. She never *has* sent me her address. If I wanted to write to her, I should address Mrs Bracebridge, Atherstone, *to be forwarded*.

I told her that my mother had frequently said to me, “could we not get Mrs Bracebridge to Embley?” She was pleased but said her health was such that she could not go to a tree-y place during the autumn. This, of course, does not hold for “after Christmas.” She is compelled, I know, only to drive out during sunshine and to take care of herself in every way, alas! Though better, I think her much altered, far, far more than my mother is though she is much your junior.

Source: From a letter to Emily Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/72

16 June 1871

Mrs Bracebridge writes this morning (dated yesterday) of Mr Bracebridge, who was in the greatest danger: “Praise God with me—a

---

10 Note on envelope, Add Mss 43397 f196.

11 Undated note, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/107(6).

12 Letter, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/137.

change has come and he is likely to recover. The pulse has gone down from 120 to 86 and the dropsical symptoms have diminished, but he is still very weak, cannot turn himself in bed. I could not believe in it for four days, for I thought he was *too* far gone to rally.”

**Editor:** In correspondence during Mr Bracebridge’s last illness Nightingale reported to Emily Verney, “Both Mr and Mrs Bracebridge are sadly ill and infirm. I regret so much that I cannot go to them.”<sup>13</sup> Charles Bracebridge died 13 July 1872. Mrs Bracebridge recounted his last days to Nightingale, who reported them to Emily Verney, who was herself, although young, near death.

On reporting to her sister on Mrs Bracebridge after the death of her husband, Nightingale wrote: “Mrs Bracebridge has left Atherstone, she says ‘forever.’ She is at Penmaen Mawr, Hotel Conway. Berdmore Compton took her there.”<sup>14</sup> Mrs Bracebridge’s own last illness and death was not far off. Only one last letter to her and several about her death still exist.

Source: Typed copy of an incomplete letter to Selina Bracebridge, ADD Mss 43397 f204

[before July 1872]

Dearest, this long letter, so often interrupted, must come to an end. Would you not like the autotypes of the Sistine to come back? This is just the time when they might cheer your imprisonment. Shall I send them back by rail? If you say “yes” by your maid, please ask her to tell me how Mr Bracebridge is and how you are—I feel very anxious. God bless you.

Earth seems to matter very little now. But I am all yours, and  
ever yours, living or dying  
in heart and soul  
F.N.

13 Letter 9 May 1872, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/136.

14 Letter 5 August 1872, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/155. Berdmore Compton was a relative of Charles Bracebridge; Mrs Compton corresponded with Nightingale about Mrs Bracebridge.

Source: From a letter to Emily Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/153

Embley

Romsey

27 July 1872

You know that we have lost our dear friend, Mr Bracebridge. His last hours were quite conscious, quite calm and cheerful and aware of his end, to which “there was not a sign or a struggle.” He had long resigned himself in complete trust. These last hours were in the words of the Psalm [23:4]: Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. This is Mrs Bracebridge’s own account: she writes quite collectedly, though to her it must be the break-up of all things. Much as she had suffered with him and for him, the suffering will be greater to her without him. But she only says that her “call will come soon to go up higher.”

Source: From a letter, Royal College of Nursing, Edinburgh RCN/FN1/6/2

8 February 1873

Dearest ever dearest friend [Mrs Bracebridge]

It does seem so long between the times I hear from you and of you. Good Mrs Sutherland gives me news of you sometimes. But I have no one to send down to bring me word of you. Yet my thoughts and prayers are always with you. O would I could see you, but that is a selfish wish.

My own work is more of a struggle every day. But I have had a nice letter from the new governor general of India [Lord Northbrook], speaking of his wish to help me in it “for the sake of his old master, Sidney Herbert.”

You know that Dr Lushington is dead, aged ninety-one, such a peaceful end, in the midst of his children. Scarcely a month before he had gone to Oxford to vote for Dr Stanley.<sup>15</sup> It is a terrible break-up at Ockham for his daughters.

But, dearest, ever dearest, more than mother, there is no break-up, no sorrow like yours. I think of it day and night. But then, how blessed will be the waking; you will have “another dawn than ours.”<sup>16</sup> “Today

---

15 Stephen Lushington (1782-1873), lawyer, Whig MP and progressive on all political issues; the vote for Arthur Penrhyn Stanley” was to become Select Preacher.

16 A paraphrase from T. Hood, “The Death Bed,” “another morn than ours.”

shalt thou be with me in paradise,"<sup>17</sup> as you said. For myself, I try to wish neither to die nor to live, but to let God will for me in all things.

I have been lent two wonderful water-coloured drawings by Lear<sup>18</sup> (who is now gone to India to draw). One is a deep red and purple dawn, or rather before dawn on the Nile, near Asyut, such as you and I and he who was then with us on earth have so often looked at together. The other is a dark green and lilac and yellow view of the Valley of Jeshospaphat [Jehosaphat], with the Mount of Olives such as you have described to me. I think of the eighteenth chapter of St John, the taking to prison of our Lord and the beginning of his passion, and trace his steps.

You know that Sir Bartle Frere<sup>19</sup> is gone to Zanzibar to negotiate with its sultan, who was once a prisoner in his hands at Bombay, the putting an end to the East African slave trade. I saw him before he went and have heard of his conversations with the viceroy of Egypt on his way out. He says that Egypt is so changed, more good and more evil, the fellah better off, but more luxury and frank dissipation, too. Railways, iron bridges, roads and new buildings quite transform the face of the Nile.

Sir Samuel Baker's expedition is not succeeding.<sup>20</sup> The excellent Dr Livingstone,<sup>21</sup> having received his supplies, has plunged again into the depths of Central Africa.

My father and mother are well, but they age very much. They are unfit to be left. I spent two thirds of last year with them, to the destruction of my work, and twenty-two hours out of every twenty-four in the room next my mother's. And still I felt I could not do enough for them.

God be with you always. May He bless you and He will bless you. Pray for me, "I have most need of blessing."

ever your loving and grateful  
living or dying  
Florence Nightingale

<sup>17</sup> Luke 23:43.

<sup>18</sup> Probably Edward Lear (1812-88), painter.

<sup>19</sup> Henry Bartle Frere (1815-84), later Sir, a collaborator when he was governor of Bombay.

<sup>20</sup> Samuel W. Baker, *The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia and the Sword Hunters of the Hamran Arabs*.

<sup>21</sup> David Livingstone (1813-73) doctor, missionary and explorer.

**Editor:** As Nightingale could not visit Mrs Bracebridge directly she was grateful for Sir Harry Verney's visit on her behalf. She wrote him, "I cannot thank you enough for your two kind visits to Mrs Bracebridge, nor for writing to me about her."<sup>22</sup> She told her sister that she had written Mrs Bracebridge promptly on the death of W.E. Nightingale, 5 January 1874, "for fear she should hear suddenly" (1:273).

On Mrs Bracebridge's death Nightingale sent numerous letters to people who would care to know about it (several below), and received many letters of condolence, some giving her sympathy on the deaths both of her father and her friend. She wrote Elizabeth Herbert (see p 705 below) and nurse Angelique Lucille Pringle. A letter to Julius and Mary Clarke Mohl similar to that below was included in the after-life section of *Theology* (3:203-05). Julius Mohl sent his condolences (in Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:236-37). Nightingale received condolences from nurse Ada Browne.<sup>23</sup>

Later that year Nightingale asked her sister to return her Greek letters to her; she would "keep the Roman and Egyptian letters to read during the winter, very dear to me now on Mrs Bracebridge's account."<sup>24</sup>

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Mrs Compton, Museum LDFNM 0870

28 January 1874

I have sent down to Norwood [where Mrs Bracebridge was then living] today to inquire after our dear Mrs Bracebridge in consequence of your kind note, but cannot help thanking you for it and begging for further news—sad though it is. She was more than mother to me, and oh that I cannot be daughter to her—now. In great sorrow,

yours sincerely

Florence Nightingale

Source: From an incomplete letter to Parthenope and Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/70

Embley

4 February 1874

You know that Mrs Bracebridge passed away on Saturday morning at ¼ past 5. She was taken ill on the Sunday with cough, difficulty of swallowing and of breathing. On Thursday at noon was the last time she

---

22 Letter 29 September 1873, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/55.

23 Letter 10 February 1874, Add Mss 45803 f164.

24 Letter 2 November 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/132.

took notice; she tried to say something and failed. She was more than mother to me, and oh that I could not be a daughter to her in her last sad months. What should I have been without her? And what would many have been without her? . . .

Excepting my dear father, I never knew any so really humble, and with hers, the most active heart and mind, the most buoyant soul that could well be conceived, was it not the more remarkable.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/67

4 February 1874

So I can only think of that Saturday morning after the suffering darkness of her last year, as of the first time I saw with her, after a bad voyage, the sun spring out of Eastern seas: not with the chill damp of an English dawn but rejoicing like a giant to run his course in the glory of God, not his own. But this is but a pale likeness of her rising again; the "better world" must be the better for having her in it and heaven itself the happier for her being there. Hers *was* "another dawn than ours." But she is "in the grave" (to us) and "oh the difference to me."<sup>25</sup> In thought I always lived with her in the days of her sorrows. May we be with her now in soul in the days of her joy!

Other people live together to make each other worse: she lived with all to make them better. Such true Christian humility. . . .

With her I part with my past.

Source: From a letter to Mrs Compton, Florence Nightingale Museum LDFNM 0872

Embley

Romsey

18 April 1874

I have never thanked you, for I have no doubt that it is through your kindness that I have received them, for the precious relics of my dear mistress and friend, Mrs Bracebridge, without whom my life would have been impossible, and without whom life is indeed to me dreary. She was to me wings, the pure heroic soul who lifted me out of the baser perplexities of life, or gave me strength to do and dare everything, even perplexity, in a great cause. Yet who could wish her back? These relics are her blue snake ring, her blue seal ring engraved with, I think, Hadji, and a lock of her beautiful hair, still beautiful even in

25 From William Wordsworth, "She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways."

age. They followed me down here, where I have come for the second time this spring to nurse my poor mother, whom we have to remove from her home of fifty-six years.

I thought it just possible that there might be a scrap of pencil writing from Mrs Bracebridge (even if it were only “for Florence”). But I sifted the packet over and over again and could find nothing. Pray believe me,

ever yours gratefully, sorrowfully

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Mrs Compton, Florence Nightingale Museum LDFNM 0874

3 March 1879

I venture to recall myself to you for dear, dear Mrs Bracebridge’s sake, gone home now these five years, but whose little tokens, *not* needful to keep her always before me, always stand by my bedside.

Could you give me Mrs Dee’s address? I think *Mrs Dee* was the name of the maid who nursed her to the last. And could you kindly tell me whether there would be the least chance of finding her disengaged? (The last I heard of her was that she was keeping a lady’s house in London, a great waste, I thought, of such a woman.)

My mother’s maid who, we fondly hoped, would have remained with her till the end, is going to be married. My mother is ninety-one and infirm, though she still drives out every day, enjoys a great deal of reading aloud (by a lady companion) and dines with the family. She lives in London with the Shore Smiths, my cousins, and goes every summer to Lea Hurst in Derbyshire (when I go with her and take charge). Her maid sleeps in her dressing room with the door open. She has to lift her into her bath and wash her, and certainly the attendance, night and morning, is very close. Some physical strength is required though my mother is not a heavy woman. It would be to us a relief untold to entrust my mother to such a woman as Mrs Bracebridge’s maid.

Pray accept my regret for troubling you with these details and believe me, for the sake of our dear friend, not lost but gone before,

yours ever sincerely

Florence Nightingale

Source: Notes on the deaths of Charles and Selina Bracebridge, ADD Mss 45784 ff90-92

[July 1886]

He and she have been the creators of my life. When I think of him at Scutari, the only man in all England who would have lived with willingness such a “prying” life, without the interest and responsibility which it had to me. I think that we could have better spared a better man. He had genius. We ne’er shall look upon his like again.<sup>26</sup>

When I think of Atherstone [country house of the Bracebridges], of Athens [where Nightingale stayed with them in 1850], of all the places I have been in with them, of the immense influence they had in shaping my own life, more than earthly father and mother to me, I cannot doubt that they leave behind them, having shaped many, very many lives as they did mine, their mark on the century, this century which has so little ideal, at least in England, in the century of good sense, having the sense of the common public, good manners, good conversation, good principles, that is, keeping out of the divorce court, getting into Parliament and not into the Bankruptcy Commissioners. As if a God and left His impress.<sup>27</sup> They were so immeasurably above any English country gentry I have ever known, no more of the same race than a man is of the same race as the gorilla. Darwin be blown.<sup>28</sup>

Sometimes I think that I am glad that when I go there will be no such heart-rending grief felt for me, as when two are parted who had lived for nearly half a century with each other and for each other—no one to feel for my work as I felt for Sidney Herbert’s when he died—and feel every day more and more. On Friday he will have been dead eleven years. I think this anniversary the saddest there (more than any one that) has been, yet not alone on account of Mrs Bracebridge’s loss. For there are things worse than death. And the change in the Government of India and in that of the War Office have annihilated Sidney Herbert’s work more than did his death, more than anything that has gone before.

But let us not dwell on these things; we know that, in the eternal plan of love, all is right. “Whatever is, is right,” says Pope.<sup>29</sup> “Whatever

26 A paraphrase from Hamlet speaking of his father, in *Hamlet*, Act 1, scene 2.

27 Possibly a paraphrase from Browning: “’tis man stamps the earth/And I will seek his impress.”

28 Nightingale’s negative views on Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution appear in *Society and Politics* (5:652-56).

29 Alexander Pope, “An Essay on Man,” Epistle 4, line 145.



is, is wrong,” says Chadwick. Both these things are true, because we cannot conceive of perfection except as worked out through imperfection.

“Made perfect through suffering,<sup>30</sup> evil and imperfection.” We can sooner conceive of the perfect One being Himself worked through, “it is finished,”<sup>31</sup> that is, being “finished” by evil and imperfection than we can conceive of God “working out” the “salvation”<sup>32</sup> of His creatures without evil. In fact, the problem of the “origin of evil” in the good God’s good kingdom might be stated the other way, namely, how could God make us perfect as He is perfect *without* evil? In the Apocrypha it says, “The just man if he be prevented with death”<sup>33</sup> may be at rest, because God will take care that his works, or rather God’s works shall be worked out, or that he himself shall work out his works in some other “mansion”<sup>34</sup> of our Father’s house.<sup>35</sup>

In an old German-Latin book of the thirteenth century it says that in the *undecaying spring* of God’s *eternity* (“in immarcessibili aeternitatis meae vernantia [undecaying spring of God’s eternity]).”<sup>36</sup> If ever there is truth in words, it is in these) and good work will be continued and increase and grow and [breaks off]

### Mary Clarke Mohl

**Editor:** Mary Clarke Mohl (1793-1883)<sup>37</sup> was a family friend who lived much of her life in Paris. She married late, the German-born Persianist Julius Mohl. Several letters to Mme Mohl have already been published in the *Collected Works*, notably those with condolences on the deaths of her mother and husband, with material on the afterlife, in *Theology* (3:197-98 and 203-06 respectively); a joking letter about Gladstone is in *Society and Politics* (5:472-73); and letters about Sir John

30 Heb 2:10.

31 An allusion to John 19:30.

32 An allusion to Phil 2:12.

33 François de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Book 9, from Wis 4:7.

34 An allusion to John 14:2.

35 A paraphrase of John 14:2.

36 Gertrud von Helfta (1256-1301/2), on whom see *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:63-68).

37 On Mary Clarke Mohl see Margaret Lesser, *Clarkey: A Portrait in Letters of Mary Clarke Mohl (1793-1883)*; M.C.M. Simpson, ed., *Letters and Recollections of Julius and Mary Mohl*; *Times* obituary 30 May 1883 11. Mme Mohl published some of her husband’s remaining papers after his death: *Vingt-sept ans d’histoire des études orientales*.

Lawrence and the scientist Michael Faraday also appear in that volume (5:522-23 and 821 respectively). Nightingale and Mme Mohl shared a love of cats, so five letters on this precious subject appear in "Cat Care" in *Life and Family* (1:759-63).

Nightingale's cousin, Rosalind Nash, in 1947 acknowledged that "a large correspondence between the Mohls and F.N. was destroyed by me in 1946 after consultation with Miss B.A. Clough. There was much repetition and the interest of the letters has much diminished. These six have been kept as specimens, being some of the best."<sup>38</sup> One can only regret the decision to destroy any of the correspondence, especially those with Julius Mohl on religion. The letters here on comparative religion, gathered from various sources, include published sources where the original is not available.

The letters below reveal an entirely different kind of friendship from that immediately above with Selina Bracebridge, although both women were older, family friends. Mary Clarke must have seemed an exotic creature when Nightingale met her in 1838: an independently wealthy Englishwoman living in Paris, well accepted in the literary community. When "Clarkey" married Julius Mohl, in 1847, just before Nightingale's Rome trip with the Bracebridges, her husband too became a friend; the Mohls hosted Nightingale as well during her stays in 1853 and when passing through to and from the Crimean War. But Mme Mohl's life was centred on literature and the fine arts, and she had no interest in any of Nightingale's public health and social reform concerns. Indeed she was socially a "born conservative" although she did agree that Nightingale should be able to pursue her own goals. She did not share Nightingale's religious faith, nor "take the sacrament" with her. During the Franco-Prussian War the two were exchanging letters on cats! We will see difficulties when Nightingale tried to meet her old friend's social demands without compromising her work.

The early letters were written to "Dearest friend," the later more often to "Dearest Mme Mohl," then sadly at the end, "ever dearest Mme Mohl." One letter is to Mme Mohl's sister, Mrs Frewen Turner, whom Nightingale greatly liked and to whom she owed a debt for moral support. Several of the late letters are to Frewen Turner's granddaughter, Eleanor Martin, whom Nightingale recruited for worthy causes. There are delicate references in these late letters about Mme Mohl's unconventional faith; reading between the lines it would

---

38 Note February 1947, ADD Mss 46385 f22.

seem that the great niece was concerned about the resting place of Mme Mohl's soul.

Source: Letter to Mary Clarke, ADD Mss 43397 ff275-80

Lea Hurst

19 August [1846]

How long, my dearest friend, how long? before I see you again—I shall be on all fours and, if I wait much longer, on all sixes. When will you come? I am a wretch not to have answered your kind letters before, but my boy Shore has only just left for Brighton, *that* seat of learning, from *this* and, while he is with me, all that is mine is his, my head and hands and time. I am sorry to say that hitherto I have not been able to hear of an evangelical governess that is not spiteful, but I have some hopes from Mrs Bracebridge, who is coming here today, and who has, heaven knows where she got it? a little bit of evangelicalism patched in somewhere, which looks upon her like a smutty mark the devil made in switching his tail upon a white gown. That was *before* he painted his tail pea green. I don't deny that it keeps people out of mischief sometimes, but so did Balaam's ass, and they sit upon it as ill as Balaam did on that poor animal.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps though you are suited with the requisite ass already. If not, I will continue my prerequisites.

We come south on the 1st of September in order to assist the Scientifics at Southampton<sup>40</sup> to ennuyer [bore] the world on the 10th and do hope and trust to see you at Embley before long. The Carters are still on the tramp for a house—houses being, I suppose, like the Fata Morgana,<sup>41</sup> one fancies one sees a few in this populous land, but when one approaches, they apparently vanish away. Aunt Nicholson is getting better at last at Brighton under Laura's tender care. Marianne, like the "squirrel in my pocket," is here, there, everywhere, NOT nowhere. Henry is in Spain, Jack in Ireland. And the rest of the Carters perform the entire cycle of England in five years and ten months, beginning at Liverpool and returning thither, by way of the seaport towns, in that space of time.

My children are distributed upon the same principle. We are practising an hour after breakfast every day standing upon our heads in

---

39 In Num 22:23 Balaam kills his ass for seeing the angel with a drawn sword.

40 Meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; see *Society and Politics* (5:665-67) for an account.

41 A fairy mirage of the sister of the legendary Arthur.

convulsions about a certain railroad, which is to pass through this valley, and which we vow and declare is a Poacher, a Pagan, a Thief, but no *Highwayman*—as it ought to be. How foolish we shall look if it never comes at all. Heaven avert such a catastrophe. Helen Richardson is just going down into Scotland with her father, who has been ill. But I think you must be tired of all this, for I fancy that you live much more in the supernatural than the natural world.

I always believe in Homer and in St Paul's "cloud of witnesses"<sup>42</sup> and in the old Italian pictures, which have a first storey, where the Unseen lives au premier [on the first floor], a two pair back, where the Père Eternel's shadow is half seen peeping out, and a ground floor, where poor mortals live but still have a connection with the establishment above stairs. I like those books where the Invisible communicates freely with the Visible Kingdom, not that they ever come up to one's idea, which is always so much brighter than the execution (for the word is only the shadow cast by the light of the thought) but they are suggestive. I always believe in a multitude of spirits inhabiting the same house with ourselves; we are only the entresol [basement], quite the most insignificant of its lodgers, and too busy with our pursuit of daily bread, too much confined with hard work, and too full of the struggle with the material world, to visit the glorious beings immediately about us, whom we shall see when the present candle of our earthly reason is put out, which blinds us just as the candle end, left burning after one is in bed, long prevents us from seeing the world without, lit up by the full moon.

It trembles and flickers and sinks into its socket, and then we catch a bright stripe of moonlight shining on the floor, but it flares up again and the silvery stream is gone "as if it could not be, as if it had not been." And we can see nothing but the candle and hardly imagine any other light till at last it goes quite out, and the flood of moonlight rushes into the room and every pane of the casement window and every ivy leaf without are stamped, as it were, upon the floor, and a whole world revealed to us, which that flickering candle was the means of concealing from us.

This is what Jesus Christ meant, I suppose, when he said that he must go away in order to be *with* his friends in his spirit, that he would be much nearer to them after death than in the flesh.<sup>43</sup> In the flesh,

<sup>42</sup> An allusion to Heb 12:1.

<sup>43</sup> An allusion to John 16:7.

we were separated from our friends by their going into the next room only; a door, a partition, divided us, but what can separate two souls? Often I fancy that we can perceive the presence of a good spirit communicating thoughts to us—are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto us?<sup>44</sup> When Jesus Christ warns us not to despise anyone, because that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of his Father,<sup>45</sup> perhaps he thought that our beloved ones who are gone might be these our “angels,” who must therefore have communion with men.

It is here, where a cold and false life of conventionalism and prejudices and frivolity is often all that reaches our outward senses, that we are sometimes baffled in seeing into the life which lies beneath. It is here, amidst the tempers and little vexations which are the shadows that dim the brightest intercourse, it is here that we fail sometimes in having intimate communion with souls, and we stop short at the dead coverings. But between the soul which is free and our soul—what barrier, what restraint can there be? Human sympathy is indeed necessary to our happiness of every moment, and the absence of it makes an awful void in our life. Every room becomes a grave and every book we used to read together a monument to the one we love. But, someone says that we need an *idée merveilleuse* [marvellous idea] to preserve us from the busy devils, which imagination here is always conjuring up. This *idée merveilleuse*, I think, is the idea of the loving presence of spirits. Those dear ones are safe and yet with us still, for truly do I believe that these senses of ours are what veil from us, not discover to us, the world around (which is sometimes revealed to us in dreams, or in moments of excitement, as at the point of death, either our own, or a friend's, or by mesmerism, or by faith).

Faith is the real eye and ear of the soul and, as it would be impossible to describe the harmony and melody of music to one who was born deaf, or to make a blind man perceive the beauty of the effects of colour, so without faith the spiritual world is as much a hidden one to the soul as the art of painting to the blind man. On a dark night the moon, when at last she rises, reveals to us, just at our feet, a world of objects of the presence of which we were not aware before. We see the river sparkling in the moonbeams close beside us, and the tall shadows sleeping quietly on the grass, and the sharp relief of the

---

44 A paraphrase of Heb 1:14.

45 An allusion to Matt 18:10.

architectural cornices, and the strong outline of the lights and shades, so well defined that we can scarcely believe that a moment ago, and we did not see them. What shall we say if, one day, the moon rises upon our spiritual world and we see close at hand, ready to hold the most intimate communion with us, those spirits whom we had loved and mourned as lost to us?

We are like the blind men by the wayside, and ought to sit and cry, Lord, that we may receive our sight,<sup>46</sup> and, when we *do* receive it, we shall perhaps find that we require no transporting into another world to become aware of the immediate presence of an Infinite Spirit, and of other lesser ones whom we thought gone. What we require is sight, not change of place, I believe. But the Bracebridges are come, which must—O thank your stars! bring this long and stupid lucubration to a close. The next shall be more interesting, I hope, and less hurried. Our best love to Mrs Clarke, if she still remembers us. I shall make Mrs Bracebridge write you a note about the Gainsborough's governess. I am ashamed of this letter—good luck! it's three pages! but believe me,

ever yours fervently, lovingly  
and with a very red face of shame  
Flo

Source: Letter/draft/copy, Add Mss 43397 ff292-95

Lea Hurst  
10 July [1847]

My dearest friend [Mary Clarke]

I hardly know where to write to you now, but I hope this will reach you somewhere. We have seen your friend M Mohl at Oxford and in London, and were very sorry not to see him at Embley, as we proposed to him, but hope that he will come here. Papa and I went with him to the Pentonville Prison (on the solitary system) in London, and he seemed very busy at Oxford. But my opinion of him is that he is a thorough *Weltmensch* [man of the world], who is labouring under a delusion (you know, they say we have all of us one mental delusion, some two—one monomania which makes us think ourselves other than we are—in some it takes the form of conducting ourselves as teapots, in others as Napoleons, one thinks himself another Jesus Christ). Now my opinion of your friend is that he thinks himself very

<sup>46</sup> A paraphrase of Mark 10:51.

much interested in the civil policy of England, whereas he is a thorough man of the world who is very much bored by everything but the things of society.

We too have been seeing the world, the flesh and the devil<sup>47</sup> during the last month, the first ten days of which we spent in London, hearing Jenny Lind<sup>48</sup> (but it really requires a new language to define her and meanwhile she must be felt, not talked about) and doing the exhibitions, then to Oxford for the British Association and never anything so beautiful as that place was looking have I seen abroad or at home, with its flowering acacias in the midst of its streets of palaces. I sauntered about the churchyards and gardens before breakfast and wished I were a college man. The Astronomical Section there was a plum pudding without the suet. Le Verrier and Adams<sup>49</sup> sat on either side the president, like a pair of turtle doves, cooing at their joint star, and holding it between them. And there were Struve,<sup>50</sup> etc.

We worked hard: chapel at 8 to one of those glorious services, sections from 11 to 3, colleges afterwards, then lecture away at 6 and philosophical tea and muffin at somebody's afterwards. Fowlers, Hamilton Grays, Bucklands, selves, etc., the muffins. Hallam, Wheatstone, Sewell and the great guns of philosophy. . . .

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 ff296-300

Embley

13 October [1847]

To think that you are now a two months' wife, and that I have never written to tell you that your piece of news gave me more joy than I ever felt in all my life, except once, no, not even excepting that once, because *that* was a game of blind man's buff, and in *your* case you knew even as you were known.<sup>51</sup> I had the news on a Sunday from dear Ju,

---

47 In the Church of England baptism one must renounce the world, the flesh and the devil.

48 Singer Jenny Lind (1820-87), Mme Goldschmidt, who later raised money for the Nightingale Fund.

49 John Couch Adams (1819-92) and Urbain-Jean-Joseph Le Verrier (1811-77), the English and French discoverers of the planet Neptune, who had worked independently; Sir John Herschel (1792-1871) sat between them. See also *Society and Politics* (5:668-71).

50 Friedrich Georg von Struve (1793-1864), astronomer.

51 A paraphrase of 1 Cor 13:12.

and it was indeed a Sunday joy and I kept it holy, though not like the city, which was to be in cotton to be looked at ONLY on Sundays.

I saw you on that day sleeping on the Acarnanian Promontory, with the blue Mediterranean stretched out before you, and the sky of Greece, spanned with a rainbow bent over all and by you stood a Guardian Genius with her feet upon the soft moon, wrapped in a rosy veil, and in the folds of the rainbow lay a shadowy spirit called life. And life stretched forth his hand, holding a wreath of rosebuds, exquisite sweet-smelling dewy variegated petals, streaked as it were by the hands of the rosy-fingered Aurora, with the “purple light of love”<sup>52</sup> and the first bloom of the morning. This is first love, the love of the fancy, said Life. But her, i.e., your Guardian Genius, would not let her take it. And when I looked I saw that the bud changes when it opens and unfolds a pale scentless flower. And its beauty was only the Ideal existing in one’s own mind, one’s own idea of what that bud *ought* to come to. Its name is the Besoin d’Aimer Rose. (See Loudon’s Catalogue.)

Next, Life offered a crown of full-blown hothouse pomegranates, gorgeous in colouring, magnificent in their luxuriance, without much fragrance, but all bathed in crimson light. This is the love of passion, said life. But her Guardian Genius would not let her take it. And when I looked I saw the petals of the beautiful forced exotic falling off with their own weight.

The sleeper’s eyes were wet, her summer was far advanced. She sighed to think how soon it would be gone, when Life presented her with a wreath from the oak tree. It had not the dewy fragrance of the roses, nor the intoxicating beauty of the pomegranates—the tree from which it was gathered was grown neither in the garden nor in the hothouse, but under the open heaven and among the everlasting hills. Take it, said the Guardian Genius, it is the strong love of the soul, the love given in the full force of the inquiring and discriminating spirit. And she took it, not with the innocent unconsciousness with which she would have plucked the first—her knowledge of life and mankind forbade that—nor with the passionate eagerness with which she would have snatched the second—her powerful and matured intellect prevented that, but she humbly kneeled down, and the Guardian Genius crowned her with it and blessed her. She took the gift, with not less trust, not less tenderness, not less self-devotion, not less appreciation of the greatness of the blessing, that she knew what she had to give in

---

52 From Homer, *Odyssey*, Book 5, and Thomas Gray, “Progress of Poesy” 1,3,16.



return, but she bent her head to receive it with the seriousness, the earnestness, the solemn self-possession, of one who feels how much she has set upon the die.

How great is the leap she has before her. How shall I take it, she said? So she awoke, and she saw at the bottom of the cliff a little bark, and at its helm the captain of the craft. And from the cliff she looked before and after, she surveyed the innumerable ports where the boundless sea, the uncertain winds and waves might carry her. She examined her own position. And the Guardian Angel said to her, a vigorous intellect, uncommon powers, instead of diminishing the greatness of the hazard, instead of affording an easier descent, only raise you upon a higher eminence, and give you a wider view of dangers and possibilities. You feel the more because you think the more, and your prospect is enlarged by the range of that telescope, which an analyzing and examining mind has set before your eyes.

She looked, she thought, she weighed. She listened to the winds. She saw the breakers, but not the less did she trust the little sail and the captain at the helm, who *commands* the winds and waves to carry him whither he will, be they ever so contrary, by his skillful management. I saw her look once more, and then she made the spring. She took Sappho's leap, not with blind and headlong haste, but with deliberate and resolute purpose. I saw her fling herself from the cliff, and lo! her Guardian Genius gave her wings and they bore her up till she reached the bark. For, as has often been said, we must all take Sappho's leap, one way or other, before we attain to her repose, though some take it to death, and some to marriage and some again to a new life even in this world. Which of them to the better part, God only knows.<sup>53</sup> Popular prejudice gives it in favour of marriage. Should we not look upon marriage less as an absolute blessing, than as a remove into another and higher class of this great schoolroom, a promotion—for it *is* a promotion, which creates new duties, before which the coward sometimes shrinks, and gives new lessons, of more advanced knowledge, with more advanced powers to meet them and a much clearer power of vision to read them. In your new development of life, I take, dearest friend, a right fervent interest, and bless you with a right heartfelt and earnest love.

---

53 Sappho, Greek lyric poet born on the island of Lesbos; after marrying and having a daughter she is said to have fallen in love with a man who rejected her, and then threw herself off a cliff. The saying "some to marriage . . . God only knows" is a paraphrase of Socrates' last words to his jurors, in Plato's *Apology*.

We are only just returned to Embley, after having passed through London on our way from Derbyshire. News have I none, excepting financial, for no one could talk of anything in London excepting the horrid quantity of failures in the city, by which almost all England has suffered, more or less. My father came in for a *not* serious loss, Uncle Octavius<sup>54</sup> for a rather more considerable one. The Carters<sup>55</sup> are at Bournemouth, near here, by the sea. They spent the summer here. But no doubt you have heard from Hilary. Aunt Joanna is slowly recovering her sprained ankle. I did not see Ju [Aunt Julia Smith], alas, in town, where she is staying with Uncle Octavius at Bedford Square, because I was obliged to come out of London that very morning with my father down here. Aunt Jane is still in Scotland with the chicks.

And now for my confessions. I utterly abjure, I entirely renounce and abhor all that I may have said about M Robert Mohl, not because he is now your brother-in-law, but because I was so moved and touched by the letters which he wrote after your marriage to Mama; so anxious they were to know more about you, so absorbed in the subject, so eager to prove to us that his brother was *such* a man, he was quite sure to make you happy.

And I have not said half enough either upon that score, not anything that I feel; how “to marry” is no impersonal verb, upon which I am to congratulate you, but depends entirely upon the accusative case which it governs, upon which I do wish you heartfelt and trusting joy. In single life the stage of the present and the outward world is so filled with phantoms, the phantoms, not unreal though intangible, of vague remorse, fears, dwelling on the threshold of everything we undertake alone. Dissatisfaction with what is, restless yearnings for what is not, cravings after a world of wonders (which *is* but is like the chariots and horses of fire, which Elisha’s frightened servant could not see, till his eyes were opened<sup>56</sup>), the stage of actual life gets so filled with these that we are almost pushed off the boards and are conscious of only just holding onto the footlights by our chins.

Yet even in that very inconvenient position love still precedes joy, as in St Paul’s list,<sup>57</sup> for love laying to sleep these phantoms (by assuring

54 Octavius Smith (1796-1871), brother of Nightingale’s mother.

55 Born John Carter, John Bonham Carter I (1788-1838) took the name Bonham Carter on receiving an inheritance in 1830, married to Joanna Marie Smith (1791-1884), sister of Frances Nightingale.

56 An allusion to 2 Kings 6:17.

57 An allusion to Gal 5:22, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. . . .”

us of a love so great that we may lay aside all care for our own happiness, not because it is of *no* consequence to us, but whether we are happy or not, as Carlyle<sup>58</sup> says, but because it is of so much consequence to another), gives that leisure frame to our mind, which opens it at once to joy.

But how impertinently I ramble on. “You see a penitent before you,” don’t say “I see an impudent scoundrel before me.” But when thou seest, and what, more, when thou readest, forgive. You will not let another year pass without our seeing you. M Mohl gives us hopes, in his letter to Ju, that you won’t, that you will come to England next year for many months, then, dearest friend, we will have a long talk out. If not, we really must come to Paris, and then I shall see you and see the deaconesses too, whom you so kindly wrote to me about, but of whom I have never heard half enough. I have just read your *Princesse de Clèves*.<sup>59</sup> It is a jewel, but were you thinking of that wretch when you wrote to me?

The Nicholsons<sup>60</sup> are all at Waverley again. Marianne, they say, is getting fatter. Some of the party have been in Scotland. Helen Richardson is not very well, but she has the little Reeve with her and is very happy at Kirklands. The Bracebridges are at home. She rejoiced as much as we did over your event. Parthe is going at the end of November to do officiating verger to a friend of ours, Fanny Hanford, on a like event. Her prospects are likewise so satisfactory that I can rejoice and sympathize under any form she may choose to marry in. Otherwise I think that the day will come when it will surprise us as much to see people dressing up for a marriage as it would to see them put on a fine coat for the sacrament. Why should the sacrament or oath of marriage be less sacred than any other? Do you remember V. (Mrs Archer Clive),<sup>61</sup> the woman of whom you said “Only think of her having a heart and no legs”? We have been staying with her and, though my people still keep up a low murmuring grumble of astonishment in her husband (being singularly subject to the “caprice des yeux”) I maintain that it is

---

58 Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881); his just-published *Past and Present*; in chap 4, “Happy,” he argues the nobility of work and futility of seeking happiness.

59 A novel by Mme de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves*, 1678.

60 Frances Nightingale’s sister Anne was married to George T. Nicholson.

61 Poet Caroline Clive (1801-73), spouse of Rev Archer Clive; V refers to her anonymously published *IX Poems by V*, 1840, which Nightingale commented on also on her Rome visit, in *European Travels* (7:88); further material on her appears (see pp 523-24 above and 649 below).

not at all astonishing. Though there is another great difference between her and all the rest of the world that, while all her fellow creatures are always trying to say something clever, she is always trying to say something stupid.

Aunt Patty<sup>62</sup> is at Tenby with, though not in the house of, the Allens. Miss Allen is coming here. Fortunately for you my paper is at an end, the house being deficient in that article and not yet unpacked, fortunately too (as I am writing before breakfast), I must go, and lay down rules for the laying down of the carpets, instead of chattering on with you so rudely. Why didn't I write before? Because I thought you would rather be let alone at first and that you were on your travels. And now, dearest friend, with ALL our *best* loves and congratulations to you and your accusative or nominative case, believe me,

yours overflowing

ever yours

Florence Nightingale.

Excuse haste and "vain repetitions." I am in the middle of china and linen lists. Parthe and Mama will write from Embley.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 f301

Embley

Thursday 21 October [1847]

You will not be more surprised than I am to hear that I am going to Rome with the Bracebridges for three months on Tuesday. Poor old me! We shall be in Paris on *Wednesday evening*, next, the 27th, and I trust that we shall see you on Thursday as we shall be only two days in Paris. We go straight to Marseille and by sea to Civite Vecchia. I wrote to you at rue de Grenelle 52, some days ago, but as I have never heard from you, I have an "Ahnung" [presentiment] *an awful fear* that you may not be returned to Paris. It will be too aggravating if I miss you. This was only settled last night, wherefore I put off all I have to say, hoping to meet, and am

yours ever in haste and in peace

in presence and in absence

Florence N.

If you could write one line to me at Poste Restante, your address at [breaks off]

62 Martha Frances Smith (1782-1870), unmarried sister of Frances Nightingale.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 ff303-04

Embley

7 February [1851]

That misfortune of England, never to be regretted enough: confoundedly cheap postage (excuse me for swearing) which wastes all your days in writing things you don't want to write to people who don't want to hear, leaves no time for such friends as you. Poor Papa's no better. I hope we shall go to Vichy or some German Bad [spa] in the summer. I have no faith in medicine. I heard Dr Fowler say the other day that we should none of us die before we saw the whole present system of medicine exploded. As people put in the "Marriages" the name of the clergyman or men who married them, I would put in the "Deaths" the name of the doctor or doctors who killed them.

Lizzy Herbert I have just been staying with to nurse her during the manufacture of a third bab.<sup>63</sup> She *has* a little girl (like Van Dyck's infant Christ,<sup>64</sup> foreseeing all the suffering of the world and looking at you with its fixed supernatural eyes till it breaks into an absent smile. I think it will die). Then she has a boy of six months, who looks like a child of three years, which doesn't speak. She is now gone up to London to see after her emigration scheme, for she must always be a-doing.

Papa is in Derbyshire. The Bracebridges have just left us, but I have no words to speak about her. He is in better spirits, but more lame than usual. They are going to London till the Great Show, which will drive us all out. As you get your Greek news from *Rangabè*, I don't think I shall give you mine. (You can't believe both) though I have plenty. Only this let me say, there's not a soul in Greece that reads Grote.<sup>65</sup> I am so glad you like him. That chapter on Socrates, why, it's like magic.

Some authors, like your Lamartine, give you a picture of a character, a daub without an inside. Some, like W. Scott, give you its clothes. Some, like Talfourd, give you its bust, cold and white and beautiful, and some, like Macaulay,<sup>66</sup> give you its daguerreotype, strong and black and ugly, with every detail.

---

63 Elizabeth Maud Herbert (1851-1933), later Parry.

64 Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641), Flemish baroque painter.

65 George Grote, author of a twelve-volume *History of Greece*.

66 Alphonse-Marie-Louis de Lamartine (1790-1869), French historian, foreign minister in the provisional government of 1848; Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), novelist; Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795-1854), poet; Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), historian, poet, essayist and politician.

I suppose it's all very fine, but Grote, his Socrates is *real life*. You don't feel as if it was a painting or a bit of art but as if you had lived with him all your life. Only compare it with Thirlwall.<sup>67</sup> Why, none of us ever knew Socrates before. There are two reviews in the *Quarterly* of it by Arthur Stanley<sup>68</sup> and one in the *Edinburgh* by Franklan[d] Lewis.<sup>69</sup> But I never could read reviews. We don't know Grote—I wish we did. He is a gentlemanly quiet sort of man, his wife the greatest *queen* you ever saw, but the only woman who knows what we call the middle classes.

I believe it's a great advantage to our literary men, their mixing so much in politics, as they do, though it makes their productions perhaps too little artistic, too much political. I was so pleased to hear Sidney Herbert, whom I always thought a Peel Tory, say the other day that a republic was the ultimate form of all human government. But you and Parthe are born Conservatives (by Conservative meaning one with whom *associations* tell more than ideals), so I shall keep my politics to myself.

You who are so fond of Homer should read Colonel Mure's *Literature of Ancient Greece*.<sup>70</sup> There are only the two volumes on Homer out. His character of Helen, as the modern fine lady, and of Paris are capital. Or if you see the *Edinburgh* and like it, read Edward Bunbury's review of it. I like Mure, because I heard him maintaining successfully one day against Macaulay that the accentuation of the modern Greeks is like the ancient.

Birch (at the British Museum<sup>71</sup>) is doing wonders in hieroglyphs. I didn't like Lepsius<sup>72</sup> though he was very civil to us for your sake. But he has no enthusiasm for his trade (so unlike a German) and takes it, much more as we do, like a trade. The Berlin Museum, fitted up like an Egyptian temple, is a little bit of stage effect and I can't help believing the stories against him in Egypt of his destroying things for the

67 Connop Thirlwall (1797-1875), historian and bishop, translated Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Socrates*.

68 Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815-81), dean of Westminster Abbey.

69 Sir Gilbert Frankland Lewis (1805-76).

70 Homer, tenth-century-BCE epic poet; William Mure, *A Critical History of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, 1856.

71 Dr Samuel Birch, keeper of Oriental antiquities.

72 Karl Richard Lepsius (1810-84), German Egyptologist, on whom see *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:221 and 317) and *European Travels* (7:453 and 483).

sake of making his specimens unique. But then his master is such a quack. As you don't believe in Egypt, I shall spare my raptures. I am going over it now with the servants. Poor Pop has been drawing a little lately, but it excites her too much. Mrs Bracebridge has been with vermilion and gambage doing some sketches of Egypt, but we can't get it hot enough. Go and see, that's all I say to you.

Poor Hester Tutt, whom Mrs Frewen Turner<sup>73</sup> was so very kind to, is dead.

I suppose you know how the two churches have been convulsing themselves in England in a manner discreditable to themselves and ridiculous to others. The Anglican Church screamed and struggled as if they were taking away something of *hers*, the Catholic Church sang and shouted as if she had conquered England. Neither the one nor the other has happened. Only a good many people (in our church) found out they were Catholics and went to Rome.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 ff305-07

Lea Hurst

8 April [1853]

You will have heard from Hillie of my dear grandmother's death<sup>74</sup> and of her fearful sufferings. I shall never be sufficiently grateful that I came, as she allowed me to do many things in the way of moving and changing her, which perhaps she would have allowed no one else to do, and which made her end less suffering. This was the reason why I did not answer your letter sooner, you will understand. We buried her last Friday and, after the funeral, Papa and my aunt and I came here for a few days. But I am going back to Tapton (my grandmother's) tomorrow, to settle with the poor old servants and wind up affairs, for a week.

Now for my own affairs. In all that you say I cordially agree, and if you knew what the "fashionable asses" have been doing, their "offs" and their "ons," poor fools! and asking Marianne Galton's advice,<sup>75</sup> such a sensible idea! you would say so ten times more. I shall be truly grateful if you will write to Pop. My people know as much of the affair now as I do, which is not much. You see the f.a.s (or a.f.s which will stand for "ancient fathers" and be more respectful, as they are all

---

<sup>73</sup> Sister of Mary Clarke Mohl.

<sup>74</sup> Mary Shore died 25 March 1853.

<sup>75</sup> Marianne Galton told the ladies' committee that Nightingale was needed at home and should not be appointed superintendent at the Harley St. institution.

Puseyites<sup>76</sup>) the f.a.s want me to come up to London now and look at them, and if we suit, to come very soon into the sanatorium, which, I am afraid, will preclude my coming back to Paris, especially if you are coming away soon, for going there without you would unveil all my iniquities, as the f.a.s are quite as much afraid of the R.C.s as my people are. It is no use telling you the history of the negotiations, which are enough to make a comedy in fifty acts. They may be summed up, as I once heard an Irish shoeless boy translate Virgil:<sup>77</sup>

“Obstupui” [I was amazed] I was altogether bothered.

“Steteruntque comae” [hair stood up] and my hair stood up like the bristles of a pig.

“Vox faucibus hesit” [my words stuck in my throat] and devil a word could I say.

Well devil a bit of a word can I say except that you are very good, dear friend, to take so much interest, and that I shall be truly glad if you will write to Pop, dans le sens du muscle [in a very strong fashion]. All your advice, which I sent to Mrs Bracebridge, I give my profoundest adhesion to. I would gladly point the finger of scorn in the liveliest manner at the f.a.s, and ride them roughshod round Grosvenor Square. I will even do my very best, but I am afraid it is not in me to do it as I should wish. It would be only a poor feint, a mean caricature. But I will practise and you shall see me. My people are now at 30 Old Burlington St., where I shall be in another week. Please write to them there and, if you can do a little quacking for me to them, the same will be thankfully received, in order that I may come in when I arrive, not with my tail between my legs, but gracefully curved round me, in the way in which Perugino’s devil wears it,<sup>78</sup> in folds round the waist.

I am afraid I *must* live at the place. If I don’t it will be a half and half measure, which will satisfy no one. However I shall take care to be perfectly free to clear off, without its being considered a failure, at my own time. I can give you no particulars, dearest friend, because I don’t know any. I can only say that, unless I am left a free agent and am to organize the thing myself and not they, I will have nothing to do with it. But as the thing is yet to be organized, I cannot lay a plan either before you or my people. And that rather perplexes them, as they

76 From the leader of the high church, Anglo-Catholic movement within Anglicanism, Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-82).

77 Virgil (70-19 BCE), Roman poet.

78 “Temptation in the Wilderness” by Umbrian painter Pietro Perugino (c1450-1523), which Nightingale saw in Rome.



want to make conditions that I shan't do this or that. If you would "well present" my plans, as you say, to them, it would be an inestimable benefit both to them and to me. That estimable matron, Mrs Douglas Galton, is doing all she can against the poor little infant—I mean my sanatorium—not her baby.

Hillie will tell you all I know—that it is a sanatorium for sick governesses, managed by a committee of fine ladies. But there are no surgeon-students nor improper patients there at all, which is, of course, a great recommendation in the eyes of the proper. The patients, or rather the impatient, for I know what it is to nurse sick ladies, are all pay patients, poor friendless folk in London. I am to have the choosing of the house, the appointment of the chaplain and the management of the funds, as the f.a.s are *at present* minded. But Isaiah himself could not prophecy how they will be minded at eight o'clock this evening. I hope Hillie will stay with you till you come to England. I hear from Abraham himself that she is not wanted at home. I would write to her if I had time. (Aunt Ju is at the Holmwood now.)

And now what shall I say, dearest friend, for all your kindness to me? Think anything but that I am indifferent when I do not write. Give my love and thanks to M Mohl. If you could give me a little impression of your and Hillie's plans, I should be very much obliged. I fear that, if I undertake the f.a.s, my people will wish me to spend the intermediate time with them, and so I shan't [page missing].

And dearest, if you want any little presents of cutlery, there are some in my little top drawer (in tallboy). I believe you must bring all my goods back with you, as, even if I do go back to Paris, I fear it will not be yet. Perhaps you said a word to Parthe about my not having sat to you. If you come to England after Easter (but I hope you will *not*) I may see you in London, pending my negotiations.

It was heaven's mercy that I came and I shall never regret it, *what e'er betide*. Dear Aunt Mai had never seen a deathbed before and this was an awful one to begin her experience. The end however was so calm that, though I sat at the head, I did not know the exact moment. More when we meet.

Pay my letters, stays and all my odds and ends, dearest. Let not aught stand against me. God bless you. I would send you some French money I have still by me, if I knew how. The letter you forwarded to me was to tell me that Canning<sup>79</sup> was on again. Put my straw bonnet

---

79 Lady Charlotte Canning (1817-61), with whom Nightingale ultimately made the arrangements for becoming superintendent at Harley St.

into my carpetbag. And please say all kinds of things for me to dear kind patient Mr Mohl. Don't leave behind any of the "budgets" he gave me, which are in the drawing room. He bought them his own self for me and made me a present out of his pocket. I was so shocked, when I thought he was only going to borrow them. Adieu, dearest. I am sorry to give you the trouble of bringing home my goods, or any trouble, this particularly.

Papa is at the Hurst with your people. He has been here—she just recognized him. He returns for the funeral on Friday. I am very glad I did not delay an hour. She knew me always but never took food after I came. I am sleepy and have much to do. Good night, ever dearest. With love and blessing to dear Clarkey and something to Fraulein Anna,  
thy old Flo

I hear M.G.'s baby is a very little one but not a very bad one.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 ff308-09

4 May [1853]

I have not written before, because our affairs were not settled, and because we thought you might arrive in London any day. We stay in London till the end of next week, thirteenth or fourteenth, and then *they* return to Embley, and *I* come back to Paris, I *believe*, to give myself a little education before I enter upon my sanatorium in *July*. I'm so sorry that you won't be at Paris when I come. But, at all events, I shall see you here. I suppose I shall go directly to my St-Vincent-de-Paul place, rue Plumet to stay—unless I can keep out for a few days to see Koh-i-noor, Mr Guillot (M Bonlieu's médecin) and go and see his things with him, as he asked me most kindly, which would give me more opportunity of seeing things impartially than going at once to my St-Vincent-de-Paul (des Genettes'<sup>80</sup>) place. However, we will talk over all that.

Do you know of any one going to Paris about the end of next week? It won't do for me to go with Miss Orton again. Nothing is known about that here, please remember. But I was asked so many questions that I dare not go with *her* any more. Please tell me if you know of anybody.

ever yours, dearest friend

gratefully, F.N.

You know Hilly and I came to you *with the Bruces*.<sup>81</sup>

80 Abbé des Genettes, curé, Notre-Dame-des-Victoires.

81 The family name of the earls of Elgin; Nightingale was friendly with Lady Elgin particularly while in Paris in 1853.

Source: Letter, ADD Mss 43397 ff310-12

Back drawing room! at Mme Mohl's!

Rue du Bac 120

28 June [1853]

My dearest friend [Mary Clarke Mohl]

Do you see where I am? Here's a "go"! Has Mr Mohl told you? Here am I in bed in your back drawing room. Poor M Mohl appears to bear it with wonderful equanimity and recueillement [religious respect], like his danseuse. Not so I. It is the most impertinent, the most surprising, the most inopportune thing I have ever done—me established in a lady's house in her absence to be ill. If Mr Mohl had any sins, I should think I was the avenging Phooka appointed to castigate him. As he has none, I am obliged to arrest myself at the other supposition that it is for my own. It was not my fault, though, really. Here is how the things have happened. But first let me tell you, in answer to yours, that I think Chaton Working a great deal better. Her lip has almost retaken its natural size. She looks altogether much less scrofulous. Nelken says that she wants her constitution changing by iodine and cod's liver oil, which he is giving her, and that a little more sea or a little more country, though very good for her, are not the essential, but that she will get well here. I think her already looking so much better with the good food and the medicine. Nevertheless I write in good time that you may decide whether I am to bring her, as I must be in England the beginning of *next week*, if I can, and shall be too glad to bring her (and pay her journey and expenses, of course) if you will let me bring her. I go into service at my place in London next week, if I possibly can. Do come and see me there (1 Upper Harley St.), when you come to town.

To explain: I have had the measles at the Soeurs. And, of all my adventures, of which I have had many and queer, as will be (never) recorded in the X Book of my Wanderings, the dirtiest and the queerest I have ever had has been a measles in the cell of a Soeur de la Charité. They were very kind to me. Dear Mr Mohl wrote to me almost every day, and sent me tea (which however they would not let me have). He lastly, in his paternity, would have me back (where I came yesterday) and established me in the back drawing room, to my infinite horror, and now I am getting better very fast and mean to be out again in a day or two. I hope nobody will catch it here. Mr Mohl assured me that both the children had had it and I had got rid of the eruption and all that before I came. Mr Mohl is *so* kind and comes to see me and talk, which I suppose is very improper, but I can't help it,

and he has been like a father to me and never was *such* a father! I really am so ashamed of all his kindness and the trouble I give them, that my brazen old face blushes crimson. I assure you this paper ought to be red. Julie is very kind to me, but I hope not to be long on their hands.

As to my calamity itself, it is like the mariage de Mademoiselle, who could have foreseen it? It really was not my fault—there was no measles at any of my posts. I have had them not eighteen months ago, so that, erect in the consciousness of that dignity, I should not have kept out of their way, if I had seen them. The doctor would not believe I could have had them before. Well, I'm so ashamed of myself that I shall lock myself up for the rest of my life and never go nowhere no more. For you see, it's evident Providence, who was always in my way, and who as the supérieure said, is “très admirable” (meaning *wonderful*) in having done this, does not mean me to come to Paris nor to the Soeurs, having twice made me ill when I was doing so, and given you all this trouble. For me to come to Paris to have the measles a second time is like going to the Grand Desert to die of getting one's feet wet, or anything most unexpected.

I hope you are going to the Hurst, where my people are now. I have heard nothing of Hillie. And now, enough of me. I am so provoked that Mr Mohl's benign face enrages me, and I am ever, dearest friend,  
yours repentantly and very gratefully

F.N.

Please write to M Mohl and comfort him for his disaster. I am so repentant that I can say nothing—which, the Cath[olic]s tell me, is the “marque” of a true “humiliation.” Thank you 1000 times for all your kindness. I come to England next week.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, in E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:13-16 (ellipses in printed letter)

13 December [1861]

I have read half your book through and am immensely charmed by it. But some things I disagree with and more I do not understand. This does not apply to the characters but to your conclusions, *e.g.*, you say “women are more sympathetic than men.”<sup>82</sup> Now if I were to write a

82 Her (anonymous) *Madame Récamier: With a Sketch of the History of Society in France*, 1861. The disputed passage states: “Women are born more sympathizing, more dependent on the affection of others than men; having less

book out of my experience, I should begin, *Women have no sympathy*. Yours is the tradition. Mine is the conviction of experience. I have never found one woman who has altered her life by one iota for me or my opinions. Now look at my experience of men. A statesman [Sidney Herbert], past middle age, absorbed in politics for a quarter of a century, out of sympathy with me remodels his whole life in policy, learns a science, the driest, the most technical, the most difficult, that of administration, as far as it concerns the lives of men, not, as I learnt it, in the field from stirring experience, but by writing dry regulations in a London room by my sofa with me. This is what I call real sympathy. Another (Alexander, whom I made director-general) does very nearly the same thing. He is dead too. Clough, a poet born if ever there was one, takes to nursing administration in the same way, for me. I only mention three whose whole lives were remodelled by sympathy for me. But I could mention very many others—Farr, McNeill, Tulloch, Storks, Martin, who in a lesser degree have altered their work by my opinions. And, the most wonderful of all, a man born without a soul, like Undine,<sup>83</sup> all these elderly men.

Now just look at the degree in which women have sympathy—as far as my experience is concerned. And my experience of women is almost as large as Europe. And it is so intimate too. I have lived and slept in the same bed with English countesses and Prussian *Bäuerinnen* [farm women]. No Roman Catholic *supérieure* has ever had charge of women of the different creeds that I have had. No woman has excited “passions” among women more than I have. Yet I leave no school behind me. My doctrines have taken no hold among women. Not one of my Crimean following learnt anything from me or gave herself for one moment after she came home to carry out the lesson of that war or of those hospitals. . . . No woman that I know has ever *appris à apprendre* [learned to learn]. And I attribute this to want of sympathy.

Nothing makes me so impatient as people complaining of their want of memory. How can you remember what you have never heard? . . . It makes me mad, the women’s rights talk about “the want of a field” for them—when I know that I would gladly give £500 a year for

---

physical strength, they have more need of help, and thus their desire to please and to inspire kindly sentiments in all around is a natural instinct given for self-preservation and defence” (vii).

- 83 Undine, from Goethe and Fouqué, was a water sprite who was brought up by a fisherman and his wife who had lost their own child; on falling in love with a knight she reveals she is not human, but on marriage is given a soul.

a woman secretary. And two English lady superintendents have told me the same thing. And we can't get *one*. They don't know the names of the Cabinet ministers. They don't know the offices at the Horse Guards. They don't know who of the men of the day is dead and who is alive. They don't know which of the churches has bishops and which not. Now I'm sure I did not know these things. When I went to the Crimea I did not know a colonel from a corporal. But there are such things as army lists and almanacs. Yet I never could find a woman who, out of sympathy, would consult one, for my work. The only woman I ever influenced by sympathy was one of those lady superintendents I have named. Yet she is like me, overwhelmed with her own business. . . .

In one sense, I do believe I am sure that my contemporaries, Parthe, Hilary, Marianne, Lady Dunsany, were all cleverer than I was, and several of them more unselfish. But not one had a bit of work for her husband (which I have had to do without) out of pure sympathy. She did not understand his policy. Yet she could write his letters for him "like a man." I should think Mme Récamier was another specimen of pure sympathy. . . . Women crave *for being loved*, not for loving. They scream out at you for sympathy all day long, they are incapable of giving any in return, for they cannot remember your affairs long enough to do so. . . . They cannot state a fact accurately to another, nor can that other attend to it accurately enough for it to become information. Now is not all this the result of want of sympathy? . . .

You say [of] Mme Récamier that her existence was "empty but brilliant." And you attribute it to want of family. Oh, dear friend, don't give me into that sort of tradition. People often say to me, You don't know what a wife and mother feels. No, I say, I don't and I'm very glad I don't. And *they* don't know what I *feel*. . . . I am sick with indignation at what wives and mothers will do of the most egregious selfishness. And people call it all maternal or conjugal affection, and think it pretty to say so. No, no, let each person tell the truth from his own experience. Ezekiel went running about naked, "for a sign." I can't run about naked because it is not the custom of the country. But I would mount three widows' caps on my head "for a sign." And I would cry, This is for Sidney Herbert, this is for Arthur Clough, and this, the biggest widow's cap of all, is for the loss of all sympathy on the part of my dearest and nearest.<sup>84</sup> . . .

---

84 A reference to something her aunt, Mary Shore Smith, told her in 1862, and still grieved over years later.

I cannot understand how Mme Récamier could give “advice and sympathy” to such opposite people as, e.g., Mme Salvage and Châteaubriand. Neither can I understand how she could give “support” without recommending a distinct line of policy, by merely keeping up the tone to a high one. It is as if I had said to Sidney Herbert, be a statesman, be a statesman, instead of indicating to him a definite course of statesmanship to follow. Also I am sure I never could have given “advice and sympathy” to Gladstone and S. Herbert, men pursuing opposite lines of policy. Also I am sure I never could have been the friend and adviser of Sidney Herbert, of Alexander, and of others, by simply keeping up the tone of general conversation on promiscuous matters. We debated and settled *measures* together. That is the way we did it. Adieu, dear friend. . . . I have had two consultations. They say that all this worry has brought on congestion of the spine which leads straight to paralysis.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, ADD Mss 43397 ff319-20

30 July 1864

I am afraid it would be a long way out of your way. Or could you come to me on 5 August between Whitfield and Cold Overton? I shall be by that time at the old place, 7 Oakhill Park, Hampstead N.W. It will be duller than ever for you, for I am now so feeble that I cannot talk for more than fifteen or twenty minutes at a time, without disqualifying myself for all work. I shall have nobody with me.

I have much to discuss in your letter, in which, *du reste* [moreover], I entirely agree. “Concentrativeness” has its terrible revenges, however, as well as its benefits. And the non-concentratives, though they do little, suffer little, I am convinced. I would not have anybody I loved enter upon my life and its sufferings, no, not for anything. You will be doing me a favour, if you come to me. 2 August is a terrible anniversary to me<sup>85</sup> and I shall not have my usual solace, for Mrs Bracebridge has always come to spend that day with me. I am sure she would have come this year, but I could not tell whether I should be able to get Sir J. Lawrence’s things off by that time. It does me good to be with you, as with Mrs Clive, because it reduces individual struggles to general formulae. It does me harm, intensely alone as I am, to be with people who do the reverse. But it is incorrect to say, as Mrs Clive does, that I “*will not let people help me*” or, as others do, that “no one

---

85 The death of Sidney Herbert.

*can* help me.” Anybody could have helped me who knew how to read and write and what o’clock it is. I did not have your letter announcing your arrival (directed to South St.) till three weeks after. So it was entirely by the light of nature I knew of your arrival. I have a great deal to [breaks off]

Source: Incomplete letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 f321

7 Oakhill Park  
Hampstead, N.W.  
23 August 1864

Yes, yes, dearest Mme Mohl, I expect you the first day you can come, to stay as long as you can bear the dullness. Only let me know “the date” as soon as you can, not for your sake but mine.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I have no time to write, but your letter has given me much to say. I entirely agree with you that I would “teach a girl instead of the piano, only to give to others as much as they give to me.” But don’t you see, you are a philosopher if you can lay out your affections in that way like a game at cards. I who am a work-a-day body, mine are gone out of my power because I have no time to measure and cut out and take my yard measure and begin again. I don’t believe Sappho or Ariadne or Dido<sup>86</sup> (who by the way were but poor lovesick bodies) ever [breaks off]

Source: From an incomplete letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Add Mss 43397 f322

[early 1860s]

About the expected kits. *I* expect to have them, all but one, which I understand Lydia Shore is to have, and one which Mrs Watson<sup>87</sup> is to have. But tell Mrs Watson that I am very sorry poor Tom is left behind, because Mrs Tom is the only cat of that kind I have ever had who is faithful to her tom. You see that I can’t get any purebreed kit-tens out of my other cats, though I take no end of pains to marry them well. But they won’t have the husbands I choose, while they take up with low toms, of recent extraction, out of the mews. If old Tom is

<sup>86</sup> Ariadne, by Greek mythology fell in love with Theseus and gave him the thread by which he found his way out of the labyrinth. Dido, the legendary daughter of the king of Tyre, threw herself on a pyre of flames to escape marriage with a mean king. On Sappho (see p 552 above).

<sup>87</sup> A cousin and the Nightingales’ housekeeper respectively.



lost, or gets wild, as I am afraid he will do, left alone at Embley, or if Mrs Tom learns that he is not to be her only husband, adieu to our breed of long tails.

Not only have my Pussie's kits no long feathery tails but they have no long feathery ears, but ears like cropped bull dogs, and tails like rats.

Source: From two letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, in E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:89

23 June [1865]

Clarkey Mohl darling, How I should like to see you now. But it is quite, quite, quite impossible. I am sure no one ever gave up so much to live, who longed so much to die, as I do and give up daily. It is the only credit I claim. I will live if I can. I shall be so glad if I can't.

I am overwhelmed with business. And I have an Indian functionary now in London, whose work is cut out for him every day at my house. I scarcely even have half an hour's ease.

Would you tell M Mohl this, if you are writing, about the queen of Holland's proposed visit to me?<sup>88</sup> I really feel it a great honour that she wishes to see me. She is a queen of queens. But it is quite, quite, quite impossible.

4 October [1865]

I am so weak, no one knows how weak I am. Yesterday, because I saw Dr Sutherland for a few minutes in the afternoon, after the morning's work, and my good Mrs Sutherland for a few minutes after him, I was with a spasm of the heart till 7 o'clock this morning and nearly unfit for work all today.

Source: Letter of Mary Clarke Mohl to Mrs Reid, in Margaret Lesser, *Clarkey: A Portrait in Letters of Mary Clarke Mohl (1793-1883)* 174

[1865]

One time Florence Nightingale was so fond of me that no company was to her what mine was. She would walk with me for hours in the park and would comport herself as if she would give anything in the world that I should stay a few days longer. But when her all-absorbing pursuit came over her all this vanished. She still liked me, but did not want my company. How absurd I should have been had I not accepted this, explained that she had "not the slightest taste for nursing—fact is, I mortally dislike it."

---

88 Sophia, queen of the Netherlands, on whom (see p 841 below).

Source: Letter, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/44

Lea Hurst  
Matlock

19 September 1868

Dear Mrs Frewen Turner

I have never thanked you for your most kind note of 31 July, full of encouragement and sympathy, nor for your goodness in sending me a valuable little pamphlet-tract. But I have thanked you in my heart, though not in words.

May I venture to send you my little *Notes on Nursing*, which I have just had reprinted because it was out of print? Perhaps Miss Eleanor Martin may find in it something for her poor cottages, in the chapters on Health of Houses and "Minding Baby"?

Mme Mohl also desires me to ask my father to send Miss Eleanor Martin "some sunflower seeds, when ripe," because "they are wonderfully fine at Lea Hurst." My father thinks that Mme Mohl must mean hollyhocks, because we have no longer sunflowers here. But he could get her some sunflower seeds from the cottages, if these be really what she means. Perhaps Miss Martin would write a line to my father today whether it be hollyhocks or sunflowers or both.

I am afraid I shall very soon be returning on my business to London. I hope that I am not troubling you by writing these things to you.

Dear Mrs Frewen Turner, I so often think of you, of the kind defence which I once heard you make of me,<sup>89</sup> and which I dare say you have long since forgotten, of the peace and happiness which I pray that you may be enjoying, as I think you should, after a long life spent in the service of God, though with many cares and sorrows. I trust that your bodily sufferings are relieved. Pray believe me,

ever your faithful and grateful servant

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.10

26 March 1869

Yes, I *must* have the little cat with a cultivated mind, brought up in the purple. "Bring it up" for me, if you please, with every accomplishment of singing and dancing, such as poor Mr Tit had. Is it a lady or a

---

89 Presumably Mrs Frewen Turner was one of the family friends who supported Nightingale's desire to nurse.

gentleman? My Pasma [?] are wonderfully well, thank you. He was here a short time ago, passing through from Lea Hurst.

No, you did not send me the third volume of Lanfrey.<sup>90</sup> Nor have I read it. I never get anything amusing or interesting for myself, except for my business. Do you know I am often three months saying to myself: “I *will* get such and such a book” and never find a moment to do it in? But I believe the principal thing I write for now is about Sir John Lawrence.

I cannot conceive what your informant means by his “injustice toward natives.” Because the one characteristic of his government, acknowledged by all friends and foes, has been a certain persistent chivalry toward natives, especially peasant natives, which has often made him overlook the strict justice of a question, as e.g., in land tenure—his one absorbing idea being to raise the native—just as there are some in England who, in their one absorbing idea, which is to raise the pauper—forget all political economy. . . .

But to return to Sir J. Lawrence. He is come back and wrote me one of his little letters, beautiful in their stern simplicity and modesty and is coming to see me. You can ask Sir B. Frere about him, if you like. But they are two men so unlike, yet each so roundly perfect in his own way that they can never understand each other—never touch at any point—not through eternity. I love and admire them both with all my mind and with all my heart, but have long since given up the slightest attempt to make either understand the other. But each is too much of a man, too noble, too chivalrous, to denigrate (*dénigrer*) the other.

As for Sir J. Lawrence’s government, it had great faults—the greatest of which was Caesarism—and this without the slightest desire of popularity or power on his side. But he never could see that the Caesarism of Lord Dalhousie,<sup>91</sup> which was necessary during the process of conquest, must be exchanged for quite another policy in organizing and administering for 200 millions of people in time of peace. He could not delegate power to the local governments. The centralization was something inconceivable. I knocked my head against it at every step. Sir J. Lawrence tried, with his indefatigable industry and powers of government, to do all the business in his own room for a

---

90 Pierre Lanfrey’s five-volume *Histoire de Napoléon I.*

91 The 10th earl and first marquess of Dalhousie (1812-60), governor general of India 1847-56, when great territories were annexed.

country bigger than Europe, of which Bengal is bigger and more populated than France.

But peace hath higher tests of manhood than battle ever knew.<sup>92</sup> He left his mark on India. Wherever superstition or ignorance or starvation or dirt or fever or famine, or the wild bold lawlessness of brave races, or the cringing slavishness of clever feeble races, was to be found—there he has left his mark—he has set India on a new track which—may his successors follow!

Knight of a better era  
Without reproach or fear  
said I not well that Bayards  
And Sidneys still are here! (lines 101-04)

You ask about the sanitary affairs for the natives: the whole of our sanitary work for the last three years has been for the natives. The soldiers' sanitary organization is now complete and, though of course it will be years before the details are worked up to it, still they have nothing to do, since we got our ten millions of £, but to go on.

What grieves me is that, in the new Government of India Bill, just passed here, they have given powers to the governor general (such as that of naming natives to government appointments without making them pass through the English competitive examination) and other powers, which Sir John Lawrence had been contending for for years—and to him who knew the natives better than any man on this planet they did not give these powers. And they have given them to Lord Mayo,<sup>93</sup> who does not know a Sikh from a Bengali.

You ask me the story of my work, dearie—and I feel inclined to answer, like Canning's knife grinder: Story, God bless you! I have none to tell, Sir, only last night, a fighting at the checkers he gets a hole in his head, his hat and his breeches.<sup>94</sup> That's just like me. I have only to tell how I have been fighting and broken my head when you ask after my work. Don't suppose I have not more to tell about Sir J. Lawrence, but he is too big for a letter. And my hand won't write any more.

ever yours  
F. Nightingale

92 From John Greenleaf Whittier, "The Hero," lines 75-76.

93 The 6th earl of Mayo (1822-72), viceroy of India 1869-72, whose political experience was mainly in Ireland.

94 A paraphrase from George Canning, "Knife Grinder," in *The Anti-Jacobin*.

Source: From a letter to Eleanor Martin, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/217

14 November 1868

My mother has desired me so many times to write and ask you to forward kindly the *Letters on Egypt* (when Mrs Frewen Turner has quite done with the book) to *this* address, and I have so often put it off from excess of business that I snatch the pen now in a rampant state to execute my mother's desire. I hope that you will not think it troublesome. My mother will send Mrs Frewen Turner another copy if she desires it.

Pray give my most respectful love to Mrs Frewen Turner. I trust she is not worse but rather better than usual.

May I, on my own account, ask whether you returned by Mme Mohl (there is no possible hurry for the same) two books, one on some American war hospitals, by a lady, and on the American Christian Commission, the latter I think I saw here. You must excuse my asking these questions, because, being a prisoner to two rooms, I cannot hunt for myself. I am at this moment in great tribulation because I cannot find a copy of a Persian poem, with French translation, by Al Khayyâm, which M Mohl gave me. People take my books away and return them perhaps (perhaps not) into my dining room, where they become mixed up with other older books there. And into my dining room I have not been able to go for two years. Excuse haste and complaints. And believe me,

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Mrs Dicey, Add Mss 45802 f78

24 November 1869

I have only just heard from Mme Mohl that it was to your kindness I was indebted for the bringing of two lovely little Persian kittens from her house to mine. Now, though these little animals are perfect, whether in intelligence, feeling or natural grace, I know, by experience, that they are not agreeable travelling companions and therefore I am the more obliged. M and Mme Mohl had returned from Rome when I heard—and were both well and vigorous. They did not stay over the Ecumenical Council, as at first they had intended, because M Mohl had seen what he wanted to see.

I suppose Persian business (not cats) and the finishing of the great book (the *Shahnameh*<sup>95</sup>) recalled him.

---

95 Julius Mohl began publishing translations from this epic poem by Ferdowsi, tenth century CE, in 1829; his seven-volume folio edition came out 1838-78 (he died in 1876).

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.14

7 May 1870

I must “seize the pen” or I never shall write at all. Every day of this week it has been on my mind to thank you for your great kindness upon the matter of Miss Jowett and the translating M d’Haussonville’s<sup>96</sup> book. But Mr Jowett won’t authorize me to trouble you at all. (He distrusts his sister’s powers<sup>97</sup> perhaps a little—he does not like to get you and M Mohl into a troublesome negotiation with Lévy—he is nonetheless grateful to you, etc.) (I would have gladly paid any money to Lévy there was to pay, if that had been all.) But he won’t engage us in the business nohow, perhaps as I think doubting whether any engagement might be fulfilled at this (his sister’s) end. So you are to understand that he is nonetheless grateful to you (and to M d’Haussonville, if the latter has been willing) but gratefully declines.

But surely the articles published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* came down to a later date than the four volumes. I read the articles’ every word. They brought the story down to the time Pius VII leaves France on his return to Rome.<sup>98</sup> I only looked at the four volumes cursorily when I sent them to Miss Jowett, but it appeared not to bring the story down so far as the breaking up of the Napoleon Church Council at Paris. (But that may be my mistake.)

I will take care to ask particularly whether in the Diplomatic Service it is thought essential that an ambassador should *not* know the language of the country to which he is accredited. Of one thing I am certain: that it would be an essential improvement to the government and Indian service of this country if all the officials did not know how to read and write. (Else we shall come to a deadlock) I should make it a condition, a *sine qua non* in civil service examinations, that the candidates should not know how to write, at least.

My hand is so bad that I am essentially in the condition of not knowing how to write, except in pencil. So I must stop. I shall look forward to seeing you this summer and also M Mohl. Please tell him so and thank him for his so kind and interesting letter. I have got the articles and some great lithographs of the Sistine on purpose to read

96 Joseph Othenin Bernard de Cléron, comte d’Haussonville (1809-84), author of books on the period, the church and his own memoirs.

97 Emily Jowett (1815-82), Jowett’s older sister; she, as Haussonville was a Roman Catholic convert.

98 Pius VII (1740-1823) was forced out of Rome by Napoleon (1769-1821) and only returned in 1815 on his defeat.

them properly *with* the pictures in consequence of your recommendation. There's enthusiasm for you (Montégut's on the *Deux Mondes* I mean). God bless you,

ever, dearest, yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.15 and A.16

22 June 1870

My father will be here from *Friday till Monday*. Could you not give him one breakfast or one dinner of your company more? more if you can, but the smallest mercy thankfully received. *Saturday and Sunday* breakfast 9:30 A.M., dinner 7 P.M.

Ah poor me that can't see you. If, like the saints, I ought to be thankful for all my troubles, wearinesses, fightings without and fears within,<sup>99</sup> I have a great deal to be thankful for.

ever yours, my dearest

your old Flo

25 June 1870

I am glad you're come. Why did you not bring your niece Mlle Helmholtz? With regard to what you say, that I have "left you where you were" about Miss Frere, perhaps Mr Jowett did not bring me the right message. As Mr Bright<sup>100</sup> says: "Everybody asks me all kinds of questions and my answers are *masterly*!" Try me again: write down the right question. And see if I don't give you a "*masterly*" answer!

ever your

F.

Is M Mohl coming to England this year?

Source: From four letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.19, A.20, A.21 and A.22, the first three from Lea Hurst, Matlock

16 August 1870

You can't think what a *relief* it was to me to see this letter or *how* good it was of you to send it. Do send any other. As for feeling *pleasure* in anything, that is impossible. You know I have a sort of connection with the Intendance at Paris. I hear what tallies exactly with M Mohl's account: pillage and dishonesty of it beyond all description, cause of

---

99 An allusion to 2 Cor 7:15.

100 John Bright (1811-89), Liberal MP, free trade advocate.

the terrible failure of everything in the organization at the army stores, ammunition, clothing, guns, *everything* falling short, false muster rolls of battalions, men returned at 900 strong who never were more than 500. And this, my dear, is what would happen at *our* War Office if *we* were to go to war, which God forbid, except that ours is incapacity, not pillage. But Paris absolutely quiet.

I have not a minute. For the last month I have been writing war business as long as I could hold pen or pencil. Never, never, if I live an eternity, would I undertake this kind of thing again, not because it kills but because it kills body and soul *for nothing*.

Tell M Mohl if he comes to London in September to go to my house (address above 35 South St.) I have not a minute to answer your last dear letter, but will by and bye—only this, I never had the letter from you “offering to come.” But, my dear, I could not see my dearest friend, and chiefly *not my dearest* friend for a month, don’t you understand? I will write again. Please write to me. I never saw my mother better in all her life.

17 August 1870

I cannot help writing again to thank you for M Mohl’s letter and to ask for more news. Mme Canrobert—you probably know her—(don’t tell me she is a nasty woman, for she is a splendid administrator) at the head of the “Society for Sick and Wounded” at “Palais de l’Industrie” at Paris, is doing wonders. Among other things, they have actually sent out at their own expense three field hospitals complete, with surgeons, infirmiers, aumôniers, stores, 300 beds each, to the seat of war, costing each £10,000 and £1000 a month keep, while we are doing so little besides mismanagement at *our* Sick and Wounded Aid Society. We can scarcely be said to exist at all except to mismanage. Could not Miss Eleanor Martin help? I enclose “lists of articles” which the French and Germans ask us for. These should be collected and sent with as little delay as possible to the Office and Stores of the Society, 2 St Martin’s Place, Trafalgar Square, London W.C.

We want ladies’ committees all over the country to collect money, even the smallest sums, and send it (and these “articles”) to 2 St Martin’s Place. We are vehemently asked for these things and for surgeons from both belligerents. And we *are* getting a little shipshape, have agents with both sides and the societies of Berlin and Paris, who tell us what they want. We transmit things direct to these societies, who are working splendidly and have direct communications with all the seat of war hospitals. You will have seen us advertised in *Times* and *Daily*



*News.* O that I could go to the seat of war to work, instead of all this writing, writing, writing!

Mme Henri Mallet, of Paris, do you know her? has written to me to “*rédiger quelques pages*” of *règlement* [draft some pages of rules] for her deaconesses and *infirmières* [nurses] starting for the *frontière* [border]. And I have done so. So has the crown princess of Prussia asked for nurses. I enclose (but I don’t think it very well done) the “Notes” of our society. Please let Miss Martin make us known as much as possible among people who will work for us. I could send more papers to her. She does not know any surgeons who would volunteer, does she? We have sent out twelve to Metz and the Prussians and another party starting.

18 August 1870

I cannot help writing again to thank you (in returning by “return of post” M Mohl’s letter). One gets so frightened that it is a relief to know it is no worse, but how *can* things be worse? After the fighting come the miseries of the poor people and a victory is only less dreadful than a defeat. It is some sort of refreshment to me though to hear M Mohl talk of “Bismarck’s crime of 1866.”<sup>101</sup> England does talk such intolerable “bosh” about Prussia.

Now, if you take all the great names in science, in literature, in metaphysical and religious philosophy, in art, of the last eighty or ninety years in all Germany, will you tell me how many of these came out of Berlin? Yet the higher civilization is to be subjected to the lower. And England is to rave about Prussia. Of those two men, L.-Napoléon and Bismarck, which is the worst?<sup>102</sup> Is it not Bismarck? “the blacker devil he” and oh that we cannot say of any man in either side “and the more angel he.” The world is darkened indeed.

We have sent surgeons to both belligerents at their earnest request. One of our great London surgeons took out the party to Metz. He says “the emperor has not ten days to live.” But I was told this with the greatest secrecy (and it may not be true as we swear in our surgeons to give no information relating to either combatant of any sort, not to write to the newspapers or to write at all except to us to tell what is wanted).

---

101 The Austro-Prussian War in which Prussia decisively beat Austria in Schleswig-Holstein, and which whetted Prussia’s appetite for conquest; Prince Otto von Bismarck (1815-98), the militarist, expansionist Prussian chancellor.

102 Louis-Napoléon declared war, provoked by trickery on Bismarck’s part.

I cannot help sending you more papers of "lists of articles" wanted in case your nieces will work for us. And, if they will send them to their friends and get up women's committees (I will send plenty more) to collect these articles and contributions in money, even the smallest sums? These hospital materials are asked for urgently on both sides. Enough cannot be sent. There were two miles of dead and wounded after one battle. After another (a "trifling engagement") the Prussians had 40,000 dead and wounded.

Make these facts known. Both sides call upon us for help in sending them hospital supplies. Let everything be sent to the *Storekeepers, 2 St Martin's Place*, Trafalgar Square, London W.C. And when all is done for the wounded, there remain the starving wives and widows, orphans and children and old people. I collect for the "Victoria Stiftung" at Berlin. It is for these. Port and sherry and Liely's essence of meat are asked for for the hospitals and money, money, money. I can think of nothing else. I am sure that God had better bring the world to an end!

yours, *how much* yours

F.

[ca. 18 August 1870]

I continue to have the most deplorable accounts of the distress, terror and bewilderment, though quite calm, and not fermenting, of the provinces (France). (They write to me for plans of field-hut hospitals.) The country people who through the sub-prefectures had given largely wine, corn, horses, linen, etc., to the *Ministères* (*Intérieur* and *Guerre*) think, rightly or wrongly, that their gifts are sold by the *Trésor* [Treasury] for the general purposes of the war and the government. They now keep their gifts for their widows and orphans, the destitute wives and children, and any sick and wounded who may be sent to them. There are ladies' committees collecting gifts and tendering help all over France and Germany, only *not* with *us*.

Source: Letter, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C99

Lea Hurst

27 August 1870

My dear Miss Eleanor Martin

As you are so good as to wish for more papers, I send some, in case our secretary at St Martin's Place should have been too much hurried to answer your call at once.

I have no good news. The best informed people think rather that the war will be prolonged than brought quickly to an end. And this is

the worst news of all. I feel almost as anxious as Mme Mohl to hear from M Mohl. The fighting is not fighting. It is a carnage, a massacre. To me, who remember how hideous it was to see the parties of men silently arming every night in the Crimea to march to the trenches and to say ten or twenty will not come back at all of those men, forty or fifty will come back on stretchers to be laid in the hospital beds. The accounts are ghastly, insupportable, of *these* battles where whole regiments of French and Germans have half their numbers dead and wounded on the field. And of the wounded many die of neglect before they can be removed.

We keep sending out things, but nothing we can do is able to meet their wants. It seems hopeless to send enough. People are most generous, all the country towns almost are helping now. But the wounded need it all and much more. I should like to hear how Mrs Frewen Turner and Mme Mohl are.

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Julius Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.23

Lea Hurst

Matlock

31 August 1870

It is an unutterable relief to hear that you are safe in South St. What earthly good to stop out a siege and a revolution in Paris for a sensible man? I should never forgive myself for that passage in your letter to Mme Mohl where you say that you will have to run about London looking for some "good Samaritan" to take you in, if I were not sure that I had written to Mme Mohl, begging and praying that you would look upon 35 South St. as with its door wide open whenever you would come in.

As it is, it does not signify since, the Verneys being in London, their house is much less dull than mine. But, please, I have written to Mme Mohl that, if not at 32, you can always be taken in at 35 (and she too as she knows). But, as she has played me false once, I think it better to write to you direct too. I will write to my maids. . . .

Oh let no one think they can taste what war is from letters and from newspapers; they must have *seen* what it is to conceive the unutterable misery, ghastliness, hideousness of the thing! And to me who have seen the poor Tartar women and children come down to the shore at Balaclava starving, not knowing where to go—to think that now there are thousands and tens of thousands of civilized people like

ourselves in that plight. I say, like the duc de Broglie,<sup>103</sup> it is the end of the world!

The only good thing I have heard is that you are out of Paris.

Source: From a letter to Julius Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.24

Lea Hurst

Matlock

9 September 1870

We are so very sorry to hear of Mme Mohl being so poorly, who was not thought well when she was here. *I* was in hopes she would have been better when “the beast” was “kicked out” (though little vantage shall we gain thereby, it seems, as John of Gaunt<sup>104</sup> said). She wrote to me she should “die” if he were *not*. We trust that she will soon be better. I write by the orders of my superiors, too glad to execute them, to beg and pray that you will come here, when, how, and as it may be most convenient (or least inconvenient) to *you*. Pray don’t disappoint them. My father tells me that he *has* asked you in all manner of ways already, so I say no more but just to repeat: please don’t grieve them.

As for me, it was really a comfort to me to read your letter—strange sort of comfort, you will say! Yes, but it *is*: “il n’y a que la raison qui ne fatigue pas à la longue” [there is nothing but reason which does not tire in the long run]. And I am weary of unreason, the baseness and frivolity of the English about this war, the frantic ambition of the Prussians, their desire of military despotism and their real subserviency to Bismarck, not a bit different in effect from (if you read for “Prussians”) the French (and for “Bismarck”) the beast though equally frantic imprévoyance of the French, caring only for joy at having sent away the emperor, and not thinking of what they have to put in his stead. Who was it who said: ah if I had been God, I would not have made the world! (I am much of that mind myself.)

In all this unutterable woe and horror of misery which closes round this poor world now (the guillotine of the Great Revolution was merciful compared to this). When, as you say, the conditions which Prussia *may* demand, urged by the popular clamour which Bismarck himself has raised, can but bring about a disastrous universal European war, preceded by a disastrous universal armed peace, in this European

103 Probably Jacques Victor Albert (1821-1901), duc de Broglie, French ambassador to England, later prime minister.

104 John of Gaunt (1340-99), duke of Lancaster, son of Edward III, commander in the 100 Years War with France.

convulsion of misery—to say nothing of how the whole European civilization (if such a word as *civilization* is not as far off, as out of place, now as heaven would be) would be altered by Prussia's military preponderance. The baseness and frivolity of the English—in all excepting the grabbing together of £100,000 and more for the wounded (which is very fine)—our low-mindedness one of the meanest features of the whole. But, do you know, I had rather be poor MacMahon<sup>105</sup> than our secretary for war, Cardwell. You talk of “Intendance” corruption, shortcomings and malpractices? Do you know *ours*?

But I must stop, say “God bless you” again, *that* does me good. And God bless *you*, dear M Mohl.

ever yours

Flo

The more I hear, the more I admire Germany and her unheard-of sacrifices, the less I admire Prussia, who has placed *herself* as a God on the Altar for them to adore and the more I detest her free translation of “German nationality,” which *she reads* as Prussian military supremacy.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.25

Lea Hurst

Matlock

13 September 1870

Now you are a sensible person. I have written to my maids to prepare the little drawing room for your bedroom, the bigger for your sitting room, the bedroom (above mine) for M Mohl. If you go up with only a day's notice, please write to Mrs Legg, 35 South Street, Park Lane, London, W., and announce yourself. But, if there is time, please write to me and let me give the order, merely because I think I can make you more comfortable. The maids will ask you exactly for your orders, of course, when you are there. And I think my little cook makes very good beef-tea and soup, etc.

How I wish I could recommend you a doctor. I could name to you, of course, a dozen “well known for stomach complaints,” but then I think what you want is somebody who will see to your everyday regimen and not give medicine. And that is just what English doctors say they do and just what they don't do. You would think they made you worse.

My dear, there is nothing I wouldn't give to hasten a *possible* peace even by one moment. Christ weeping over Jerusalem<sup>106</sup> is nothing to

---

105 Field Marshal MacMahon (1808-93), second president of the Third Republic.

106 In Luke 19:41.

this terror and great crowded misery of the march upon Paris. Why, God Himself must be standing “weeping” before Paris.

But I assure you that our government is not backward. You know they are no friends of mine: “their tameness is shocking to me.” But they are waiting to mediate. They will seize an opportunity. (Thiers<sup>107</sup> is supposed to be in London *today* to treat.) No private person, no queen can do anything. As for *her*<sup>108</sup> being at Balmoral, as a mere matter of feeling, I think it is intolerable. But, if our government can do anything, urge anything, mediate anything, as a neutral power, in consultation with Thiers (ministers are responsible to Parliament, not to the queen; *our* sovereign is nobody in an affair of this kind) depend upon it. They, the ministers, will do what they ought, what they can, *with* the queen, if there is time, without her, if there is not.

(I am writing to the crown princess today in answer to her letters and telegraphs and have said all I can. But no crown princess, no queen, no private person can do anything. And if I had not been writing, I should not even have thought of her.)

Many thanks for Barthélemy-St Hilaire’s<sup>109</sup> most striking letter, true to the letter. I will forward it, as desired.

The *Captain* is gone down with 500 men and Reginald Herbert, Sidney Herbert’s boy<sup>110</sup> (*my* boy, as they always called him), such a noble, gallant lad, the very flower of the flock, a promise of Sir Philip Sidney<sup>111</sup> is lost with her. His mother (Lady Herbert) [is] lying dangerously ill at Wilton—they *cannot* tell her.

A little later would be better for me to see M Mohl here (in answer to your question). But, if he *can* come, my time will be his (for a few minutes). Let him come when he *can*. God bless you.

ever yours

F.

107 Louis Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877), prime minister of France.

108 Empress Eugénie; Napoléon III and she settled in England after his forced abdication.

109 Jules Barthélemy-Saint Hilaire (1805-95), French philosopher and politician. A draft letter to the crown princess (see p 826 below) cites a statement from him.

110 William Reginald Herbert (1854-70), midshipman lost at sea on HMS *Captain* 6 September 1870.

111 Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86), soldier, poet, statesman. The poem cited (see p 571 above) refers to this distinguished ancestor of Sidney Herbert.

Source: From two letters to Julius or Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.46 and A.29

[c1871]

As for German unity: if Prussians (of all ranks) are now in the process of developing into Germans, who are, as a body, civilized and human beings, then even this great earthquake and hurricane of misery may have been worthwhile (though I myself should prefer annihilation). But, if German unity means Germany (of all ranks) developing into Prussia, upon my honour I think I had rather be France. Certainly I had rather be the *Captain* with my dear boy in her “*Tu Marcellus eris*”<sup>112</sup> lying 200 fathoms deep off the coast of Spain. Lord have mercy upon us His poor children, who have all turned out murderers and robbers and villains!

ever yours

Florence Nightingale

I sent your Cinchona [quinine] note to Parthe. She is here.

11 April 1871

4 P.M.

I was most thankful to see this letter. It has just come in (from Lady William, I suppose) and after having read it twenty times, I return it in haste with a rain of thanks. O black letter days in the calendar, but even the man “hid in the washerwoman’s cart” [Louis-Napoléon] makes them less appalling.

I had a letter yesterday from a lady at Versailles. She describes the rage of the people against the insurgés. They would hardly let her give a drink of water to an insurgé mortally wounded who was brought in. She says she cannot help feeling this rage herself. All her poor people whom she had re-established in their old quarters, Meudon, Garches, La Celle St-Cloud, St-Cloud (the last at the village of Boulogne) driven out again.

ever your

Flo

---

112 An allusion to Virgil, *Aenid* VI.881-32, “If only you escaped your harsh fate, you would be Marcellus.”

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.33

Sunday 28 May 1871

I have a letter from M Mohl. The last date in it is on *Thursday*. It is written at different hours on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, as a sort of diary. He records the burnings of the Tuileries, etc., on *Wednesday*. And when he finishes on *Thursday*, says that “the town is entirely taken” and that he only hears “a moderate cannonade” somewhere about Bicêtre and at a distance. So that I hope there was nothing more or worse to be learnt or done when he wrote. He says: “the streets are shut up with sentries to facilitate the arrestation of a few hundred ringleaders.” He hopes to “go to the embassy tomorrow (Friday) to post his letter,” so that perhaps this letter was not sent till Friday, in which case all the better—it is later news of him. The streets must then have been open to the Faubourg St-Honoré. I would send you the letter at once, but I have no doubt you have even later news.

I would not wish my worst enemy to pass such a week as I have passed. I did not dare to send to *you*, for terror is contagious. I had rather by far, far, have been *in* Paris, as I had rather have been *in* the war *from first to last* myself.

I saw Mme de Staël<sup>113</sup> (for your sake and in consequence of you and your note) on Wednesday. They had then heard of the burnings by telegram. She did not cry. (But I thought there was death in her face. The young de Broglie, at Versailles, wounded by an obus,<sup>114</sup> was, they feared, in a desperate state. And his father, the duc de Broglie, was gone to him. I did not like to trouble her by sending to inquire. But, if you see her, I should be so glad to know that the young man was better. Also, if they have any news of Mlle d’Haussonville. God bless you and save Paris.

ever and always

your old Flo

Source: From a letter to Julius Mohl, ADD Mss 46385 f17

23 October 1871

Not one word have I heard from Mme Mohl since she returned to Paris. So I don’t write (for I am sure *she* has not so much difficulty in

113 Not the famous author, Germaine de Staël, whose novels Nightingale knew, but probably the widow of her son Auguste, who raised the duc de Broglie on the death of his mother.

114 A howitzer shell.



writing as *I* have). But I commission you, please, to say: (1) her eyeglass has been found here; (2) Miss Topsy, the cat, *did* become Mrs Muff and had five of the most beautiful kittens, as far as I can judge, that have ever been bred here, much handsomer than either Topsy or Muff, whom you called the handsomest tom kitten you ever saw. (He was a grandson of yours.) Of these five, she overlaid and killed two. It was a pity, for one of these was a beauty. Of the three who are left, two are black and orange without white, very handsome and very life-y. One is black and grey, in mourning for its grandmama, your cat. Of course the handsomest *miss* shall go to you, if you wish it. (They are nothing like weaned yet.) One has a black and orange fur pelisse and hood, trimmed with a black velvet border all round.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.36

Embley

Romsey

30 July 1872

I write as soon as it is possible. I like you to think of our dear old friend, Mr Bracebridge, so much! I have told Mrs Bracebridge that you do so. He and she have been the creators of my life. And when I think of him at Scutari, the only man in all England who would have lived (and submitted to) such a “pigging” life, without the absorbing interest and responsibility which it was to me, I think “we ne’er shall look upon his like again.” “O insupportable and touching loss!” as Cassius says of Portia.<sup>115</sup>

She wrote to me herself of it, quite collectedly, though it is the break-up of everything to her. They were the same age, had been married near half a century, scarcely ever separated, I should think, a fortnight. She only says that her “call will soon come.” But she could spare *him* better than he *her*. I always felt that, if he had been left alone, he must have starved. I do not at all know what she means to do. For her health she ought to leave Atherstone, but I shall not be surprised if she never does.

He had been unconscious for a week up to the day of his death, then quite conscious, quite calm, quite cheerful, quite aware of the end. In the words of the psalm [23:4] “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For Thou art with me.”

---

115 In Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act 4, scene 3.

He had genius. And when I think of Atherstone, of Athens, of all the places I have been in with them, of the immense influence they had in shaping my own life, more than earthly father and mother to me, I cannot doubt that they leave behind them their mark on the century, this century which has so little ideal, at least in England.

As if a god had been abroad.

And left his impress on the world.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.38

Embley

Romsey

11 August 1872

Thanks for your letter. I have *not* heard from M Mohl. I know I am in his debt, but he must not count with me too exactly. I am like old Richard Baxter<sup>116</sup> who said that his weakness took up *so much of his time* and that all the pains of all his infirmities were not half so grievous to him (which is quite true to me) as the *loss of his time* which they occasioned.

I send more Livingstone. (It is about the best pleasure I have that that man is found—no thanks to us!)

My tender love and thanks to Mrs Frewen Turner for her most kind message, in her own hand too. God bless you.

ever your loving

F.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.40

19 June 1873

It makes me joyful, so that I could sing a “Te Deum” in the midst of all my cares that M Mohl is again “clothed” and on “his right” knees.<sup>117</sup> God bless him and you! I am going to write to him about his shah who entered London yesterday with a splendid state procession in a pouring rain and a fog (18 June) so that I could neither breathe nor see.

But I have not one moment today and only write to sing an ode about M Mohl, who is more worth than many shahs, and to thank you for writing and to be glad that you are coming. Yes, I think Mr Tit must come. Else how am I to raise up kittens for you?

116 Richard Baxter (1615-91), Puritan divine.

117 A paraphrase about the man from whom devils were cast out in Luke 8:35.

I am very sorry Miss Eleanor has to bring “an elephant” for me. But I could at least easily send for him to Charing Cross, if I knew the hour. If M Mohl does not come to England till July, and Lady William should fail him, I hope he will come here. The drawing rooms are being fitted up for my mother, who leaves on the last day of June, and M Mohl who, I suppose, ought not to go upstairs shall sleep there. (I never come out of my bedroom now.)

ever your old Flo

No, M Mohl, you did not write “from your bed” before. But you have written now. And very thankful I am. What a very queer world this is we live in. If M Reuter owns the “shah of shahs,” the “son of the sun,” It is as if Pickford owned the pope.

The whole world and his wife here are on their knees to get tickets for the ball at Guildhall tomorrow night to the shah. I was asked and went on my knees too (in a letter) to that estimable functionary, the lord mayor, to get my tickets transferred to a rising young surgeon (and his wife) whom I have made medical instructor<sup>118</sup> to my nurse school, in which I succeeded.

No doubt that (not very) estimable functionary, the shah, will have his mind improved by seeing how fine *we* can be at our “*self-governing*” centre! The printed cards of directions sent me as to how to get my carriage within 100 miles of Guildhall would have been enough for the German armies to surround Sedan! hood and all.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.41

21 June 1873

10,000 thanks. I was so very glad to receive your letter this morning, but sorry that the poor knee has been put to do what he was not up to. I cannot find a moment to write today but will write soon to Your Solitary Highness, and only write now to say that my Messenger (a commissionaire in the Corps’ dress) shall be at the Charing Cross Station on Monday to meet the Tidal Train at 5 P.M. Perhaps he may be able to help Mme Mohl with her luggage, unless she is met from the deanery. At all events, he will be able to relieve Miss Eleanor of the cat, M Tit.

I am so very sorry not to be able to offer Miss Eleanor a bed here, though I dare say she has plenty of beds in London. I am immersed in such a torrent of my trained matrons and nurses, going and coming,

---

118 John Croft (1833-1905), medical instructor to probationers 1873-92.

to and from Edinburgh and Dublin, to and from watering places for their health, dining, teaing, sleeping, sleeping by day as well as by night. But that would not interfere with *you* if you would come, since I shall keep the drawing room, bedrooms, after I have fitted them up for my mother, open for you.

Source: From a letter of Nightingale to Mary Clarke Mohl, in E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:317

27 February [1875]

Do read Pascal's *Provinciales*.<sup>119</sup> There is nothing like it in the world; it is as witty as Molière;<sup>120</sup> it is as closely reasoned as Aristotle; it has a style transparent like Plato.<sup>121</sup> You said you had not read it. I have a great mind to send it you. I read it every year (as Lord Morpeth said he did Miss Austen's novels<sup>122</sup>) for the pure pleasure it gives my imagination. Voltaire said, did he not? that though Pascal was "fou" [crazy] he fixed the language.

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.43

Upper Norwood

18 June 1875

I am glad and sorry to hear that you are at Hastings (St Leonard's), sorry that you are alone, but you are always a host to yourself. Of course you are finishing your book.

I am "out of humanity's reach" in a red villa like a monster lobster: a place which has no "raison d'être" except the *raison d'être* of lobsters or crabs, viz., to go backwards, and to feed and be fed on, in charge of my mother, by doctor's orders, as her only chance of recovering strength enough to see once more her old home (Lea Hurst) after which she cruelly craved. Here she is happy—happy at least as compared with her miserable unhappiness in London.

119 Blaise Pascal's *Les provinciales, ou les lettres écrites par Louis de Montalto à un provincial de ses amis et aux RR PP Jésuites*, a defence of Jansenism.

120 Molière, French dramatist.

121 See *Society and Politics* for Nightingale's comments on Aristotle (5:625-28); Plato (427-347 BCE), Greek philosopher. See Nightingale's extensive comments on his *Dialogues* in *Society and Politics* (5:551-623).

122 Viscount Morpeth (1802-64), MP, chief secretary for Ireland; Jane Austen (1775-1817), novelist; see *Society and Politics* for Nightingale's comments on her (5:765-66).

Stranger vicissitudes than mine in life few men have had: vicissitudes from slavery to power, and from power to slavery again. It does not *seem* like a “vicissitude,” a villa at Norwood, yet it is the strangest I yet have had. It is the only time for twenty-two years that my work has not been the first reason for deciding where I should live and how I should live. Here it is the last. It is the caricature of a life.

Dearest Mme Mohl, this letter, begun the moment I received yours has been lying by me a week. If I try to finish it I shall never send it. We are here and *Miss Irby* is with us (you ask where she is) at Abbotsleigh, Church Road, *Upper Norwood*, S.E. We are so crowded that we cannot even ask a friend to sleep, a great, great grievance. Miss Irby sleeps in the study, the housekeeper in my room and three servants in lodgings.

Please write, if you are so good as to write, to *35 South St.*, and if you could make use of that house when you are in London, I should be so glad. I have had a charming letter from M Mohl, but have no strength to answer it. Could you send him *this*? God bless you.

ever your, my dear, dear friend  
old Flo

Source: From two letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.44 and A.45

Lea Hurst  
Cromford, Derby  
5 September 1875

I hope that you will make all the use you can of *35 South St.*, you and M Mohl, when you go through London, if you wish to stay in London. Only let me know a day or two beforehand. I have written to M Mohl, asking him to give me a night or two here. It is very provoking that I should be so “tied and bound” here by the “weight of my” query? “sins,”<sup>123</sup> just when you are in England. *No cats*, thank you.

I have written to M Mohl the account of the enlèvement [removal] by Miss Irby of her schoolgirls and schoolmistresses from Sarajevo to Belgrade and asked him to send it to you. She could not get a passport for girls except upon a written promise by her that she would

---

123 An allusion to Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Book 3; Nightingale’s extensive annotations of the work are in *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:81-104).

bring these valuable subjects of the Porte<sup>124</sup> back again. God bless you.

Please, my love to Mrs Frewen Turner and Miss Eleanor Martin. . . .

6 December 1875

I know if I do not send this as it is I shall never finish it. I don't want to talk of my misfortunes, but you kindly ask what we are about. I have had charge of my mother since 4 May. She is now at 32 South St. still under my charge. I here, at 35, Shore and his wife and Miss Irby staying with me. Shore and his wife have taken a large house at 30 York Place and (most kindly) take in my mother for six months. They are the only people (except Miss Irby) who have shown my mother *personal* persevering kindness since her widowhood. God bless them for it! My mother's is like a resurrection under Shore's care and love. We hope the house will be ready in a week.

I am like a person who cannot breathe. God bless you, dearest, best of friend. M Mohl: *get well*.

I send you one of Miss Irby's maps/papers to amuse you. I would tell you much about Bosnia but M Mohl knows more than I do, also much about the Indian accountant-general's irrigation accounts, which have been sent to me to overhaul. God bless you again.

Source: From two letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.49 and A.51

14 September 1877

My heart, and a very sad heart it is, is always with you, dearest friend, with you and with him who is gone before us.<sup>125</sup> You say truly that no one loved him or, I believe, understood him more than I. And my thoughts of him strengthen every hour. Thanks for sending me that old letter; how I wish I had more. Indeed I think of you as having lived with two such men as M Mohl and M Fauriel.<sup>126</sup> But what a glorious life to have known two such men. And how few have it.

You ask what I am doing. My mind is full of the dying Indian children, starved and lying by the roadside, dead or torn by dogs, by hun-

124 The government of Turkey.

125 Julius Mohl died in 1876.

126 Claude-Charles Fauriel (1772-1844), historian; their correspondence was later published, with letters of Julius Mohl, by a relative of his, Ottmar de Mohl: *Correspondence de Fauriel et Mary Clarke*, 1911.

dreds of thousands, from conditions which have been made *for* them in this hideous famine—there has been no calamity like it for a century. We can manufacture any death rate we please for English children, who certainly can do nothing to make their own conditions and, what is worse still, we can manufacture a “rate” of brutal savages as we do in London. But nowhere do we see this terrible law as in India, where the people are the poorest in the world, the most industrious in the world, and yet are wholly dependent on government and government works.

At this time when England is, really almost for the first time, thinking powerfully about India, we must seize the opportunity. The governor of Madras (the duke of Buckingham) and the Indian secretary of state (Lord Salisbury<sup>127</sup>) have been *proprio motu* [on their own initiative] in correspondence with me about irrigation and water transit and about Madras drainage, which has been pending for twenty years. But, though people wait to drain and to water, they do not wait to die. John Bright made a powerful speech at Manchester yesterday upon water for produce *and* for transit. But someone should now get up an agitation (as Mr Gladstone did for Bulgaria<sup>128</sup>) in all this country for India which shall say to the government: “*You shall.*” If we had given them water we should not now have to be giving them bread!

18 July 1878

It is true that you have not written, but you *and he* are ever present with me. I think the apartment au 3ème is ever before me just as much as if I were in it. God bless you always. Yes, indeed his letters did contain deep truths.

Aunt Jenny, Uncle Oc’s widow, has gone to join him. She longed to go. She wrote to me twice not many days before she died as clear as ever. I bless God that I have ever known M Mohl though I find it hard to bear life without him. How much more must you!

India work has occupied me exceedingly lately, especially the question of the frightful indebtedness—question did I say?—I mean heart-rending reality of the Indian, and chiefly the Deccan, peasantry and their slavery, *actual slavery*, to the moneylenders. And we are undertaking new and huge territories, we who have been able so little to make India what she should be, it takes away my breath.

127 The duke of Buckingham (1823-89) and the marquis of Salisbury (1830-1903), later Conservative prime minister.

128 Gladstone spoke and wrote passionately about the plight of the Christian victims of Turkish rule in the Balkans and became, Nightingale thought, too belligerent later; see *Society and Politics* (5:475-76).

We are undertaking Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and occupying Cyprus. The opening words of the treaty are: "in the name of the omnipotent God." How I like those words. The miseries of this world are so dreadful that if one did not believe in the Father Almighty, one must pray for annihilation.

I must go to Lea Hurst in a few days to take charge of my mother. She is gone there already under the convoy of good Shore. And again there must be some reason in the counsels of the Father Almighty for taking me away from my work without a single day's rest for this exhausting charge. I have not had one day's rest since my father died 4½ years ago. But God can do the work without me.

I will write again. Under severe stress of business and illness,  
ever dearest friend  
your old Flo

Miss Irby is still at Knin with 12,000 starving Bosnian fugitives dependent upon her in Dalmatia.

Source: From a letter to Eleanor Martin, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/223

My dear Eleanor (if you will allow me to call you so) 24 March 1879

I cannot help writing to say what I *cannot* say, how much we feel with you at the calling home of our dear Mrs Frewen Turner. "Is it well with her?" "It *is* well." She is gone home. To you I am afraid it is the breaking up of a home, and I long to know not only about her, but about you. Only I do not like to press you to write.

Dear M Mohl—he was so fond of her. Perhaps now they have met. I always used to think of him—there was no one who wished so much to know God, who so longed after God. He could have spent his life in writing the history of God, as far as man can know Him, and he was sad because he thought man can know Him so little. Now he *knows Him* after whom his soul yearned. And your dear grandmother, she is home, beyond all misunderstandings, where all is love.

It is six and twenty years today since I lost my dear grandmother Shore; she was ninety-five, but what a blank that made in my life. How much I have lived through since, and how much she has known, how much she has enjoyed since.

I have often the saddest letters from Mme Mohl. I trust you will be with her soon. Pray for me, and I pray for you. May God be with you. Fare you very well, now and always.

ever your affectionate  
F. Nightingale



How dear Hilary would have been with us now. Perhaps she *is*.

Did you know our Miss Irby? She is on the Bosnian frontier.

Source: From a letter to Eleanor Martin, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/224

Easter Eve

12 April 1879

6 A.M.

Indeed I do pray for you as I hope you pray for me—pray that we may both find God's highest call for us. He has sometimes a heavy load for us to carry. May He give us and show us what we have to do for Him, be it hard or easy. There is *so* much to do for Him in life, and so few real, genuine, labourers.

One does indeed feel what a blank life is to you just now, but what a joy to *her* that you were “provided for.” Ah, but it is a good thing that at her death there was no aged person to be turned out of home! I *pray* that God may show you the way! And do *you* pray no less for me! for my way is hard and heavy. God bless you ever.

God bless and keep you and your sisters, and Mme Mohl, is one of the deepest Easter prayers of,

yours ever

F. Nightingale

I have lost both my beautiful long-haired *tom kittens* (black and orange)—only a little white cat left, which is very miserable (Mme Mohl's cats). You once kindly offered me a Persian tom kitten; have you a *tom kitten* to spare now? tortoiseshell?

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Eleanor Martin, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/225

Lea Hurst

Cromford, Derby

13 October 1879

I was so very glad to see your handwriting again. I do pray, as you wished, that you may find your place and your work. But we may trust God for that. There is such a field for work.

Thanks very many for the little tom kitten. I wrote to Miss Crossley direct and she was so kind as to send it here. It misses its mother but is too “manly” to cry. It is a charming little animal and I have called it Darius<sup>129</sup> (“Mr Darkie's” progeny, as you said).

---

129 Doubtless after Darius the Great, king of Persia.



Stained glass window of Florence Nightingale, Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY. Photograph courtesy of Michael D. Calabria.



Left, Selina Bracebridge, Nightingale's "spiritual mother." Photograph courtesy of the Hampshire County Record Office. Upper right, Harriet Martineau, Nightingale's collaborator on many issues. Photograph courtesy of the British Library. Lower right, Maude Verney, daughter-in-law of Sir Harry Verney, a friend in Nightingale's old age. Portrait by Sir William Blake Richmond at the Courtauld Institute of Art, courtesy of Sir Edmund Verney, 6th baronet.



Upper left, Louisa Ashburton. Photograph courtesy of the National Library of Scotland. Middle left, "Aunt Mai" (Mrs. Samuel Smith), from an unfinished sketch by J.R. Parsons. In I.B. O'Malley, *Florence Nightingale*. Lower left, portrait of Hilary Bonham Carter, by herself. In I.B. O'Malley, *Florence Nightingale*. Right, Sir William Blake Richmond's 1869 portrait of Margaret Verney, daughter-in-law of Sir Harry Verney. Portrait at the Courtauld Institute of Art.

London Dec 22/41

My dear Mrs. Truelove

I cannot let Christmas pass without one word of Christmas greeting to you -

A thousand & a thousand good wishes for all the best Christmas blessings on you & yours & all you love -

I cannot help sending you a little book of mine on dying in Distress - not that it is much in your line - but as an "old remembrance" surely, tho' not so sweet as thyme.

Now I had taken this great sheet - But in the process of business & illness I find, alas! less & less room - I will not say for friendships or relaxation - those I have long since had to give up - but for any but the most necessary claims - (And now I am interrupted unavoidably.)

Believe me ever yours

Florence Nightingale

Do not trouble  
at my Hampshire  
puzzle

Letter from Florence Nightingale to Mrs Truelove, accompanying an annual gift of game and delicacies. Courtesy of the International Museum of Surgical Science, Chicago, IL.





Combe Hurst, home of Nightingale's beloved "Aunt Mai" Shore Smith, now the School of Music, Kingston University, Kingston-upon-Thames. Photograph courtesy of Haley McDonald.

## Statistical Tables

1. Name of School
  - a. District
  - b. Separate
  - c. Workhouse
2. When established.
3. N<sup>o</sup> of inmates (average last year)
4. Yearly Admissions
5. Yearly Deaths & Causes of Death
6. Yearly Discharges
  - a. to service
  - b. to friends
  - c. other causes.
7. N<sup>o</sup> of girls for every 5 years of age
  - 0-5
  - 5-10
  - or
8. N<sup>o</sup> of orphans
  - a. both parents dead
  - b. father dead
  - c. mother dead
9. N<sup>o</sup> of classes with average attendance in each
10. Branches taught in each class
11. Duration of Classes.
  - a. hours per week
  - b. in years
12. Domestic training
  - description of & similar particulars as to time
13. N<sup>o</sup> of Teachers & Salaries
14. Holidays, if any.
15. Examinations, if any.
16. How the School & Training managed by Board of Guardians or School Committee  
 (generally some good & interested in children -  
 some hard-fisted or rate-saving or bad)

Draft questionnaire prepared by Florence Nightingale for Jane Senior, first woman Poor Law inspector. Courtesy of Clendening History of Medicine Library, University of Kansas Medical Centre.

Schools

Good  
bad  
indifferent

Merely to get my hand in

In this & similar ways I  
would get the requisite  
experience before I  
committed myself to an  
official investigation

Knowing that I must look carefully  
for defects  
& be ready to suggest practical  
remedies.

3

17. Then would come your own  
thorough personal routing out  
of the School & Girls  
as to cleanliness  
clothing  
bedding  
general care  
etc. etc.

18. Then, most important &  
most interesting of all,  
your own direct & indirect  
routing up  
of the moral state.

I should meet the Poor Law  
Inspectors & discuss the  
subject with them -  
& then take specimens of



# Deaconesses' Work in Syria.

## APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE KAISERWERTH DEACONESSSES' ORPHANAGE AT BEYROUT.

IN March of this year 106 Syrian orphan children, stray waifs from the frightful catastrophe of the Lebanon, were moving into a clean, new, roomy, healthy house by the sea, at Beyrout, with the noble women who had adopted them, Deaconesses from a far off northern home—Kaiserwerth, on the Rhine—the same poor, homely institution which had built them their house. The house was solemnly consecrated to God, whose work indeed it is, more visibly perhaps than even works of charity usually are. For surely out of less money so much good has rarely been done. But how is bread to be put into these 106 mouths? That is now the question.

The mother institution at Kaiserwerth has already a yearly deficit of more than 1,000*l.* for herself. Even with provisions so cheap as they are this year in Syria, the Syrian Institution costs 1,000*l.* a year.

And it must not be supposed that these children are pampered or spoiled in idleness. They are brought up to wholesome habits of household industry, unknown among Syrian women. Four Deaconesses direct this part of their education. Each little orphan has its own little office, sweeping, scrubbing, cleaning knives, cleaning windows, and so on.

There is a Children's Infirmary in the house, and many of the pupils are destined for nurses and for female teachers, in order to spread the blessings they have themselves received. Three other Deaconesses, two Arab Protestant schoolmistresses, and one English, teach them their lessons. 322 children have, since the Lebanon massacre, passed through their hands. Of these, 119 were Greek Church, 128 Maronites, 33 Protestants, 42 Roman Catholics. To show what a work of regeneration has to be done, I may state that the greatest difficulty the "Sisters" meet with is the untruthfulness which seems part of the national character. The children are as little ashamed to be caught in a nasty lie—I must call it by its own name—as a fish to be seen in the water.

There is a great inaptitude for spiritual things, which one would not have expected in these Syrian children. One of the Sisters was trying to teach them that "the Saviour's is the best gift." And upon asking them afterwards, "What is the best gift?" one answered, "A mess of lentil pottage" (Esau's), and another, "Silk worms."

Their natural ability is very great. They learn readily to read and write Arabic, and to read German and English (the latter for the sake of bringing a greater variety of books within their reach), and many who did not know how to read or write when they came, will now ask leave to write a letter in Arabic during playtime. They are very apt at needlework. They already make a good part of the linen for the hospital. They are taught to darn and knit, the object being to make them good household servants, of which there is a lamentable deficiency in Syria.

Besides the children, sixty-nine widows (also out of the Lebanon massacre) have been nursed and provided for by the Deaconesses. All but a very few (rendered incapable by blindness or some such cause) have now been restored by the Sisters to their homes, or otherwise placed.

Three other Kaiserwerth Deaconesses nurse in the Women's Hospital in Beyrout, opened in March, 1861, by the English and American and German Committee. It has received 495 sick, and is just as full as ever.

The Deaconesses have also nursed 750 patients in Sidon, which hospital is now, alas! given up from poverty. When these Deaconesses left Sidon a great crowd assembled to see the Sisters once more, and accompany them out of the city with tears, crying out that they were "their mothers," the "flowers of their hearts," the "light of their eyes," and calling down God's blessing upon them.

The Prussian consular agent, a native, has taken a house for the Sisters in Sidon, hoping that they will come back, if funds can be raised. Even the children's gratitude is a hopeful quality. They are continually asking the Sisters to write to thank their unknown benefactors in Europe.

Since October, 1860, these Kaiserwerth Deaconesses have been at work in Syria—comforting, nursing, feeding, clothing, teaching—and, if possible, in everything, more touched by (and more applying their efforts to) the spiritual than the bodily needs of these poor women and children.

I have been asked by Pastor Fliedner, who founded the Kaiserwerth Institution of Deaconesses, and has in twenty-six years spread its action over nearly all Europe, parts of Asia, Africa, and America, on the smallest funds that ever supported so immense a sphere—I have been asked by him to make more known in England this work of his Deaconesses in Syria. England has already largely co-operated. Indeed, all Evangelical Christendom have been united in the effort to give back to Syria some of the blessings we have received thence.

Pastor Fliedner has made a calculation, by which the 1,000*l.* a year necessary to keep up the Beyrout Orphanage and School could be raised in Evangelical Christendom. And in this calculation he debits England with 200*l.* a year.

London, Sept. 19, 1862.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

Dear Mme Mohl has written to me. She is seriously offended with me for not being in London. She does not know the circumstances: I come down here every year at the risk of my life (this year the journey was more serious to me than ever) in charge of my dear mother. Her condition here was very anxious. She has just returned to London under the care of my cousin, good Shore, who *is* so good to her. And I stay here to help in such a mass of business, schools, sick and dying people, etc., as we are the only resident family, if poor mother and I can be called “a family,” at Lea Hurst now, besides trying to work up the arrears of my own business. Then when, but I will not write all this, dear Eleanor—you were so kind as to ask after us and I thought perhaps it was as well to tell you as you might make Mme Mohl understand, through the lady (your cousin?) whom she is with, Mrs Fickers. (I will also write to Mme Mohl.) Pray for me and believe me,

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Mme Mohl wants *me* to “decide” or at least to “advise” about the publication of his letters to her. Priceless his letters must be, but I am wholly unequal to such a “decision” or “advice.” A competent person should give a month or six weeks to looking them through. How I, were I competent, should enjoy such a task. But I could scarcely give six hours from the business which has had far too many claims upon me for twenty-five years and more.

Source: From a letter of Mary Clarke Mohl to Nightingale, in E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:312-13

16 October 1879

Now, my own Flo, you believe me, I am sure, to love you truly; therefore you will bear what I say, and also you believe me to have common sense: you can't help believing it, I defy you! Now I declare that if you don't leave that absurd place, Lea Hurst, immediately, you must be a little insane—partially, not entirely; and that if you saw another person knowingly risking a life that might be useful *dans les grandes choses d'ensemble* to potter after sick individuals, and if you were in a lucid moment, you would say, “That person is not quite sane or she has not the strength of will to follow her judgment in her actions.”

Source: From a letter to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.52

8 June 1880

I can scarcely raise my head from the pillow and I am overwhelmed with business. I was going to write to you [for] *Saturday* at 5. Would that suit you? I ought to lie quite quiet for a week and I have not had one day.

ever and ever your  
old Flo

Source: From two letters to Mary Clarke Mohl, Woodward Biomedical Library A.56 and A.57

30 June 1881

6:00 A.M.

Dearest, ever dearest Mme Mohl

I *always* remember you. I “think of” you *always*. There is no danger of my “forgetting” you, if it were only for this, that I think of *him*. And how can you two be apart in my mind? He is living; I never think of him as *dead*; he is making the infinite progress in God which he did so long for on earth. God is everywhere and in God he is nearer to us than he was when on earth. It is only of the soul’s *system of relations* that we can say, “It is *here*; It is *there*.” I was thinking of him, in God, and of you (what people call praying) in the night particularly, even more than usual, just before your letter came.

I am not worthy to meet him again. Perhaps he would not know me with my body off, because he thought better of me than I deserved. But he would not have been happy without you here. Why should you think he will be hereafter? He has taken up the hereafter and is waiting for you. You two will pursue greater objects, a wider sphere together hereafter. At least I don’t think his objects could be greater, but he will pursue them in the “glorious liberty of the children of God.”<sup>130</sup> Here he was so chafed by the “limits,” so vexed by the narrowness. *He wished so to write a history of religions or, as I should call it, a history of God, that is, of what we have found out about God.* That was what all his study of Oriental languages and of discoveries of manuscripts and remains had been for, he told me. And he used to say, “But we don’t know enough.” Now he knows; now he enjoys. Now he is ever gaining fresh knowledge. You would not grudge it him. Hereafter you will be with him.

---

130 Rom 8:21.

Yes, I cannot remember the time when I have not longed for death. After Sidney Herbert's death and Clough's in 1861, twenty years ago, for years and years I used to watch for death as no sick man ever watched for the morning. It is strange that now that I am bereft of all I crave for it less. I want to do a little work a little better before I die. But I have no guide to help me but God in doing anything.

Yes, dear friend, I do feel how you must long to die and be with him and with God, where he is. But I don't think at all that your interests are all "individual." You have great and wide sympathies and large interests. O indeed I love you, love you dearly. Forty years and more have I loved you.

You speak of Ida: would you not go to her for the summer? Dear Ida, give her my love. (You ask where Beatrice is—they have taken a cottage in Savernake Forest. But she may be at Embley now. If you write to her, Mrs Godfrey Lushington, Embley, Romsey, it will be forwarded. Bertha Coltman<sup>131</sup> has a sick son, a most interesting boy of nineteen with a heavenly face. She has left London and taken a house at Westgate near Margate for six months for him to be by the sea.)

I am as usual (you kindly ask) and more than usual immersed in business every day far beyond my strength—India, *trained* nurses, etc. People don't know how weak I am. Yesterday we opened the new Marylebone Infirmary for pauper patients (760 beds). We nurse it with our trained nurses, thank God. I have each of these women to see for three or four hours alone before she begins work.

Surely, dearest Mme Mohl, if you come to London, I shall hope to see you. God bless you.

ever always yours and *his*

F. Nightingale

Lea Hurst

Cromford, Derby

2 November 1881

Dearest ever dearest Mme Mohl

How can I ever forget you? I stand in the rue du Bac 120 now at this moment as much as if I were really there in the body with him and you, nay, I think, much more.

Yes, yes, we shall all be friends and "acquaintances" as you say in that other world where we shall be after such much worthier objects

---

131 Cousin Bertha Elizabeth Smith, married to William Bachelor Coltman (c1828-1902); they had two sons, on whom see p 867 below.

than here, objects which will satisfy even *him* who was, as it seemed to me, always in search of God (oh how I miss him! second only to you) in search of God in everything deep, as philosophy, in everything loving and kind, as the genius of friendship that he was, as you would say, in everything perfect—ah not to be found here—in administration how far, how far from it, but above all in the history of God. The Persian *Shahnameh* did not satisfy him. He wanted to read the history of God in all the traces of the ancient religions. *Now* he is doing it, but in how far, far more perfect a way. Do you know my heart leaps for joy when I think of his joy in action now, though not a day passes that I do not feel I have lost in him my last, best friend. O yes, you will see him again. How can it be otherwise when he loved you so? It does me good to think of it.

You know I think the love between him and you is like the ark which passed through the river Jordan, without wetting a fringe,<sup>132</sup> sweeping back all the rushing waters of difficulties and of trials, and enabling them to pass through the dark flooded river on dry land to the beautiful country. O how much greater miracles there are now than then. How ridiculous and even stupid and even hateful are the miracles (so-called) of the Old Testament compared with the real miracles which God works now. Yes, we will meet next year either in this world or another.

Always overworked by work beyond me—that is the worst,  
but ever and always  
your old Flo

What is death but a laying down of the system of our physical relations here to resume it elsewhere? O what joy to some to lay them down and go to better errands by and bye,<sup>133</sup> what joy to him who has them already! but what joy to him to see you again. But oh, if I may say so, don't let any bitter feeling toward *others* come between you and him, who never had *any* bitter feelings. True love overcomes these things. *He* overcame.

F.N.

Address me in *London*.

---

132 An allusion to Josh 3:15-17.

133 A paraphrase from Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Method of Nature."

Source: From a letter to Eleanor Martin, Leicester Record Office DG6/D/226

6 June 1882

I have had a piteous letter from Mme Mohl, I cannot tell you how piteous. But she asks me to write to you to come “to look after” her. It appears to me from her letter that there is not a day to be lost, and I am sure if you were to see it that you would kindly set off for Paris with the least possible delay, provided indeed that you do not know more than I do.

But you will judge better than I. I will write again, but now, in terrible haste,

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Telegraph to me your address, please. I am not sure of it.

**Editor:** Two notes to Eleanor Martin send love to Mme Mohl, ask how she was after her journey and offer times for a visit.<sup>134</sup> Evidently Nightingale felt this had to be arranged through the young niece.

Source: From three letters to Eleanor Martin, Leicestershire Record Office DG6/D/229, 230 and 231

19 June 1882

*Burn.* She was so unspeakably pathetic, not in the least wandering, but she actually told me all her wanderings about M Mohl—that she saw him several times “quite distinctly” pass the glass door of her room (in Paris), that she reproached him for not remaining with her, that she actually wrote to him at the Institut, but, as I understood, did not send her letter, that she has not been able to help writing to know whether and where she could find him, but that she reasoned with herself and knew it was an “illusion,” viz., that she had seen him, that she had never fancied him *sitting with* her (I almost wished she had). (Oh, dear friend, I do “pray” for her. May God comfort her. I never wished so much that I could have said the right word.)

She has never wandered with me in the slightest degree about HIM either in her letters or in talk, but on the contrary been exceedingly perceptive and touching, more so indeed I thought than when he was in life here. (I thought her sadly altered in body.) She asked it is true the same question many times about some things, but many people do that.

---

<sup>134</sup> Notes 10 and 15 June 1882, Leicestershire Record Office DG6/D/227 and DG6/D/228.

There was little trace of her former brilliancy. She was sad and silent for *her*, but her talk was oh how far more interesting than ever.

I should like to hear of her from time to time, if you would be so good. I was so sorry not to be able to see you.

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

9 July 1882

*Burn.* Oh how grievous it is what you write about dear, dear Mme Mohl. I know not what to say, only to pray. But I ought to explain something in Mme Mohl's last letter to me which has been misunderstood.

She did not write to me, not *that last* letter, pressing to come to *England* "*at once*," but pressing that someone—mentioning particularly *you*—should come out to her at once, at Paris. And she gave reasons, which would have so alarmed a doctor or nurse, for her not being left alone a day longer, that I telegraphed and wrote, as you know. For she had never said anything of *that sort* to me before.

I do not think I said anything in my telegram or letter, did I? about her being in a hurry to come to England then. But I gave almost the exact words of her message to you, that she *must* be with *you* "*at once*." (Knowing how imperfect her memory is, I sent down to the Bonham Carters first, who are in constant intercourse with Ida, to know whether Ida might not be with her, or going to her, then, in which case should not have troubled you so emphatically.)

It is grievous indeed that she should be so restless in England, as you describe. I earnestly hope that this will not continue. If it does, it is because she has again her illusions that M Mohl is *there* at Paris, and that she ought to be with him. You would think it quite unsafe for her to be alone at Paris. I know how difficult it is to be there. And perhaps you have many, many other calls at home. But I venture to think that some one of her nieces should always be with her, or some lady friend, is it not so?

I WISH I could be with her; as you say it quietens her, and as she talks rationally and oh so pathetically with me, but alas! it is impossible.

I was aware that she had written through Ida to M Moritz Mohl to find *her* M Mohl. And she told me herself that she was subject to these illusions. Her strong mind must be helped by those who are with her to overcome them. She does try. If she is left alone, they will increase. If they were comforting instead of painful illusions it would not matter so much. It would not be so unlike the truth of God's love, and her husband's love. O may God be with her. I pray, I pray for her and for you.

Lea Hurst  
Cromford, Derby  
9 September 1882

Just before I left London a few days ago I had an unspeakably melancholy letter from Mme Mohl. She spoke a great deal about you, full of tenderness for you, wishing to have you like her child, and ended with asking me to tell you not to give her "lessons," but not as if it were your fault but hers that she could not take "lessons" from you, that it was as if she were your "mother." There was no incoherence in the letter. She spoke of M Mohl as dead and of her great loss and misery. She did not allude to her visit to England.

I answered her letter at once (I wrote without entering, of course, into the "lessons" question, and indeed only spoke of your love to her as far as my letter regarded these things and urged her to ask you to come to her). Afterwards my sister told me that Margaret was with her. Is this so?

But, whether it is so or not, I had so strong an impression all last night, viz., that, however almost impertinent it might seem to me, I ought to keep you "au courant" of what my friend of five and forty years says to me, however unreasonable, that I know you will forgive me, my very dear Eleanor. I often think with the greatest pain, could *I* not do something more for this friend of more than, I suppose, eighty years old? But it is impossible.

Dearest Eleanor, I do not know what she means by "giving her lessons." But I guess that it is this: if you could put the things that concern salvation and God and Christ, which you so truly feel and say to her, into words more familiar to her habits of thought. . . . you and I mean the same truths, but somehow she understands you less than she does me.

I venture to say this because I *know* we mean the same things. You truly knew M Mohl, knew him as I did to be a man more occupied with God than almost any man I ever knew. If I were to try to describe him, I should say, truly filled with the Spirit, the Spirit of God. What a thing that is to be able to say of any man! But his words, his manner of speech, were different from the usual phraseology of English orthodoxy. Those are the words which suit her now and one cannot wonder at it. Forgive me. I do feel so excessively anxious about her I think one can never know what might happen.

We have been exceedingly occupied with sending out nurses and orderlies to the war, under circumstances of great anxiety. Pray for



them, pray, pray. I have been very ill since I came here, which I only mention that you may excuse this scrawl, which, I address to Worms-tall, though I know you are not there, as I did my last. God bless you.

ever yours anxiously

F. Nightingale

Source: Draft letter to an unknown recipient, last part not in Nightingale's hand, Woodward Biomedical Library A.60

3 March 1886

And to you who knew her, how she had never a breath or half a breath of “posing” or of “edifying” in her presentation of herself, not even where it would have been almost desirable, such like words when they came are pregnant—they meant what they said.

For the same reason, no one ever had such influence in forming others' characters as Mme Mohl, except M Mohl, because her influence came from what she was and there was not a point that was hollow in her whole conformation. Mother Mohl was always undressed, naked in full view. A little clothing would have been decent. She was always “au naturel,” but refinement. Both M and Mme so intangible, like spirits, you can't write their memoirs. Like great actors (they never acted) they leave nothing fixed behind, but they formed characters like Savonarola.<sup>135</sup>

Siege of Khartoum, 1884,<sup>136</sup> can alone be likened to Siege of Florence, 1530.<sup>137</sup> highest truth not pain but joy. Impossible to put the *highest* truth into memoirs of theirs, never painful, M Mohl, the greatest lover of truth. That is why he wrote so little—there was so much more to be known.

Did I tell you how much her stay in Venice interested her in the cause of Italian freedom? I suppose it must have been during this journey and that that part of the diary which she would have valued most is lost. She told me how refugees came and asked to be taken out of Venice on their carriage and they did help some to escape in this way. Her feeling about Italian freedom was without the critical caution of her other political views but they seemed to reappear in her admiration

---

135 Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98), Florentine friar, leader of the Florentine republic, martyr.

136 General Charles George Gordon (1833-85), died after the eleven-month siege of Khartoum, Sudan.

137 Francesco Ferrucci (1489-1530), died in the eleven-month siege of Florence, trying to resist Pope Clement VII and Charles V in reinstating the Medici.

of Cavour rather than Mazzini or Garibaldi, which she often expressed to me.

### Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland

**Editor:** Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland (c1808-95) was the wife of Nightingale's closest colleague, Dr John Sutherland, who became a dear friend herself (see Appendix A for a biographical sketch of her, for one of him see *Public Health Care* 6:674-76). Nightingale thought he was tyrannical to his wife. Mrs Sutherland, who had no children, gave much of her time to assisting Nightingale on practical matters, notably house hunting for her when she was living in short-term rentals.<sup>138</sup> By old age there are warm and tender exchanges between the two. Mrs Sutherland continued to visit Nightingale as a friend when Dr Sutherland had retired and was ill.

In 1858 Mrs Sutherland visited Nightingale at Great Malvern, earning the compliment, as Nightingale recounted to her sister: "I like Mrs S. the best of all my wives."<sup>139</sup> By the early 1860s letters from Mrs Sutherland to Nightingale were addressed variously to "Dearie," "Dearest" and "My darling."<sup>140</sup> By the 1880s they were to "My very dearest friend."<sup>141</sup> They are all signed with expressions of affection. Nightingale to Mrs Sutherland wrote "Dearest," "Dearest, kindest old friend" and "Dearest, ever dear friend."<sup>142</sup> By contrast (and propriety) all correspondence between Dr Sutherland and Nightingale remained formal: "Dear Dr Sutherland" and "Dear Miss Nightingale," signed with "ever yours faithfully" or "yours ever truly and faithfully." His letters, especially later in life, often report on his wife's health and situation, as Nightingale's to him include warm greetings for her.

Mrs Sutherland not only helped with house hunting, she became a trusted friend. When Nightingale thought she was dying she left instructions for her last days with Mrs Bracebridge, or Mrs Sutherland if Mrs Bracebridge died earlier (see p 536 above). Mrs Sutherland herself took up sanitary reform, working voluntarily in the Ladies' Sanitary Association. As wives often did, Mrs Sutherland wrote letters on

138 There are numerous letters on the practicalities in ADD Mss 45758 ff287-319.

139 Letter 14 August 1858, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8997/72.

140 Letters, ADD Mss 45758 ff287, 297, 300, 304 and 324.

141 ADD Mss 45758 f308.

142 Letters, ADD Mss 45758 ff289, 314 and 318.

behalf of her husband when he was ill.<sup>143</sup> There is correspondence also showing that Mrs Sutherland helped in the work by looking up information on medical matters.<sup>144</sup>

Nightingale passed on information about her to mutual friends, especially about her difficulties. To her Aunt Mai Smith she wrote: "You know that Dr Sutherland has resigned—I saw Mrs Sutherland the other day—always the same—so good and dear. But she has sadly aged—her nights with him are so disturbed."<sup>145</sup>

The correspondence evidently included gifts. A letter of Mrs Sutherland to Nightingale thanked her for her "letter and gifts, birds and delicious grapes." A letter shortly after reports Dr Sutherland improved, but talking of death, "resting in Jesus," and peace: "He likes to look at the engraving of the crucifixion you gave me, and which has always hung opposite our bed, and said how much more expressive their German words of the motto are than our English version." Mrs Sutherland described "how deeply and truly I feel all your love and kindnesses from the first hour we met until now. God bless you always and return all your loving thoughtfulnesses a thousandfold onto your own head, blessings in being blessed."<sup>146</sup>

Source: From a letter to Mrs Sutherland, ADD Mss 45758 ff314-15

Dearest, kindest old friend 14 November 1885

I have not been able to write, but it has not been weather for you to come into London. I am so sorry for your domestic troubles. Now I am going to ask a great favour: the little simple sanitary tracts, which I hear are exceedingly good, published by the Ladies' Sanitary Association in Berners Street, to which you used to belong—how should I get them? what ask for? which are the best?

What I want is sanitary tracts to send out to India to undergo a process of translation, revision and adaptation there, according to Lady Dufferin's<sup>147</sup> rather exacting request to me, as the basis of a sanitary

---

143 For example a letter 4 April 1885, ADD Mss 45758 ff308-311.

144 See a letter ca. 31 December 1864 regarding the Derby Infirmary, ADD Mss 45758 ff300-01.

145 Letter 30 July 1888, Private Collection of Hugh Small, copy Balliol College.

146 Letters 18 and 30 October 1887, ADD Mss 52427 ff99 and 101.

147 Lady Dufferin (1844-1936), wife of the viceroy; at Queen Victoria's urging she organized medical aid for Indian women; correspondence with her is in the second India volume.

catechism and simple sanitary class books and tracts for women and girls' schools. It is to be an adjunct to Lady Dufferin's scheme for providing "female medical aid for the women in India." It seemed to me (what she asks of me) so wild a scheme, considering the absolute difference between Eastern and Western female habits, and the immense difference between the habits and houses of different provinces of India that I took the opportunity I had of asking three men who happened to be in England, Dr Hewlett, Mr Hume<sup>148</sup> (returned to India), Manmohan Ghose<sup>149</sup> (of Calcutta). The last says that there are no ryots' girls' schools in Bengal, that the ryot women can't read, that native ladies lecturing to them would be of use (and he gave me the names of two educated native lady doctors, one of them a cousin of his own) who could teach and address ryots' women on sanitary subjects. For Christian women to address them he says would be of no use. Dr Hewlett says that one of the best sanitary books is written by a Punjab native—that Lady Dufferin could get good advice for her scheme in India what? and he told me some extraordinary habits of Bombay women which certainly no English ideas could reach. He also spoke of the extreme difference in different parts of India and commented on the same barrack plans being given for all parts. He also says Maratha<sup>150</sup> women *can* read.

Source: From a letter to Mrs Sutherland, Add Mss 45758 ff316-17

24 August 1886

I ought to have taken the blessed opportunity of your being here yesterday to give you the enclosed paper (which is by Lady Dufferin and she says is incomplete) for Dr Sutherland as the list of subjects for the proposed manual for the EUROPEAN girls' schools. (I was afraid of sending it by post on account of the delay and I was so dazed by the pleasure of seeing you and the fear of your being tired that I missed the opportunity of sending it by you.)

She, Lady Dufferin, wants the *best books* on *all these subjects* for the manual to be compiled from. I thought the Ladies' Sanitary Association books would furnish a great many. She says we in England must "add to this list of subjects" which is "*incomplete*." (If I can have this

148 Thomas Gillham Hewlett (1832-89), sanitary commissioner for Bombay; Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912), co-founder of the Indian National Congress.

149 Manmohan Ghose (1869-1924), Indian social reformer.

150 A Hindi-speaking people in central and southwest India.

list by tomorrow morning it will do. The thing is to give *time* to Dr Sutherland to look it over and recommend books and tracts, “including instruction” as to all these things, and return it to me.) I *must* send my packet by next Friday’s mail to Lady Dufferin.

God bless you and God help the work. With kind regards to Dr Sutherland,

ever yours

F. Nightingale

You did not stay after all yesterday to write. I am afraid you will have been so tired.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Mrs Sutherland, Add Mss 45758 f318

9 March 1887

Dearest ever dear friend

I am so grieved that you are so poorly and suffering. I reproach myself because they let you go away from my door without a cab, though I told them to call you a cab. That must have added to the overfatigue from which I fear you are suffering every day. How I wish that you could get away to Bath or somewhere with Miss Cowie, and rest completely for a time, as Dr Sutherland says you are suffering from “nervous exhaustion,” which is, I am sure, but too true.

May our almighty loving Father give you the rest you have so well earned, “for he giveth his beloved sleep.”<sup>151</sup> I think of our thirty years of friendship and thank God for having given me such a friend. How I wish we were nearer.

We have had a fright about Sir Harry, but thanks to a little common sense and Sir Andrew Clark he is now wonderfully better. How I wish you were. I pray God to give you His peace.

Do you know a little book called *Like Christ*?<sup>152</sup> May I send it you? God bless you again and again. With my kindest regards to Dr Sutherland, ever yours, dearest and kindest of friends,

gratefully and lovingly

your old

F.

---

151 Ps 127:2.

152 Probably Andrew Murray, *Like Christ: Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Conformity to the Son of God*, 1886.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Mrs Sutherland, ADD Mss 45758 f319

10 April 1887

Easter Day

Easter greetings, love and blessings from my whole heart deep down, to you. May *we* “rise again” this morning here with new life and new heart from the Lord and Giver of life—as *you*, I believe, do every morning. I so very much wish I knew how you are, dear friend. God forever bless you is the fervent prayer of

your ever loving and grateful old friend

poor F. Nightingale

How is Dr Sutherland? My kindest regards to him.

Source: From a letter to J.J. Frederick, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/88/2. Marked: ANSD 16/1 J.J.F.

Claydon House

Winslow, Bucks

15 January 1888

*Immediate re Dr Sutherland.* I was struck down last night almost by my sister, Lady Verney, telling me, as of a thing that of course I knew, that Dr Sutherland was dead!! And Sir Harry, on being questioned, said he was “sure” he had seen it “in the paper three weeks or a month ago.” Would you be so very kind as to telegraph to me as soon as you receive this: Nightingale, Steeple Claydon, Bucks, telling me the truth.

I cannot find it in my heart to ask Mrs Sutherland whether her husband is dead! my old friend! I was in constant, almost daily communication with her till 20 December, when I was obliged to leave London by medical orders for total rest. (I took it as far as I could at Pine Acre, was no better, and came on after three weeks here.) But Mrs Sutherland promised to write, and I have not heard from her. But the last accounts from her and from you were so good that I was not uneasy. And I have heard from so many of his friends since, Sir D. Galton, Sir R. Rawlinson, and others, who would have mentioned anything happening to Dr S., and did not. Anyhow, I am sure that you will be so kind as to telegraph to me immediately. Pray believe me, my dear Sir, in great anxiety.

**Editor:** Dr Sutherland died in fact some three years later.

Source: From a letter to J.J. Frederick, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) HI/ST/NC/91/15

22 July 1891

Would you kindly tell me the last hours of our dear friend [Dr Sutherland] and how Mrs Sutherland is—and how she bore it and anything about the funeral. This is of course, for myself alone—just as one of Mrs Sutherland's own letters would be.

**Editor:** A letter of Nightingale's to Henry Bonham Carter in 1892 included a note that "Dear old Mrs Sutherland was here the other day and in an agony gave me an account of two nurses from Bond St. she had had for Dr Sutherland's last illness, which made one's blood run cold."<sup>153</sup>

Source: From a letter to Mrs Sutherland, Woodward Biomedical Library, University of British Columbia A.72, typed copy Add Mss 45758 ff320-22

13 May 1893

Dearest ever dearest old friend

I was so glad to hear from you. So often I think of you and hope that you are happy, you who have so done your duties in love. And thank you for remembering your old friend's poor old birthday and your dear kind note. I am glad if you are able to go to your sister's and to Edinburgh.

You say you like to hear of our "family events." You know perhaps that Rosalind, Shore's elder daughter, married last June a man, Mr Nash,<sup>154</sup> who has everything to recommend him except money. They have taken a small house at 12/ a week to the east of the east of London, where they are enormously busy—workshops—visiting all sorts of trades—and writing about them. They travel all over Scotland, England and are now in Ireland on the same quest. They telegraphed to me from *Donegal* on my birthday. If Rosalind had but health! They were married at Embley.

Shore was very ill in June in London and quite unable to go to the marriage. He has never recovered that illness, though a great deal better, but he still has a trained nurse—and Sam, the elder boy, who is a doctor, still lives temporarily with them to take care of him medically. They are now at Embley till they can let the place. Shore's wife and

---

153 Letter 20 June 1892, Add Mss 47724 f90.

154 Vaughan Nash (1861-1932), later secretary to Liberal prime ministers Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and H.H. Asquith.

Barbara are, of course, included in “they.” They describe the place as being most beautiful. Lea Hurst continues let.

Arthur Clough was married the other day to a delightful person, Miss Freshfield, daughter of the Traveller.<sup>155</sup> I hope they have every prospect of happiness. His mother was delighted with the marriage. I have always seen a great deal of Arthur. But I have not seen him since his marriage engagement, for my doctor has strictly forbidden my seeing anybody I could help. For the last 4½ months (you kindly ask after me) I have been almost entirely confined to bed and sometimes hardly able to move. But I am better.

I saw Sir Harry Verney the other day. He is in his ninety-second year. But he came up to town like a young ’un. I am sure he enjoys life. His buoyancy is as great as ever. I venture to send you a report of what we did at Claydon last year. It is not a sinecure being at Claydon.

And now dearest, dearest old friend, thank you again and again for all you have ever done for me, and for our faithful friendship—never changeable—never forgotten.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Our sanitary and nursing affairs are *up* and *down*. Princess Christian’s<sup>156</sup> scheme for the registration of nurses is a great misfortune.

People call the decline of life a going *down* hill. But surely it is a going *UP* on the contrary. I had forgotten to mention sanitation in India. I think it *is* making progress, though slow. But it is such a large subject.

Chicago—at their request I have written a paper on Health-Nursing and Sick-Nursing,<sup>157</sup> but eyes and hands are failing me now. The Empress Frederick, full of cleverness, came to see me. She is very pathetic—such a great career manquée [lost]. The Shore Smiths have taken the name of Nightingale.

**Editor:** At Christmas 1894 Nightingale sent Mrs Sutherland a booklet called *At Evening Time*, inscribed “given by F.N. to Mrs Sutherland,

155 Arthur Hugh Clough (1859-1943), son, also a friend. Douglas W. Freshfield (1845-1934), mountaineer, secretary of the Geographical Society.

156 Helena Augusta Victoria (1846-1925), daughter of Queen Victoria, wife of Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, patron of the organization working for what Nightingale considered the premature registration of nurses.

157 In *Public Health Care* (6:203-19).



dear old friend, with best Christmas love.”<sup>158</sup> After her death in 1895 Nightingale wrote to a mutual friend: “Have you heard that good Mrs Sutherland is dead? Her sister was with her. She was buried on Tuesday. Her last illness was short.”<sup>159</sup> Nightingale sent flowers to the funeral and wrote a note: “She was the friend of God; She has crossed the dark river and is with her Lord. Who follows in her train?”<sup>160</sup>

## Julia Smith

**Editor:** Nightingale’s unmarried, youngest aunt, Julia Smith (1799-1883), was an independent and intelligent woman whom she admired. It is regrettable that there is almost no surviving correspondence with her, for there are references to letters written. There are also references in family letters to her excitable and nervous disposition, but what caused these troubles is not at all clear.

In 1840 Aunt Ju was upset by the state of health of Uncle Oc: “Ju cried bitterly about him yesterday, but she herself looks so shaken that I dare say she exaggerates to herself the danger.”<sup>161</sup> Nightingale warned that Aunt Ju and Beatrice Smith should not be left together after Aunt Mai left: “Perhaps Aunt Ju does not show the full extent of her nervousness to you, as she did to me at Waverley—and this without her and me ever having the shadow of a difference all that time.”<sup>162</sup> She also called her aunt “tempestuous,” “in a state of excitement” and even “violent excitement.”<sup>163</sup> Further on the “stormy” aunt: “You have no idea of the state in which Ju came here. She cannot stand under the tempest of her feelings—and no more can I. I told her the *truth* and she was very much hurt and I must go now to keep the peace.” Nightingale wanted to avoid the “vicinity of the stormy Ju” but did not see how it could be avoided.<sup>164</sup>

---

158 Typed note, ADD MSS 45758 f323.

159 Letter to Robert Rawlinson 19 September 1895, Boston University 1/11/141.

160 Note 17 September 1895, ADD MSS 45758 f326. The quotation is from Bishop Heber’s “The Son of God Goes Forth to War.”

161 Letter to Parthenope Nightingale [spring 1840], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/9.

162 Copy of a letter to Frances Nightingale [November 1844], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/64.

163 Letters to Frances Nightingale [1845] and Parthenope Nightingale [autumn 1844], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/110 and 56.

164 Letter to Frances Nightingale [1845], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/111.

Source: Letter to Julia Smith, in E.T. Cook, *Life of Florence Nightingale* 1:34 (ellipses in printed text)

20 June [1843]

A cold east wind, *forty-one* days of rain in the last month! as our newspaper informs us to prove that '43 is worse than any preceding year. *Du reste*, the world very pleasant—people looking up in the prospect of Peel's giving them free trade and all radical measures in the course of one or two years.<sup>165</sup>

Carlyle's new *Past and Present*, a beautiful book. There are bits about "work," which how I should like to read with you! "Blessed is he who has found his work: let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life purpose; he has found it and will follow it x x."<sup>166</sup>

Sir J. Graham<sup>167</sup> is going to be obliged to give up his Factories Education Bill for this year; O ye bigoted dissenters! but I am going to hold my tongue and not "meddle with politics," or "talk about things which I don't understand," for I tremble already in anticipation, and proceed at once to facts x x.

The two things we have done in London this year—the most striking things—are seeing Bouffée in Clermont, the blind painter (you have seen him, so I need not descant on his entire difference from anybody else, and going under Mr Bethune to Sir James South's at Kensington, where we were from 10 o'clock until 3 the next morning.<sup>168</sup> Mr Bethune is certainly the most good-natured man in ancient or modern history. You will fancy the first going out upon the lawn on that most beautiful of nights, with the immense fellow slung in his frame like a great steam engine, and working as easily, and the mountains of the moon striking out like bright points in the sky, and the little stars resolving themselves into double and even quadruple stars x x. Those dialogues of Galileo are so beautiful. Mr Bethune lent them us to read in the real old *first* edition.<sup>169</sup>

165 Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850), Conservative prime minister; he had opposed the repeal of the restrictive Corn Laws but finally reversed himself.

166 Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present*; chapter 11 is "Labour."

167 Sir James Graham (1792-1861), home secretary.

168 Sir James South (1785-1867), where he had an observatory.

169 Galileo's *Dialogo* [*Dialogues concerning the Two Chief World Systems*], 1632, defended the sun-centred, Copernican system against Aristotle's earth-centred view, supported by the Catholic Church. It resulted in his trial and conviction by the Inquisition.

Source: From a letter to Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/92

[autumn 1845]

Aunt Ju is not at Embley. I wish she were. She came over here the very morning I arrived in a state of violent excitement—was much hurt because I would not go with her directly—threatened me with all sorts of punishments, if I did not go to Combe when I left this place to see *her*, she said, not Shore, for Shore will be gone. I was obliged to let her write to Mama, and I do not know how it will end. Oh woman woman, how little you know the secret of your own power, when you do not see that repose is the most essential element of it, *that* divine repose, the very name of which gives us new life.

### Joanna Bonham Carter

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47721 ff4-5

25 April 1884

Thank you, thank you, my dear Harry, for your most kind and most touching letter about dear Aunt Joanna—about all which I so much wanted to know. Yes, indeed, it is a wrench when *she* goes who is the only one we have known as long as we have been at all.

But what a son you have been to her and how much better to have such a remembrance than to be able to forget. Indeed I do know that what Alice has gone through, in making such a faithful home of constant care, has broken her strength, but never her love, as you say. May God bless her and reserve still for her here a new and happy life when she is rested—she will have happy recollections. Hers has been a work which requires such great qualities.

My best love to Sibella,<sup>170</sup> please, who I hope has not been overtired with letter writing. I heard of her seven sons, very dear to their Grand-mama, at the funeral, from which Shore and Sam came here. Thank you again and again for your letter.

ever, my dear Harry, yours

F. Nightingale

I would not write till after the funeral was over.

Sir Harry was pronounced out of danger last night for the first time.

---

170 His wife, for correspondence with whom see p 871 below.

## Harriet Martineau

**Editor:** Letters to Martineau (1802-76) have already appeared in the midwifery and prostitution sections of this volume, and there is a biographical sketch in Appendix A. The range of letters here covers many subjects and shows the growing friendship between the two busy women. Selections were difficult to make, for the same letter might cover much substantive material (the more concentrated ones are dealt with in their theme areas; many others appear in later volumes).

Martineau made her network of influential friends available to Nightingale, who took advantage of it. Thus in 1863 she sent India material to Martineau to be passed on to Lady Elgin, wife of the governor general.<sup>171</sup> The two friends, despite substantial political differences and night-and-day religious differences, clearly felt strongly for each other, sympathized with the other's illnesses and losses by death. Martineau's (entirely unsolicited) reviews of *Notes on Nursing* were effusive in their praise.<sup>172</sup> Nightingale's references to the "second edition" (in the second letter below) are to the fuller "library" edition of *Notes on Nursing* (in the first nursing volume). The "third and cheaper edition," which Martineau called the "people's edition," is to *Notes on Nursing for the Labouring Classes* (in *Public Health Care*).

Letters to Martineau's niece and companion Maria are interspersed, for Nightingale sometimes wrote the niece, "Miss Martineau," to save the aunt, "Mrs Martineau," trouble.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff71-72

28 April 1860

I cannot tell you, and this is not a figure of speech, how much I felt at hearing how ill you were. I trust your life will yet be prolonged. It is indeed kind of you to remember me at such a time. It is the greatest pleasure I can have to learn that words of mine have enabled good nurses still farther to alleviate the suffering of sick or of dying beds. I thank you most cordially for your review. I believe it will have the widest influence in spreading a knowledge of these nursing truths. I had rather have been more criticized. It would have helped me more in the enlarged edition which is to come out. But I cannot but be glad of what you say.

yours ever affectionately and gratefully

Florence Nightingale

171 Letters 29 July and 25 November 1863, ADD Mss 45788 ff194 and 229.

172 "Miss Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing*," *Quarterly Review* 1, 107 (1860):392-422, and see footnote 175.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff79-82

18 June 1860

I cannot delay thanking you for your most kind note of this morning. Alas! my second edition had long since gone to press. But I think you will find that your advice has been carefully followed. I have incorporated nearly all the *notes* into the text, as advised in your *Quarterly*. I have carefully looked through the misprints, which I was aware were disgraceful in the first edition. Had I had your kind note before, I should however have employed someone to do this more carefully before me. There is some new matter in the second edition, which I shall venture to send you, when out. I am preparing a third and cheaper edition, by order for the (quite) people. If you have any kind criticisms or suggestions to make me for this, they will be (as always) thankfully received.

I want to write to you many things on the subject of your last letter. I have been so driven lately by an inquiry I am making (through the Colonial Office) into the causes of *aboriginal* decrease from scrofula and consumption, which are shown by the schools and hospitals<sup>173</sup> and about which also I want to consult you—that I have only time for this scrawl now.

I am so glad to hear, I cannot tell you, that you are less suffering. I fear there is every prospect of dear times and of bad times. Butcher's meat is likely to get destructively high in price. The young animals have done remarkably ill this year. Some of the ministers are looking forward with anxiety, which I fear is just. In haste, but I need not tell *you* this,

yours ever

F.N.

Source: Letter from Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff83-86

Ambleside

25 June 1860

Dear Miss Nightingale

We are heartily pleased to hear of your people's edition of the *Notes*. As Maria [her niece and companion] says, the "workies" are so much more persuadable than the gentry! For example, in contrast with the ladies, who are so entirely satisfied with their own skins, look

---

173 Nightingale's "Sanitary Statistics of Native Colonial Schools and Hospitals," not published until 1863, in *Public Health Care* (6:163-83).

at Billy Ewington, son of one of my cottage tenants! Maria gave a copy of the *Notes* to his mother and aunt (then nursing) and the lad read it, and at once pulled out the stuffing with which he had stopped up his chimney. The same credulity which makes them the prey of quacks makes them docile to us. At least, so we find it.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff91-96

29 July 1860

*Private.* I feel how ungrateful I must seem in not having answered your four last letters—and yet I was not ungrateful. I fully agree in all you say about lunatic nurses. But lunatic nurses have made a progress in *some* degree commensurate with our times in the last ten years (although *not nearly enough*) which hospital nurses have not made. I fully agree with all you say about cousin marriages. I believe if more facts could be collected like those of Dr Howe<sup>174</sup> (whom I well know), the fact is the degeneracy of their offspring might be proved beyond a doubt.

I thank you sincerely and warmly for what you are kind enough to say about my *Notes on Nursing*.<sup>175</sup> You do not know how, in the midst of much disappointment, such words cheer and strengthen us. The only possible merit of my little book is that there is not a word in it written for the sake of writing, but only forced out of one by much experience in human suffering.

I thank you very much for your words about Annie Clough,<sup>176</sup> the truth of which I fully feel. I have seen her, but feel the impossibility of preventing her from going back *for a time* to her school is insuperable.

I had hoped before this to have sent you the “Barrack Report.” But, although we have worked at it as hard as we possibly can, yet urgent matters (our Indian inquiry, etc.) have delayed the finishing of it which yet must absolutely be done before Parliament is up. I shall send you the very first complete copy. I think our Indian inquiry, when I can send it you, will interest you extremely. We are already in possession of more information than the India House could give us. My disappointment arises from the state of the War Office and from Sir James Graham’s report, which touches *no one* of the vital points. The vital points are:

174 Samuel Gridley Howe, *On the Causes of Idiocy*, 1858.

175 Harriet Martineau, “A Reverie after Reading Miss Nightingale’s *Notes on Nursing*,” *Fraser’s Magazine* 111 (June 1860):753-57.

176 On whom see p 782 below.

1. that it is a very slow office;
2. that it is not at all an efficient office;
3. that it is an enormously expensive office;
4. that every one of the branches can negative the secretary of state's intentions, and every one can negative the other.

The four remedies of (1) quickness, (2) efficiency, (3) economy in administration, (4) unity, are *not at all* touched upon in the report. The articles upon it in the *Times* have been disgraceful and are solely to be ascribed to Delane's desire to keep his *entrée* at Cambridge House.<sup>177</sup> The object of the *Times*, and of the report, is *not* efficiency, but that they may have a secretary of state in the House of Commons whom they may worry if anything goes wrong.

The real objects are:

1. to organize the W.O. under distinct departments, each under a head responsible to the secretary of state, but working the whole details of his department himself;

2. the head of each department to communicate directly with the secretary of state and the secretary of state with him;

3. the *ministry* system to be restricted simply to what is necessary: (1) to state contents of each paper, (2) head to take necessary steps on it, (3) secretary of state to decide as much of the business with the heads to be done personally as possible, (4) office thus to consist of a certain number of distinct departments, not of mere divisions, all working through each other, as at present. I am not at all without hopes that, through the secretary of state personally, much may be done. But I am bitterly disappointed that the country understands so little of the real defects of the War Office, that such a report as Sir J. Graham's and such articles as there have been upon it in the papers could pass. The country never could really have cared for the Crimean disaster, or at least could never have understood its real causes for such things to be.

I shall like to send you, if you will let me, the results of an inquiry into the aboriginal colonial schools, when they are all come in. I did not think I should have sent you my "second edition" without a word. But so things have been. With many thanks for your undeserved notice of it,

ever yours gratefully

F. Nightingale

---

177 John Thadeus Delane (1817-79), editor of the *Times*; the commander-in-chief of the army was the duke of Cambridge.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 f175

23 April 1863

It is a great relief that Lord de Grey is war minister.<sup>178</sup>

I cannot resist the pleasure of seeing “Maria” if I can find strength between 2 and 12 May. I keep your note and will write to her, if she will allow me, at one of the addresses indicated therein. A thousand thanks for all you have done for us. I keep my answers till I see “Maria.” I am such a miserable poor creature now that, to do any business at all I must forego every, the slightest, pleasure. If I cannot see her, this will be my reason, you well know.

ever yours

F.N.

Source: Letter to Maria Martineau, University of Birmingham HM700, with an envelope: wait for an answer

[printed line] 4 Cleveland Row

St James’ Palace

9 May 1863

My dear Madam

I have no claim to ask for a visit from you on the ground of having “anything particular to say.” But if you could spare me half an hour any time tomorrow (Sunday) between 10 and 5, please fix your own time—if you are good enough to give a short half hour to a poor invalid in bed.

ever yours gratefully

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 f186-87

[19 May 1863]

PRIVATE. I assure you that Annie Clough never said anything to me like tiresome meddling as to “Maria’s” health. *I* was struck by her look of singular soundness, bodily and mental, that perfect balance between body and mind (you know what I mean) which one scarcely ever sees now—the “spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind.”<sup>179</sup>

178 Nightingale campaigned hard to get the appointment, Sidney Herbert’s choice of a successor; Martineau assisted.

179 A paraphrase of 2 Tim 1:7.



Source: Letter to Maria Martineau, University of Birmingham HM702

Hampstead, N.W.  
23 September 1863

My dear Miss Martineau

I cannot tell you how I was touched by your generous offer to come to me. But I cannot accept it. I could not bear to deprive you of an hour of your holiday, because your work for your aunt is just as much work done for me. I have never divided myself from the whole in these things—and to take away a particle of your strength in doing my work would be just as much to subtract from my work as it is to do without you. You will not believe this, but *I* should not have a happy moment.

Your offer is so noble that I feel compelled to answer it sincerely. While I am at Hampstead, I keep my spare bed for an overworked London hospital “lady superintendent” or matron to give her a mouthful of fresh air and quiet. And one of the most trying parts (to me) of an invalid state, such as mine, is that more than half an hour a day of my dearest friend ensures me a week’s fever and inability to work, and nights of nervous horror, which make the days useless.

With you I could see in a moment that you would not make the mistakes (with an invalid trying to work) that all my kind friends have done. But *I* could never get over the feeling that I was endangering your health.

ever yours gratefully

F. Nightingale

I was really *shocked* with the *Saturday Review* of *last* Saturday. Could you tell me when Mrs Martineau’s next *Daily News* article appears? I have the third thanks to you.

Source: From a letter to Maria Martineau, University of Birmingham HM703

27 October 1863

1. I am very glad you are back again.

2. I self-complacently affirm that I saw the enclosed article and thought it *VERY* good and a “clincher” of the series. Indeed for the present the enemy seems routed.

3. I sent yesterday a *Scotsman* with a report of my papers on colonial school statistics, etc., as Mrs Martineau was so good as to take the trouble to read them in the English papers. (It may be torn up.) And today I send my India paper, as reported, which I must trouble you to return please.

It is inconceivable the passive resistance there is to launching our (India) home working commission, and also the presidency ones. I

have a long story to tell, which I hope will interest you when I have strength to tell it. I wish Lord Stanley were a better champion. We are still struggling about the instructions.

I have been nine years in the *W.O.* this very week, in which I started for the Crimea in 1854, and I have still something to learn every day of the invincible strength of inertia.

I consider that you and your noble offer had so much to do with giving me courage to write my India paper that I hope you will consider it pretty fair. But it is not fairly reported.

It is a great relief to hear that Mrs Martineau is not worse.

Source: Letter to Maria Martineau, University of Birmingham HM704

14 December 1863

I have not written but I have not the less thought of you and of her in the great shock of Lord Elgin's loss.<sup>180</sup> From two of his sisters I hear that they know nothing more than we do. I know what the shock must have been and the grief to our dear friend. I know it myself. There is none greater. I do not admit that any grief is inconsolable where merely personal feelings are concerned—the craving after a personal presence. But where plans are interrupted, plans for eternal good of others, and interrupted, as far as we can see, forever, *that is grief*, that is without comfort. I have felt this.

The brother, General Bruce,<sup>181</sup> whom I knew, was a noble fellow.

I have been and am exceedingly overwhelmed with business (for I have never this autumn rallied my strength as before, and the returning here quite knocked me down). I was in constant communication with Sir John Lawrence the ten days before his departure—he is never too busy for business and is too great a man to be hurried. I had the great joy of receiving his commands to do what I had almost lost the hope of our being allowed to do, viz., prepare a scheme for the sanitary work to be done in India by the presidency commissions to be created by him.

Sir C. Wood has finally refused to give instructions to the “home” commission. But Sir John Lawrence has virtually given us the same thing to do as if we had received these.

180 The sudden death by heart attack of James Bruce (1811-63), 8th earl of Elgin, only appointed viceroy of India in 1861.

181 Robert Bruce (1813-62), brother of the 8th earl of Elgin, served as “governor” for the prince of Wales.

The most savage attacks are pouring in upon us from the India military authorities—Colonel Norman, etc., Sir C. Wood will not show them, not even to Lord Stanley, our chairman, who went at my request to claim them. How wise he is in his generation, Sir C. Wood. Because now *he* can say he believes them. And we can't contradict them.

However, the best thing is going to happen. A defence from the India military authorities is to be laid before the House of Commons in February which is to blow us all into atoms. And Lord Stanley will have “to rise in his place” to support his own position. I mean to write about this to you if I knew that *she* were a little better and if I were a little better. We shall have a tough fight of it here. But Sir John Lawrence is our stag. He says our report is far *below* the mark.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff233-34

9 February 1864

I do not write to even ask you to tell anyone to give me news but only to say (what I cannot say) how what I heard only last night of the danger of your dear one filled me almost with terror at the thought of your anxiety. I do not know in what that danger consists. I scarcely know whether sympathy with you, or dread of the cutting short of that most valuable, young life absorbs me most. I trust you have good help for you both. I scarcely ever remember being so much impressed by any character as with hers on so short an acquaintance.

ever yours in sorrow but with hope

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff235-38

12 February 1864

I cannot say how deeply obliged to you I am for writing to me and for making Miss Arnold<sup>182</sup> write. I can hardly think enough of the effort, or bear to think of it, it must cost you. I have hope. She has strong will to live, a good constitution and a great spirit. Bed, warmth, complete rest and, as she can breathe but little air, to have that little *good*. These are the essentials upon which life must win through the struggle, if at all. And all these she has. It is quite astonishing how little breathing lung-room the human being can live with, till the disease begins to

---

182 Probably Mary Augusta Arnold, niece of Matthew Arnold, later a writer under her married name, Mrs Humphry Ward (see p 820 below).

subside, provided no other effort whatever is required from the vital powers. That she continues to live is in itself hope for recovery. Within the last few weeks I have had a case quite near me very similar to, but which appeared to all more hopeless than your dear one's, and which is now steadily recovering. I speak ignorantly, at such a distance. But head symptoms may be quite accounted for from the condition of the lungs. I will not believe there is not hope. Twice, when I saw her, she spoke of her life with you as being a "privilege." When I said, Yes, I *do* think it *is* a privilege, I thought her face was like the face of an angel. You know her quiet concentrated manner of earnest truth—who so well? when she says these things.

I believe what you say that you think least of the personal loss to yourself—the time being so short. I remember, when Sidney Herbert died, though I looked upon it then, and do still, after two years and a half are over, every day, like a dreadful ghost lurking, which I dared not think of, though I could speak of it. I never felt the personal craving after his personal presence at all bitterly—my life will be so short, what does it signify?—but of the plans for reform of the army cut short forever—of me left to do office work, hard enough with him, impossible without him. As he said himself, in his last words, Poor Florence, our work unfinished. You must allow your friends to feel the same for you—a dread lest your valuable work for our country, for mankind, should be cut short, should be made more difficult. But it is not come to that. And I do believe, and I do hope, that it will come, not to that, but to a better end. I will not write more. Very likely you may not care to read this. I am always yours, I cannot say how much,

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff239-41

16 February 1864

Your news fills me with gratitude and trembling hope. Her longing for air, for *wind*, is nature's own inspiration. Provided the body is kept warm with hot bottles or such other things as are most suitable, it is the real medicine for her state. Mr Paget and she are of the same opinion. Let the patient lie in the *wind*, he says. Even the French physicians, the slowest to accept this, are coming round to it. A series of French articles have been lately published, saying, for typhoid fever, there is nothing for it but to let the patient lie with the fresh air *blowing round him* all night and day. Stimulants and warmth too—but she can take stimulants. In her case, may truly be said, while there is life,

there is hope. Nursing is of prime importance but that she has. Give your patient nothing to do for herself but to breathe and there is hope.

I dare say you know more than I about Lady Elgin. Lady Augusta (I cannot bear to call her by her new name<sup>183</sup>) called on my sister on Saturday to leave this message for me (she goes out now as little as possible): “I know how she will have grieved with us and felt the loss of another of those whose heart and mind were devoted to those causes to which she gives her life. It is a great mystery, but to *him* even in those moments of acute suffering all seemed clear and bright.” Mr Cumming Bruce, who is one of my brother-in-law’s oldest friends, writes to him to say that he and “Elma will be in town (today) to meet Lady Elgin.”<sup>184</sup> He says that “she (Elma) has little heart for anything else” that “she is to hear and tell her all the sad details of both their losses. Poor little Charlie. She (Elma) has seen no one yet but the nearest relatives.” My brother-in-law is to see Mr Cumming Bruce by his own desire. We shall hear more. Lady Elgin’s unselfish fortitude is something wonderful. You probably hear more than I do. But I write it because I have no heart to write to you about anything but these two dear ones. (I do not know Lady Elgin. Nor did I know *him*.)

ever yours in hope

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/14

18 February 1864

If Sir Harry has seen Mr Cumming Bruce, or if you see Lady Augusta, pray tell me anything about Lady Elgin, how she bore the meeting. She too has been so kind about Harriet Martineau that she will perhaps be glad to hear that Maria Martineau, who she knows has typhoid fever, after alternations of hope and fear, which made even my heart sick at such a distance, seems to have “taken the turn toward recovering.” But she is still as ill as she can well live.

---

183 Lady Augusta Bruce (1822-76), Stanley on her marriage, on whom see p 815 below.

184 Lady Elma Bruce, daughter of the 8th earl of Elgin. The Lady Elgin at this time would have been the wife of the 9th earl of Elgin; Nightingale knew the widow (second wife) of the 7th earl in Paris.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff242-47

18 February 1864

I do hope and rejoice, though with trembling, that she may be yet restored to you and to us all. Bless you for writing to me, though I am afraid it has cost you much. I shall not expect to hear again from you, though perhaps Miss Arnold will be so good as to write from time to time. Few have been the friendships I have known—fewer the marriages which appeared to me worth much. And of these few I have seen many cut short by death. Unless the union of two together makes their work better for mankind, I cannot call it worth the tie. (I suppose I am getting dour from old age—you know bad wine does get sour—while good wine gets better by age). It may be pleasant to see, but not more pleasant than to see two kittens playing together, much the same, I think, in worth. I always thought your union with her, fructifying for mankind, one of the noblest I had ever heard of; I am sure her sympathy with you was. This is why I felt a kind of sick terror at its being untimely cut short. I think you could scarcely have felt more yourself. I do thankfully hope now that there is good prospect for both. Of course, a convalescence, even when it can be called convalescence, from such an illness, is a very anxious thing. But she has every chance—good air and good care.

I am sometimes afraid that you yourself will feel the effect of intense anxiety more than you know of. You complain of irregular or imperfect circulation in the brain. Do you know the “dodges” of heat and cold applied to the back of the neck and sides of the throat? I am so afraid of ignorantly suggesting experiments, that I will only give some illustrations. If the *head is HOT*, and one *side of the throat* is as COLD as marble out of doors (to the touch—the patient is generally unaware of it—on the contrary complains of feverishness) the cold extending often down to the elbow, and like marble—the thoughts are sure to be overactive, and yet confused—often troubled with scruples of imaginary wrong done to others. This is what I constantly suffer from. Heat applied to the back of the neck and sides of my throat at night always is useful. A small India rubber bottle filled with hot water, and laid behind the back of the neck, is useful.

I am afraid to recommend this, without daily experienced advice, because it weakens the blood vessels and prevents them from properly acting afterwards. My hands are always so hot that if I hold them round my throat, that will do. Hot flannels will do. Then one does not like to keep a person up at night. If the pit of the stomach and bowels

are cold to the touch, without the patient being aware of it, that is a sure sign that hot fomentations (or hot dry flannels) or even hot hands applied there, will relieve the head. But hot fomentations, too often repeated, may be dangerous without experience. Dry heat is not. You may almost always procure sleep to a sleepless patient by some of these means, where imperfect, or rather too great supply of blood to the brain is the cause of the sleeplessness, from the heart not doing its duty properly. The contrary indications show that cold is required to the back of the neck.

I suppose everybody is familiar with the relief that is given by eau de cologne in other spirit, or simply a wet rag (if the patient is not allowed to get elsewhere damp), applied to the back of the neck, far more than when applied to the temples. I would never recommend *ice*, unless an experienced person were there to watch the effect—although the effect is marvellous. I am told that Dr Chapman has written a very clever, though offensive, book on this subject.<sup>185</sup> I have not read it. I have had neither time nor strength. I wish I had. I only give you the result of my own nursing experience.

ever yours gratefully and hopefully

F. Nightingale

Source: From an incomplete letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff248-50

[ca. March 1864]

My brother-in-law, Sir Harry Verney, sees Lady Elma, who is an old friend, when he calls, but not Lady Elgin, whom he does not know. Lady Elma describes *her* as gently sorrowful, much wrapt up in the little girl. (You know they are at Mrs Bruce's house; it seems a forlorn thing, instead of entering at once on home duties, to be living in another person's house) not very strong. Lady Elma is very fond of her. They are very poor; Lord Elgin having spent much in Canada and India and not yet having had time to save. My brother-in-law has been consulting Lord Stanley with a view to bringing forward a pension. Lord Stanley thinks £500 a year. I question whether Lord Elgin's character would not stand higher by asking for nothing. £500 a year does not seem worth asking the House of Commons for. Lady Elma said that Lady Elgin had written twice to you, so that I have no doubt you

---

185 John Chapman, editor of the *Westminster Review* and also a doctor, published numerous books on medicine; this might be his *Functional Diseases of the Stomach*, 1864.

know more than I do. I think *his* sisters are comforts to her. The queen had been to see her. When General Bruce died, the prince of Wales was almost *too* much for Mrs Bruce in his attentions to her. They were obliged to tell him to go away.

General Bruce wrote to me when he accepted the governorship, that he was overcome with the responsibility. He gave up everything he cared for to fulfill it, but that, as a soldier, he could not decline the post of danger. And oh! it was so true. It killed him. He *was* a good soldier. I sent this letter to his widow.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 f250

[ca. March 1864]

Believe that there is no one in this world who thinks of your great trial, and feels how insupportable it is, as I do. I think of you day and night. Would I could bear a part of it for you!

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff251-52

7 March 1864

I feel so much your wish to be alone, I have not written. What can one say? Those two lines always run in my head. No man bears sorrow better: Portia's dead—O insupportable and touching grief!<sup>186</sup> as words will when the brain is worn out with pain of mind and body and cannot make words of its own. I have a number of letters of hers—the last on 20 January—how little I thought then she would go before us. I put up a book of mine for her as soon as it came out; then moving here, although it is literally but a stone's throw, when I was more than usually busy and more than usually ill caused it to be laid away and forgotten. The next thing I heard was that she was ill. I have long hesitated whether it would give you more pain or pleasure to have her book. I think, even if you should never cut a page, you will like to have it, to see what was the impression she produced on one who never saw her but once. If I am mistaken, forgive me.

yours ever in sorrow

F.N.

---

186 A reference to the death of Portia in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Act 4, scene 3.



Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff280-83

12 February 1865

*Private.* I am sure the same goodness which makes you write to me makes you know that it is almost the greatest pleasure I have. I am thankful the cold agrees with you. I cannot wonder at your feeling your great irreparable loss more every day. There is no real loss, the grief of which time does not make deeper and more intense. There is generally much truth in common sayings, but I do not see that there is any in the common saying of “the great healer, time,” “time will be its cure,” etc., unless it means death.

I am like the washerwoman who said, heaven would be to have one hour in the day when there was nothing to do. We are so busy at this time of the year. I have had to see Lord Stanley and Mr Massey, who is going out to India by the mail of the twenty-sixth. Sir John Lawrence holds on his way like a hero (what would Homer have been if he had had such heroes as the Lawrences to sing?) but what a difficult course it is! It is not, as Englishmen fancy it, a despotic government, but it is a number of little despotic governments which, their despots once named, are all but independent of the head government. Mr Massey goes out, full of will to do good and he will do good, but sublimely unconscious of this.

I have also had to see Mr Villiers<sup>187</sup> and, by Mr Villiers’ desire, Mr Farnall, to confer about introducing trained nursing into London workhouse infirmaries. They are much more frightened at the death from the Holborn Union than they “let on.” I was so much obliged to that poor man for dying. The man was lost for want of cleanliness. (Mr Villiers says he shall never hear the last of it in the House of Commons.) It was difficult to me to recognize the earnest Corn Law repealer in a man who, as far as I saw, felt merely as if he were rehearsing a speech for an angry debate in the House.

I have the most enormous order for nurses for India from Sir John Lawrence, of which a trifling item is sixty-six midwifery nurses, 112 assistant midwifery nurses, for the female regimental hospitals: matrons and nurses for military general hospitals, of which ten are named. Then there will in all probability be these London workhouse infirmaries to nurse. We are training eighteen nurses for Manchester, and cannot find one poor superintendent for Manchester. We are at our wits’ ends. To

---

187 Charles Pelham Villiers, president of the Poor Law Board; H.B. Farnall was a Poor Law inspector.

me it seems, the more chatter and din about “woman’s mission,” the less are efficient women to be found anywhere. It makes me mad to hear the cant about unemployed women. If women are unemployed, it is because they won’t work. We can secure the highest salaries for women that are given to women at all (queens and actresses excepted). The women for matrons we can’t find. If you can help us, I know you will. At the same time I know you will consider this letter as private.

(There was a most pressing invitation to me to go to India to do the thing myself. Nothing in the whole world should I have liked so much. If there had been a reasonable prospect of my living through the voyage and for six months after, I would have gone.) I fail much. I never leave my bed, except to see my masters. My face is so swelled, especially when I make any such exertion that I suppose this is what is meant by my “looking well.” But it is a “grâce d’état” to get through these interviews well, even if you have fever after them for a fortnight. My writing business is so continuous, and lately tries me so very much, that you will please say, my poverty and not my will consents, to my delay in answering yours.

The winter in London has been the darkest, longest, most foggy I have ever known.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff284-90

20 February 1865

I do think that an article from you, as you so kindly propose, *would* help us *very* much. The facts look so very small, and the possibilities, which are every day held out to us, are so enormously large. And these we have no right to lay before the public. It is not money we want; it is workers. The public would give us money; they won’t give us workers. Everybody is tarred with the same stick. There is the *Times*, congratulating itself on the thousands it has got subscribed this winter. But where are the workers? No, we don’t aspire, although they are needed by the hundred and the thousand, to sending out nurses by the hundred or the thousand. What we want to do is to send a small staff of trained nurses and a *trained training* matron, wherever we are asked, proper opportunities being guaranteed to us. But the material, especially for the latter (the matrons), does not come to us. We have twenty-three nurses in training now at St Thomas’—our largest number—eighteen is the largest number we can entirely support at St T.’s

but this is no difficulty at all: even at this moment some of our twenty-three are supported by others. We should never lack the money. Wherever people really want nurses, they will give the money to maintain them. (Of course, the training costs are paid by us for these.) But we want the workers. The only other limit is put, not by want of money, but by the undesirableness of having too large a proportion of nurses to patients. Under St Thomas' temporary diminution of beds, I think twenty-three probationers should not be exceeded.

But, by the goodness of King's College Hospital superintendent, we not only train midwifery but general probationers there now. We have ten for Manchester training there now. Of these, as of the midwifery probationers, the cost of *board* is willingly paid by those who send them. (For the sake of having more beds, it is proposed and seriously thought of, that we take on another hospital. But this again is private.) A higher calibre of woman is required for a training matron than for a midwifery nurse. I will not say a higher, but a finer and a larger sort of calibre. She, the training matron, must have some power of organization and of authority. Hitherto women of this stamp have never thought of learning the technical hospital detail, which it is quite necessary to know.

Now see our opportunities. Messrs Villiers and Farnall would gladly (I have seen them again) form schools of nursing in all the London workhouse infirmaries with our trained nurses as heads and pupil nurses from the larger union schools, i.e., the bigger girls (I think this plan most promising). India would take from us any number of trained matrons and nurses and pay highly. As it is ridiculous of us to think of sending them out by shiploads, the more reason why we should send out a high stamp of matrons and head nurses, as nuclei, to form *in* India a sort of "covenanted service" of nurses *for* India. I think I will send you (privately) a copy of a private paper I am preparing for Sir J. Lawrence. (I have got seven millions did I tell you? for barracks in India. Sir J. Lawrence says it must be ten millions. Mr Massey says it shall be ten millions. My dear, millions. How well it looks—six oughts after a seven. £7,000,000.

Like the man henpecked by his heiress wife, who used to retire to comfort himself with her banking book, I am married to the India Office, confound it. I retire to comfort myself with the look of my dear millions.)

I am afraid you will think I have given you no materials at all for the article you are so very good as to propose. But you see my difficulty. I shall be so glad if you see Lady Elgin.

One question of yours I have not answered. We have no superfluity of applications at all from any description or class of persons wishing to be trained. We can scarcely make up our number of the right sort. But not many of *any* sort apply to be trained. We never once have rejected one of the right sort for want of room. But really not many come of any sort, to be rejected. Yet they are not only maintained, trained, and paid wages, free of cost, but they have a certainty and a choice of well-paid places, when certificated—for we have always ten times as many situations offered as trained persons to fill them. Indeed I am sorry to say that nurses of ours have been made “superintendents” who were totally unfit for it, and whom we earnestly remonstrated with, as well as with their employers, to prevent their being made “superintendents,” but in vain, such is the lack of proper persons. This again, you will see is private.

ever yours gratefully  
F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff291-94

22 February 1865

I don't know whether you have seen the last reports of our training schools, not that they tell one anything. I am just as anxious about the training school of St John's House (which is at King's College Hospital) as about our own. St John's is a society which keeps its sisters and nurses, does not send them out, as we do—we are a mere training school. It is the only sensible society of the kind I know in the Anglican Church, because it unites cordially with a great secular institution, like King's College Hospital, instead of keeping aloof as Miss Sellon's and other societies do. (The Augustinians at Paris unite cordially with the great hospitals they nurse. The Sisters of Charity do not.) Yet Miss Jones, the lady superintendent of St John's House, is just as much at her wits' end to get “sisters” as we are. I don't understand it. When I was a girl, I would have given both my hands (only that would have made me useless) to have been received into a hospital on the terms in which her “sisters” are received. I am sure too that no one knows matrons as I do. Yet there are still only two, Miss Jones and Mrs Wardroper, to whom I would entrust the training of probationers.

I have seen enough of governesses to know that education is by no means a universal fanaticism in England. Why do gentlewomen who have to earn their bread never take to anything else? Between being a matron and a governess, I should have thought few would hesitate.

With regard to our workhouse nursing, I will just say that, if London boards of guardians were to get a scent that the Poor Law Board was colloquing with Miss Nightingale to nurse their workhouses, it would upset the whole scheme. For, though the Poor Law Board has the power of forcing nurses upon the guardians, the guardians have a very unpleasant power of dismissing any officers of their own, who gives information they don't like. Indeed, part of the scheme I shall have to work myself with the guardians if at all, whose backs are always set up by the Poor Law Board. As for Sir J. Lawrence's scheme, I have no right to mention it at all.

ever yours gratefully

F.N.

This is the longest, darkest, foggiest winter I have ever known in London. The Eskimos have four months' darkness. So have we.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff297-300

13 August 1865

*Private.* I have been so very sorry not to be able to write a word of thanks to you for your note, of sympathy for your anxiety, of inquiry. I was indeed afraid that she was much worse. She will be sorry to hear of poor Hilary's sufferings.<sup>188</sup>

I believe the best hope is that they will soon be over. Now, in consequence of opiates, she scarcely takes notice. But there is still wonderful strength of pulse. Suppuration threatens. If there were more constitution left to bear it, it might even now give her two or three years of comparative relief. It is a tragedy from first to last worse, to my mind, than a Cawnpore tragedy.

I would so gladly have written about India statistical matters, but I fear neither of us are able to bear it. I think I sent the return for Queen's troops (mortality) every year subsequent to those for which the royal commission could get returns. (This was not produced in time to be noticed in our reply to the India government.) They charged us with exaggeration. We now find that the average mortality for India for these last nine years 1856-64 (which, they say, prove exaggerations on our part) has been 42.9 per 1000, and for Bengal 51.1 per 1000. We know that, of late years, more men have been invalided and have returned, many to die at home instead of in India, since the mutiny. Adding these, we find that the army in India in these "model"

---

188 Nightingale's cousin, Hilary Bonham Carter was then dying of cancer.

years has lost 91 per 1000 (by deaths, invaliding and returned men) and in Bengal 107 per 1000 (by same causes). The total loss is thus *above* what was stated in the report of the royal commission.

So little is understood of the whole subject of statistics as applied to health purposes that, when the India despatch appeared, it was stated that the report of the royal commission was false and had been demolished by the India government. We felt assured that Sir J. Lawrence had no such object. But, as the opponents are always stronger than the supporters of good, we have been replying with all our might. Mr J.S. Mill's return to Parliament<sup>189</sup> is a great boon to us. What I am practically working at now is to get the presidents of sanitary commissions (in the three presidencies) made secretaries to government and ministers of public health—to be in short personally responsible as heads of the sanitary administration—and to have direct communication with government. Sir J. Lawrence helps us all he can. I do not write more, because I can't.

always yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 f302

6 September 1865

I just write one line to thank you for your kind letter and to say, what I cannot tell you how thankful I am to say, that Hilary was released this morning early. The end was quite easy, but the suffering has been cruel. Of course they will write to you. But in case they should not have time today, and remembering how you and I have been one in sorrows, I just write to say that all her suffering is over.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff303-07

2 May 1866

*Private.* One word. Your note gives the most convincing evidence against yourself, viz., that your work in life is not necessarily over forever. It may be a season of mere temporary mental exhaustion, such as is inevitably the lot of those who are suffering from both severe exertion and illness and grief. I do not say this to give you pleasure. I am afraid, if it is true, it is just the thing to give you pain. I am afraid that to live is with

---

189 J.S. Mill was elected in 1865 but was defeated in the 1868 election. He did not assist Nightingale with India work but supported her Poor Law reform; he introduced an amendment (unsuccessful) to give women the vote.

you little more than an effort and a suffering as with me. I cannot help thinking that a period of complete mental rest might restore for a time the mental power. I can hardly help hoping that it may be that you will once more enlighten public opinion and public feeling in England. Else, I am sure, the painfulness and the desolateness of a bereaved and infirm life is not what one could wish a friend, like you.

I saw the other day a letter from a man resigning work for the same reasons that you do. His own letter, poor man, was the best proof that the step must be taken at once and forever—quite the reverse of yours. I could not but say these few words, at the risk of displeasing you, though I am not able to write more today. Otherwise I should have put it off till I could write more. For I have so much I should like to tell you, if I could.

You will know that we have been rather in a fever lately, because ministers were hovering between “in” and “out.” On the whole, we are glad they stay “in.” The public health service is going to be reorganized in India. The reasons connected with the peculiar forms of Indian government—new to me but not to you who have gone so deeply into Indian government which Sir J. Lawrence gives me in two letters—are so curious that I think I shall copy them for you—sometime. Lord de Grey does better for Sir J. Lawrence in these respects than Sir C. Wood, though the latter was a statesman and Lord de Grey is not.

Next I should much like to tell you a long story about a bill which Mr Villiers promised us quite early in the year for a London uniform poor rate for the *sick* and consolidated hospitals under a central management. (This was before we got our earls and archbishops and MPs together to storm him in his den.) We shall not get our bill this session for Mr Villiers is afraid of losing the government one vote. We shall certainly get it in time. “In 1860, the consolations of the future never failed me for a moment and I find them now an equally secure resource.” Can you guess who wrote those words? They are in a note from Mr Gladstone, written the morning of his speech on the Franchise Bill. Could you have believed he was so much in earnest? I could not. Yet I knew him very well once. His speech (he was ill) impressed the House very much. “And e’en the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer.”<sup>190</sup> I have much to write in answer to yours—but not now. Please burn this.

ever yours living or dying

F. Nightingale

---

190 Macaulay, “Horatius at the Bridge” lines 508-09, in *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Harriet Martineau, ADD Mss 45788 ff316-17

February 1871

I was so thankful to have your letter, though so long ago. I write as soon as it is possible. O this year of desolation. The one gleam of comfort through it all was the rush of all English-speaking people, in all climates and in all longitudes—not the rich and comfortable but the whole mass of hardworking, honest, frugal, stupid people—who have contributed every penny they could so ill spare. Women have given the very shoes off their feet, the very suppers out of their children's mouths—not to those of their own creed—not to those of their own way of thinking at all—but to those who *suffered most* in this awful war. All, all have given—every man, woman and child above pauperism.

I have been so touched to receive from places I had never even heard of (but which it would take me a day to enumerate) from congregations who had seen my “name in a stray London newspaper—the only paper they had seen”—as helping in the relief of the war sufferers, sums collected by halfpence, with a long letter to say how they wished the money spent, from poor hardworking Negro congregations in different islands of the West Indies, poor congregations of all kinds, “Puritan” chapels in my own dear hills, national schools, factories, London dissenting congregations without a single rich member, London “ragged schools” who, having nothing to give, gave up their only feast in the year that the money might be sent to the orphans in the war “who want it more than we,” women's working parties, consisting of the wives of War Office clerks and the like, who have to keep up a good appearance on £120 or £150 a year and who keep no servant. (I have known one at least of these women<sup>191</sup> who, when I sent her game and wine, almost the only thing I could make her accept, cooked the game with her own hands for her poorer sick neighbours.)

On this war occasion they sent us quantities of valuable warm clothing for the war sufferers, and poorer women still gave their work and refused to be paid for it. They gave to the sick and the suffering of whom they know nothing but by hearsay—gave, knowing that they should receive nothing again—gave to replace in their ruined homes as far and as fast as possible the people of villages utterly laid waste—some of the most industrious in the world, whose tools, beasts, corn, kitchen pots and pans, the very floors and woodwork of their shat-

191 Archivist: Mrs Frederick.



tered houses, were all, all gone—gave to enable these poor people to return to their work, to their former lives, as quickly as possible.

Source: From a letter to Harriet Martineau, Add Mss 45788 ff318-21

Lea Hurst, Matlock  
20 September 1871

*Private.* I wrote the enclosed to you I am afraid to think how many months ago. I then wrote you a long letter on the present state of the War Office which I cannot lay my hands upon—you need not wish to have it. The absolute inefficiency and confusion of the War Office especially of the “control” astonishes even me who have been in it for seventeen years and who have watched its downward course amid tasks, disappointments and humiliations impossible to conceive by an outsider for the last five years. The mistakes of the control during these “autumn manoeuvres” are what no one but I could believe. I cannot retrace this wearing, tearing subject. Let me send you this unfinished scrap, merely to show how often you have been in my working thoughts. I hear a rather better account of you. Let me hope that it continues to be true.

I came here because I do not like, as long as it is possible, not to see my father and mother, by being in the same house with them. I was glad to be here this time because our good housekeeper, Mrs Watson, who, with her husband, the butler, and her son, a lame boy, now aged twenty-one, has lived with my father and mother, in a patriarchal sort of way, much above that number of years, has died here, after a few days’ illness—though she had been ailing for three years. How little I thought she would have gone before me! How I remember her tears and kisses of welcome, the first person who spied me fifteen years ago when I returned from the Crimea! She was sitting beside me here one Sunday last month. The next Sunday she was buried! Her loss to my parents is almost greater than they know themselves—the sovereigns are not strong enough to bear great changes. All the villages round turned out to see her coffin go by—my father’s carriage following with Aunt Julia and all the servants—besides of course, her own family. I used to think always of her as a real “mother in Israel.”<sup>192</sup> She had brought up half the girls in Hampshire and here as domestic servants. Three of my four maids I had from her. All of her

---

192 An allusion to Judges 5:7; “mother in Israel” is an expression Theodor Fliedner used of Nightingale herself.

bringing up were so unlike other people in their high principle and true feeling. Aunt Julia does a wonderful deal, and I hope is very happy. I believe (like you) she might do more at *less* cost to herself. This I think would be cruel to express.

Mme Mohl is gone back to Paris—he who has been in Germany too. He writes: “My opinion is more and more that these stupid governments (German) have missed a good and very rare opportunity of reforming the R. Catholic Church and getting rid of the Jesuits, the celibacy of priests and a cartload of fetishism x x and now there is all over Germany a devil’s kettle boiling of Prussian supremacy and impertinence—of anti-Prussian feeling in the south, in Hanover and Hesse—of Catholic quarrels—of discontent about excessive taxation for armies, and of fear of a new French war. Bismarck is stirring this infernal broth, corrupting or intimidating ministers; his underlings are very active in paying newspapers. They have abundant means from the French contributions and from the confiscated estates of the king of Hanover and the elector of Hesse.

The chance of Germany is in the antagonism of the south against Prussia. They may do one another much good, just as the English and Scotch have done much good one to the other—only the southern must defend themselves against being swallowed by this poor, methodical, rapacious, calculating and very labourious race in the north x x. Bismarck is a man of strong common sense, with no depth or delicacy of mind, not at all pedantic nor troubled with a conscience, not of Prussian essence (except that he is rapacious). He is like one of those barbaric kings one reads of, pleasant in conversation, easy in manner, no ‘faiseur de difficultés’ [maker of difficulties], an audacious and calculating gambler in state affairs and war.”

I have sent you some of M Mohl’s lucubrations—they are better worth sending than mine. Yet I think I have some to send you, especially about India. It seems unnatural to let so long a gap of intercourse intervene. I hope to be able not to let it again do so. (The crown princess came to see me in London and let me tell her a good deal of the “behind the scenes” of Prussian ambulance work. I do like her so very much—and twice as much now that she is really worn and ripened by genuine hard work and anxiety.) I must stop. If you are so good as to write to me, write to the old address in London, 35 South Street. In great press of business and illness but,

ever yours, dear friend

Florence Nightingale

We hear from my aunt Octavius Smith (at Ardtornish in Scotland). You know she *is* a “widow indeed.” Her health seems reviving in her care for others—and for the little “grand-bab”—though sometimes she says: “It is a hard matter to live.”

### Lady Elizabeth McNeill

**Editor:** Sir John McNeill was a close colleague of Nightingale’s from the Crimean War. Nightingale came to know the second Lady McNeill, née Elizabeth Wilson (d. 1868) immediately post-Crimea when she stayed at their Edinburgh residence, Granton House, en route to Balmoral Castle to meet with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. The McNeills were invited to visit the Nightingale parents at Embley.<sup>193</sup>

Nightingale became godmother to a McNeill granddaughter, Florence Stewart Macalister, who published a *Memoir of the Rt Hon Sir John McNeill, G.C.B. and of his Second Wife Elizabeth Wilson* in 1910. There is correspondence with Lady McNeill about the godchild in *Life and Family* (1:724). The last items, of condolences to Sir John McNeill on the death of his wife, and to another colleague for advising Nightingale of it, show great respect and fondness for Lady McNeill. Sir John McNeill married (a third time) to Lady Emma Augusta Campbell, daughter of the seventh duke of Argyll, but there is no correspondence with her.

Source: Letter, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU70

Birk Hall

7 October 1856

Dear Lady McNeill

Your great kindness in writing to me to remind me of your invitation encourages me in proposing myself to you, alone. My father has, I am sorry to say, turned tail and fled. He was cold in the Highlands, had a cold and went home. I shall be at Edinburgh, I believe on the 10th. And I would gladly come to you on the 11th for that day and Sunday, if it will be convenient to you and if I shall not be in your way. . . .

Would you give me one line to Barry’s Hotel to say whether it will be an inconvenience to you to receive me?

---

193 Letter of W.E. Nightingale 14 May [1859], Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU116.

I had an opportunity of telling the prince the whole story of the fresh meat and transport and was very glad to be able to do so. Believe me, dear Lady McNeill, in haste,  
yours very truly and gratefully  
Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Sir John McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU76

28 March 1857

I feel that I cannot do otherwise than accept your kind invitation to me to come down and hear your candid criticism—if it were only to save you the trouble of writing to me or coming up to London.

I think I could come Wednesday or Thursday, and shall only bring a maid. But I will write again to Lady McNeill to apprise her of the burden put upon her and the day. I only trust that she will not make it a burden, but will just treat me as a campaigner who have long been happiest to be put anywhere, and to let business always come first.

Source: From a letter to Lady McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU77

22 April 1857

My dear Lady McNeill

I cannot tell you how I enjoyed my stay with you. I think Granton House is the most poetic place I ever saw. And your kindness I never can forget. I have often thought that it was a compensation for our terrible failure that it brought us into communication with such people. As it was a compensation to our awful calamity that it brought out the endurance of our men.

Now however I write upon business, which is always in our mercantile thoughts. The commercial spirit of Great Britain is strong within me. Do you think you would make interest with Mr Steele<sup>194</sup> to let me have permission to take a photograph of his bust of Sir John McNeill? I am sorry the poor clay is gone.

N.B. I was delighted to be able to say, in answer to an application similar to that of Mr Steele to me yesterday, that I stood pledged to Sir John McNeill to dispose of my remains for the benefit of science only and to go down to posterity in a bottle (of spirits of wine) if I am curious enough. It is at once becoming and professional for me to have my portrait thus.

---

194 John Steele (1804-91), later Sir, who also did a bust of Nightingale.

I hope that you will let us know when you come to London, if you do. Please give my kindest remembrances to Miss Ferooza, and also remember me to Miss Lizzie, if she is with you. And say to Mrs Gibb that she kindly provisioned my garrison so liberally that I have half of it left still. Believe me ever, dear Lady McNeill,  
most affectionately and gratefully your  
Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** A letter to Sir John McNeill sends “my love to Lady McNeill and Miss Ferooza who, I hope, is better.”<sup>195</sup> Nightingale was invited again by Lady McNeill to stay with them while strategizing with her husband,<sup>196</sup> but, as the next letter shows, she was unable to accept.

Source: From a letter to Lady McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU95

16 November 1857

I have so very much enjoyed receiving your very kind invitation, though I shall not have the pleasure of accepting it. I should have liked so much seeing Sir John McNeill so much better, and talking over with him, who always enlightens us more than all the commissioners put together, the new Army Regulations now to be framed.

Source: From a letter to Lady McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU103

22 April 1858

I must write a word myself to thank you for the photographs from Steele’s bust. The original I liked better than any portrait in marble I have ever seen, except Thorwaldsen’s Byron (which was a very inferior subject). But I never knew before what the Irishman meant when he said “the portrait was more like than the original,” till I saw the photographs.

I do not like the one with a nearly full face looking to the left. But the nearly full face with the light on it and the profile one are beautiful. I think they give even more of Sir John McNeill’s character than the bust—or perhaps some slight alteration may have been made in the mouth of the bust.

---

195 Letter 27 June 1857, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU86.

196 Letter to John McNeill 10 October 1857, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU93.

You may depend upon it that, that mouth would go through fire and water, the “baptism of fire,” for the right, and yet it has all the gentleness of the really great. Schiller (or somebody) has said that there is no real grace but in strength.

I think Steele may be very proud that he has made a work which will last.

I hope that you have quite recovered (I was so very sorry to hear you had been ill) and that Mrs Stewart is with you. Pray believe me,  
ever yours affectionately and gratefully

F. Nightingale

I heard of Lord Dunfermline’s death.<sup>197</sup> He will be much missed.

Source: From a letter to Lady McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU104

17 July 1858

My very dear Lady McNeill

I am always so glad to hear of you that I cannot help answering your letter myself. I am glad that you are not going to part with Mrs Stewart farther than Portsmouth.

Thank you very much for your congratulations on my sister’s marriage, which took place last month. She likes it, which is the main thing—and my father is very fond of Sir Harry Verney, which is the next best thing. He is old and rich, which is a disadvantage. He is active, has a will of his own and four children, ready-made, which is an advantage. Unmarried life, at least in our class, takes everything and gives nothing back to this poor earth. It runs no risk—it gives no pledge to life. So, on the whole, I think these reflections tend to approbation.

My father and mother, who are now in Derbyshire, have both been to see my sister in her new home in Buckinghamshire (Claydon) and were well pleased. But, if you know, as is very likely, the family of the first Lady Verney, you will not “faire part” to them of my observations. Admiral Hope<sup>198</sup> has been very kind to my sister.

I hope that you and Sir John are pretty strong. . . .

I conclude, from your dear kind note that you are going to stay at your beautiful Granton all the summer. I believe I am very little likely

197 James Abercromby (1776-1858), 1st Lord Dunfermline, much involved in Scottish political life.

198 Admiral (later Sir) James Hope (1808-81), brother of the first wife of Sir Harry Verney.

ever to get so far again. Else I know I need not say that to see you and Sir John again would be the dearest comfort and joy of my life.

Believe me, dear Lady McNeill,  
ever faithfully and gratefully yours  
F. Nightingale

**Editor:** A letter to Sir John McNeill from Malvern included greetings: “My kindest remembrances to Lady McNeill and Mrs Stewart.”<sup>199</sup> Another explained: “I hope I shall be able to see both you and Lady McNeill, if you are kind enough to let me choose my own time. But I am not able to see more than one person at a time, especially of those who interest me so much. And I am not able now to sit up at all.”<sup>200</sup> The last two letters relate to Lady McNeill’s death.

Source: From a letter to Sir John McNeill, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU/159 f159, typed copy Add Mss 45768 f22

Christmas Day 1868

Private. In memory of an old love, very deeply felt for dear Lady McNeill and for yourself, and of gratitude as deeply felt for great kindnesses received from her and from you during very difficult and trying portions of my life: I trust that you will not think I am breaking in like a stranger upon your grief if I try to tell you, however feebly, how much I feel personally, and far, far more for you, the intensity of the loss.

For she was one of a great and rare spirit tried in the fire, a fire which English ladies in general with their easy complaining lives so little know, and through which you and her great love for you carried her so cheerily. I have never thought of her since the year that I had first the blessing of knowing her, in 1856, without thinking how unlike she was to other people, the ignoble, useless ladies of fashion (of whom I see so much, not in my room, but from my windows), the people who have always a moral reason for doing what they like. Like herself to the last, she seems to have never had any other thought but of providing for others’ comfort, and of not being separated from you, at least on this earth.

I think the only comfort in thinking of such people is in thinking that the loss is irreparable. It is the test of a really great sorrow that every

---

199 Letter 7 January 1859, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU107.

200 Letter 19 March 1859, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU110.

day makes one feel it more and only more. Though it is seven years since I have lost Sidney Herbert, I feel more and more day by day what I have lost, as day by day teaches me that there is no one to take his place, no one to carry out his plans. But at least you have not the misery in your case as I have on seeing how his children's welfare is affected by his absence, how the army suffers by the "work unfinished" (his last words, "Poor Florence, our work unfinished"). And I, though I have lost A.H. Clough for seven years, can say the same thing of him, no one to take his place. I feel then that I can feel something of the great grief which otherwise would make it seem almost impertinent of me to approach you, did I not know something of what she was, how "worthy," as the good old scripture word says, a very present help in time of trouble,<sup>201</sup> and in time of joy. And of what she is (as I most firmly believe).

In your constant care and interest for the good of human beings, for which you can do so much, for which you have done so much, more than any man I know, in your love for those whom *she* has left you, you will find, I know, that which will carry you even through this sorrow without any weakening or corroding effect to your great powers. I do not like to dwell upon things which you know so much better than I do, lest that might seem like one intermeddling with your grief.

Source: From a letter to John Paget, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU160

26 December 1868

I cannot thank you sufficiently for having so kindly and fully given me particulars about an event which interests me so deeply, dear Lady McNeill's death, and about him whom we all love so much. He will feel the loss every day more and more while he lives. Perhaps it is the test of a real loss, that time which cures many woes, only makes us feel *that* more deeply—as we see how little there is to replace it. But his great devotion to the cause of humanity and his love of his (and her) daughter and grandchildren will carry him through it without loss of mental power.

She was a woman of a rare quality—tested by endurance and by chance and change which most stay-at-home English ladies never know.

I have been long in thanking you for your kind letter, except in my heart. For I have been oppressed by my business, which becomes more difficult to get through, as my health gets worse.

---

201 A paraphrase of Ps 46:1.



## Mary Jones

**Editor:** Correspondence with Mary Jones on midwifery has already appeared; correspondence about her death in *Theology* (3:217-23) and a letter in *European Travels* regarding Pastor Fliedner's death (7:586-87). Here are a few items from the ongoing friendship post King's College Hospital. Nightingale we know was disappointed with her friend's decision to leave her order and her dropping out of nursing. She responded to her requests for information as Jones pursued other goals. A letter to her sister called "Miss Yonge's school . . . the very weakest milk and water of high churchism, while Miss Jones (late of King's College) is the noble army of the high church. She is the only one who has ever carried out a useful organization: she is as much a general as Sir R. Napier."<sup>202</sup>

Source: From a letter to Mary Jones, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/70/3

5 February 1870

I have been so ill all the winter, and have had such difficulty in fulfilling the most pressing and indispensable business that I could not before answer your kind and welcome letter. But I think I am writing within "the month" that you gave me for the emigration and training-ship questions:

1. The "Chichester" Training Ship in the Thames was the one I spoke of. This has about 200 boys on board and trains for the Merchant Service and Royal Navy. Most of the boys on board are street "Arabs" who offered themselves of their own accord. (Of course they cannot take any but those who have the physical power to become sailors.) I believe the training ship to be remarkably well managed. This is the property of a private society called "Refugees for Homeless and Destitute Children," of which the office is at 8 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields and the Secretary is William Williams Esq. They are very poor and are always asking for subscriptions, though I believe they are good economists. Each boy or girl costs them about £15 a year. They have four other refuges where they bring up both boys and girls, both in the country and London, to trades, farm labour, service, etc. But you will see this is only a drop in the ocean. And even this is hindered, so far as apprenticing to trades is concerned, by the trades' unions.

---

202 Letter c1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/135.

2. My own belief is (and has long been) that emigration, and the emigration of children, is the only thing which holds out the least hope of touching the distress of London and of the great towns and of diminishing pauperism. But they must be educated in the colonies to which they are sent and not at home. It is found that the mere removal to another moral atmosphere is as good for them as a good ten years' education here. The whole problem resolves itself into devising proper homes, industrial homes and training schools for them in the colonies. (Old and miserable creature as I am, I think that any amount of leisure, if I had it, I would devote to furthering this. But I have it not.)

*Private.* Some years ago, a Cabinet minister told me in confidence Melbourne (Victoria) offered to organize and support any number of industrial homes for children of both sexes, if the government would send out children "before "they had become confirmed "in pauperized habits." Of such children there are between 100,000 and 150,000 ("street Arabs") in London alone, whatever their sins are, poor things, they are not sins of "pauperism" since they *can't* be caught and housed. But the government refused. (Within the last few days, I proposed some plan of this kind to the president of the Poor Law Board. But I know not whether he will take it up.)

My own opinion is that it will be left to private hands to do. Of these private hands the only one who has put her own hand to the plough is Miss Rye.<sup>203</sup> She may not be an agreeable person, but she has done what no one else as yet has. She has taken out 90,100 *little* girls "out of the gutter" with her to Niagara in Canada, kept them there in a home, then placed them out with Canadian poor families who *offered* to receive them, upon contracts containing all proper conditions (which I have seen), signed and witnessed by the local authorities—with all proper supervision secured by the ministers and mayors of the place.

Miss Rye is not yet come back. When she is, she will be the best authority for you to ask. But 30,000 children of each sex ought to be emigrated every year to make any impression on the distress of the country. The pauper union schools here are now, many of them, as good as they can be. And *they entirely fail in teaching their pauper children to maintain themselves* in afterlife. For this, are to blame (1) the pauper atmosphere, (2) the trades' unions. Music ("bandmen" in the army) is the only trade that succeeds.

---

203 Maria Susan Rye, on whom see p 816 below.

Miss Rye says that she can get more families in Canada than she wants to take the children and as much money in this country from private subscription as she wants to take them out. But then she is *only one*. And her success is mainly due (1) to her taking them out herself; (2) to the children not being ingrained paupers. (The R. Catholic “sisters” have entirely failed in their Irish workhouse girls at Quebec.)

Of other emigration agencies there are: (a) “Clerkenwell Emigration Club,” Rev A. Styleman Herring, 45 Colebrooke Row, City Road N. Part of his work is to send out a few little orphan girls to Brantford in W. Canada. A penny tract of his: “Emigration for poor Folks” (J.W. Partridge 9 Paternoster Row) is good; (b) “National Emigration League,” 120 Salisbury Square, Fleet Street E.C. A tract, called “State Emigration” by Edward Jenkins (Stanford 6 Charing Cross) issued by the “League” is worth reading. Their object is rather to help the unemployed workmen to emigrate and to press the matter on the government; (c) the British and Colonial Emigration Society” (15 Cockspur Street Charing Cross). Their object is to assist the unemployed to emigrate and to grant money (when they have it) to emigration clubs.

There are many more of these “societies” and “emigration clubs for workmen.” All are extremely in want of funds. With all honour to these noble unemployed workmen, who will pinch and save to help themselves out, and afterwards their families, to the colonies and whom I have always helped where I could—I do not conceive that to help these is the main want of our country. These are the men who would do well anywhere. If emigration is only practicable in this way, you may almost say that it is only practicable as far as it is unnecessary. It is the children who *can’t* help themselves—the young girls, not yet vicious, who *can’t* go abroad *virtuously* without chaperones—the hundreds of thousands of young recruits ever waiting to swell the tide of pauperism and vice—who might be happy and industrious and virtuous and good in a new country—who are almost predestined to sin and misery in the old—it is these who want our help. But then they want industrial training, as distinguished from reading and writing (though not without reading and writing) to make them do well in the colonies.

*Private.* To all the above-named societies I have been a contributor according to my means. But I have never recommended to any either children or emigrants, knowing how many of these poor things went to them of their own accords and how short were funds to help *these*. But if, dear friend, you should have a particular applicant for any of

these, I hope that you would let me contribute for you as far as I could.

*You* sympathize with the work of God as far as it can be done by whomsoever it is done. And I am sure that you will be glad to hear that it has pleased Him to prosper my little appeal (of “Una”) to the memory of my dear, dear, Agnes Jones of Liverpool, in bringing us a far higher class of candidates for nurses. We have occupied both Netley Military Hospital and the new (St Pancras’) Workhouse Infirmary very satisfactorily with our trained matrons and nurses (though I never praise anybody till they have been at least fifty years in charge).

The matron of the latter, especially, a Miss Torrance (a lady) I thank God for her every day of my life. She is, I think, worthy to be named in the Book of Life<sup>204</sup> with her who has been taken two years this month. (I cannot think of her even now without tears, which I have no time to shed.) But it is an anxious business, as you know—workhouse business—for the sick.

I have heard several times lately (for a wonder) from Miss Sellon. She is at Manchester!! organizing something there, but no better alas! I must stop. God bless you, dear friend. Pray for me. But I know you do.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Miss Rye’s address is always to be had, I believe, from a Mrs Fynes Webber (who has been a “weariness of the flesh”<sup>205</sup> to me).

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/161

Embley

Romsey

25 September 1872

And do you remember Miss Jones, late of King’s College Hospital, who kept our school so well for midwifery nurses for seven years? She is still at the head of the same sisterhood and they do district visiting in Pentonville and Knightsbridge, where they live and take in orphans and the like. She has just taken an old house in Kensington Sq. more because the two houses in Pentonville and Knightsbridge are too small for health and they require some place of convalescence for sick orphans and sick “sisters” than because they mean to undertake dis-

204 An allusion to Phil 4:3.

205 Eccl 12:12.

strict visiting in Kensington, which they never would do but at the incumbent's desire.

She has written to me about this and about how she should introduce herself to Archdeacon Sinclair. I cannot at all disguise from myself that she has become more ritualistic since she has left King's College Hospital nearly five years ago. There is but one thing that surprises me more than that she should have left them for such trifles and that is that they should have parted with her for such trifles. (I have never known a directress of nurses like her.) Still the reasons were not those alleged by the archbishop of Canterbury, who might easily have settled matters, had he chosen, or by Lord Harrowby. And it is one of the deepest regrets of my life that, overwhelmed with India and War Office business as I was during those years, I could not, by seeing her frequently, have averted these follies, as I believe was possible because she so reasonable.

If you kindly think it, would "do" for you to write a letter of introduction to Archdeacon Sinclair for them (her and her "sisters") I am sure that she would be deeply grateful to you. But I do not press this. There are some things which you may think will never "do." And I have not told her that I would ask you. I would forward anything to her. Or if you kindly wrote to herself, her address is: Miss Jones, 27 Percy Circus, Pentonville, London, W.C.

### **Lady Alicia Blackwood**

**Editor:** Lady Alicia Blackwood (1819-1913) was the wife of the Rev Dr J.S. Blackwood, a voluntary chaplain during the Crimean War. The correspondence here renews their friendship decades later on the publication of her book, *Narrative of Personal Experiences and Impressions during a Residence on the Bosphorus throughout the Crimean War*. The book recounts her first meeting Nightingale and volunteering to help wherever needed. Indeed the intrepid Lady Blackwood took on the care of "some two hundred poor women in the most abject misery" (40), wives and camp followers (see *Crimean War*).

Source: Letter, Medical Museum Collection, Leicester Royal Infirmary, copy  
Florence Nightingale Museum

[printed address] 10 South Street  
Park Lane, W.

28 December 1881

Dear Lady Alicia Blackwood

I was so glad to hear from you again—and first let me wish you every good and perfect gift<sup>206</sup> for this Christmastide and for many happy new years, happy in the highest sense of happiness—and to Dr Blackwood too—notwithstanding the sad, sad illness. I am sure that he still finds happiness and I pray that his sufferings may be not worthy to be named with his hopes and joys.

Thank you for the kind present of your book. I almost dread to open it. The recollections of that time (which was indeed “living”) are mixed up with so many who are now all gone before me. I have my Indian work still, and my nurse-training work, which is extending every year and which might extend a hundredfold more, since for every lady whom we have *trained and tried*, and can honestly recommend as superintendent for a hospital or workhouse infirmary, we have a dozen applications, and cannot supply trained staffs to half or a quarter of the institutions which apply to us. Will you pray for us that God will send us the sort of woman, especially the sort of *gentlewoman* for our work?

We have great waves of ebb and blow in our kind of work—never in the demand which is constant—but in the *supply*. Latterly we have had a better choice of *nurse* candidates than of *lady* candidates (for training for the superior posts in hospitals) though from the ladies we have more applications. I venture to send you a (yellow) memo of what we want. *Will you help us?* We are so blessed in our “home” sister (mistress of probationers). She carries every one of her charges on her heart before God. And she is witty, clever and a first-rate teacher. I try to have every one of our trained matrons to stay with me every year from distant towns, Edinburgh, Liverpool, etc., and to give an afternoon to each of our probationers to herself. Then there is the *district* nursing. Enclosed is a brief account.

My health is very bad (you kindly ask). And just at this time I am completely laid up.

Excuse pencil. May God rain blessing on you and Dr Blackwood is the fervent prayer of

yours affectionately ever

Florence Nightingale

---

206 An allusion to Jas 1:17.

Source: From a letter to Lady Alicia Blackwood, Medical Museum Collection, Leicester Royal Infirmary, copy Florence Nightingale Museum

31 January 1885

I *am* very hard driven but I cannot forego the desire which your kindness tempts me with of seeing you once more. Would 5 or 6 o'clock on *Monday* afternoon suit you? Or if not could you kindly mention some afternoon? I am so afraid of missing you.

God bless you ever.

ever yours most truly

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Lady Alicia Blackwood, Medical Museum Collection, Leicester Royal Infirmary

2 May 1897

Thank you for telling me about your dear sister. I do indeed grieve for your loss. Words are very poor. God comfort you. Thank you for *all* you say: "Reveal Thyself to us more and more." It is always well to remind us of that for "in knowledge of Him standeth our eternal life."<sup>207</sup> And to be reminded that nothing we can do "constitutes a claim to salvation," but I think my temptation lies rather the other way, always to be blaming myself, instead of looking up to Him.

A lady was quoting the text about "filthy rags"<sup>208</sup> before an old naval captain, a connection of ours, and he said "Yes, ma'am, but filthy rags may show which way the wind blows." You do not object to this do you?

Please excuse pencil and please don't think I took little interest in my *heart* in your sad news. But work presses constantly and heavily. Pray for me that it shall be all "begun, continued and ended in Him."

yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Indeed we need to be reminded that we must be "born again."<sup>209</sup> A friend of mine said: "we must be 'born again' every morning."

---

207 A paraphrase from the Collect for Peace, Book of Common Prayer.

208 An allusion to Isa 64:6.

209 An allusion to John 3:7.

Source: From a letter to Lady Alicia Blackwood, Medical Museum Collection, Leicester Royal Infirmary, copy Florence Nightingale Museum

20 February 1897

I began a letter to you (in what seems a long time ago) to thank you very much for your letter and for your kindness in sending me your book which I am sure will be of great use to many and I hope to me. But I am always under the pressure of severe work, and I not only never found time to finish my letter to you, but I have mislaid it and cannot now find it.

Thanks a thousand for your book. But the Lord has led me such a different way. And ought I not to be thankful that now in my seventy-seventh year and almost entirely a prisoner to my room from illness, I have still more work than ever—not only for our training of nurses but for India and elsewhere. Will you not pray for me—not only that I may “cast all the care for my salvation” upon Him,<sup>210</sup> but all the care for the “salvation” of the works He has entrusted to me, and do them, oh so much more, to Him alone.

Excuse pencil, excuse a brief and broken answer [page cut off] say about my dear sister, Lady Verney, who died nearly seven years ago, after a most painful eight years’ illness, borne with heroic patience and effort to be not idle—one could not wish her back. I was with her as much as I possibly could, without throwing up our work, but you [page cut off] She left it only a week before her death to return to Claydon where she died. Her husband, Sir Harry Verney, died there three years ago. He was ninety-two but active to the last.

F.N.

Yes, indeed, I do think how I have survived all my near relations—and more than that survived the two men, Sidney Herbert and Lord Stanley, who conducted the two royal commissions which have done all the good in the army, and the members, all the members of each. But “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons (and daughters) of God.”<sup>211</sup> And I look forward and say to *my* “earnest expectation,” “will He not send more,” both men and women, to carry on His work?

<sup>210</sup> A paraphrase of 1 Pet 5:7.

<sup>211</sup> Rom 8:19, with “and daughters” added.



## Other Older Friends

**Editor:** There is only one surviving letter with Mrs Fowler (in a nursing volume), a very old family friend who, with her husband, Dr Fowler, was supportive of Nightingale's nursing aspirations. The Fowlers took Nightingale to Ireland in 1852 (reported in *European Travels* 7: 708-15).

References to Fanny Allen (1781-1875) appear in correspondence, again a family contact and a positive one. Nightingale knew a number of members of the Allen family (one of whom married Charles Darwin). References to one sister, Mme Sismondi in Geneva, appear in *European Travels*. There is no direct correspondence surviving with any of them but "Fanny" Allen recorded her view of Nightingale, based on visits with the family:

A high mission has been given her, which has cost her her life to fulfill, and now when I look back on every time I saw her after her sixteenth year, I see that she was ripening constantly for her work, and that her mind was dwelling on the painful difference of man and man in this life, and the trap that a luxurious life laid for the affluent. A conversation on this subject between the father and daughter made me laugh at the time, the contrast was so striking, but now as I remember it, it was the divine spirit breathing in her.<sup>212</sup>

There is no correspondence available with Lady Coltman, whose son married a Nightingale cousin, Bertha, and who was a family friend Nightingale liked. Lady Coltman was a respectable woman with whom Nightingale could stay in London. She accompanied Nightingale to Scotland on her trip to Balmoral Castle after the Crimean War, when her father had a cold and begged off.<sup>213</sup>

References to the poet Caroline Clive and her clergyman husband, Archer Clive, have already appeared above. Nightingale knew Mrs Clive at least from 1846, for a letter to Hilary Bonham Carter the following year describes meeting "the Archer Clives" at the Bracebridges: "he is such a good husband," whom she liked "as much as we did her last year." Another letter a short time later reports a visit to the Clives.<sup>214</sup> A letter in 1862 jokingly demands: "Get me a letter from

---

212 Letter of Fanny Allen 15 April 1857, in Harriet Litchfield, ed., *Emma Darwin: A Century of Family Letters 1792-1896* 2:159-60.

213 Letter to W.E. Nightingale 9 October 1856, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8997/6.

214 Letters to Hilary Bonham Carter 9 June and 10 September 1847, ADD Mss 45794 ff123 and 128.

Mrs Clive to comfort me.”<sup>215</sup> Mrs Clive was one of the many friends to be sent *Notes on Nursing* on its publication.

Letters to Caroline Clive appear in *Crimean War*, comparing the contributions of Sidney Herbert and Sir George Lewis as war ministers, and in the first India volume, on Sir John Lawrence’s work. Another surviving letter gives congratulations on the birth of a granddaughter: “really good news. May all good attend her and you and her mama.” Mrs Clive even got an “ever yours overflowing.”<sup>216</sup> See also a handwritten letter on pp 523-24.

Nightingale naturally made friends on her European travels, and some of these women made a lasting impression on her. In Geneva in 1838 she met Caterina Ferrucci, a writer, education expert and ardent supporter of Italian independence. She managed to see the Ferrucci family again in Pisa a decade later on her next trip to Europe. See *European Travels* (7:32-33 and 94-95). She kept in touch by reading Mme Ferrucci’s account of her daughter, Rosa, who became a nun and died young, noted in *Spiritual Journey* (2:436).

While there are no surviving letters to the “madre,” Laure de Sainte Colombe (1806-86), of the Sacred Heart Convent in Rome, there is one from her (in *European Travels* 7:341-42). Nightingale spent much time at the convent, did a form of retreat there and arranged to pay for the schooling for five years for an orphan girl there. Certainly on her Nile trip two years later the madre’s words were still much on Nightingale’s mind.<sup>217</sup> Sainte Colombe was someone Nightingale could ask the serious questions of life, even to distinguish the voice of nature from the voice of God:

Oh, by finding out what I wanted, whether it was just to talk about myself, or to bring you to Him. I have never prayed with such fervour as for you. I would die to convert you. Well, after all, what’s that? Christ died for you, didn’t he? What’s one mortal life? . . . It is no good separating yourself from people to try and do the will of God. That is not the way to gain His blessing. What does it matter even if we are with people who make us desperate (che ci fanno disperar)? So long as we are doing God’s will, it doesn’t matter at all.<sup>218</sup>

215 Letter to Hilary Bonham Carter September 1862, Add Mss 45794 f200.

216 Letter 31 August 1864, Wellcome Ms 5482/60.

217 See *European Travels* (7:39), *Spiritual Journey* (2:367, 369, 371 and 552) and *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:408-09, 422 and 464).

218 From a missing notebook, I.B. O’Malley, *Florence Nightingale* 143.

The letter from Sainte Colombe, however, perhaps explains why the influence did not endure, for it shows the madre's firm belief in the power of medallions, fetishism in Nightingale's view.

On her Greek trip in 1850 Nightingale became friends with Frances Hill, an Episcopal missionary, who with her husband managed a school in Athens at which Nightingale often observed classes. Mrs Hill was an enormously powerful model for Nightingale, a devout woman, Protestant, a missionary, but tolerant and not out to entice believers to switch denominations. Mrs Hill is described in glowing terms in correspondence but there is no surviving correspondence with her. While in Athens Nightingale made friends also with several younger teachers at the school, whom she much described in correspondence of the time, but with whom she apparently did not keep in touch.

On the trip to Kaiserswerth from Athens, via Vienna and central Europe, Nightingale visited Protestant charitable establishments, two of them the creation of women philanthropists. There is no surviving correspondence with either of these two founders, Marianne von Rantau (1811-55) of Bethanien and Amelia Sieveking (1794-1859), both of whom died before Nightingale's post-Crimean career got underway.

Nightingale's connections with the Fliedner family lasted until her old age. After the death of the charismatic Pastor Theodor Fliedner in 1864, Nightingale kept in touch with and gave financial assistance to his widow, Caroline Fliedner, for the family as well as the institution (a letter to her appears in *Crimean War*). Nightingale knew the daughters as well. Correspondence with Luise Fliedner Disselhoff is reported in *European Travels* (7:585). Nightingale's brief notes on the day's happenings at Kaiserswerth show how much she enjoyed the company of the other deaconesses. Birthday parties, tea parties, excursions on the Rhine, singing, are all reported as enormously enjoyable. Nightingale continued through old age to fund raises for the deaconesses and give them assistance in various ways. A letter she wrote to raise funds for their work in Syria is in the illustrations in this volume.

## CONTEMPORARY WOMEN FRIENDS

---

### (Mary) Elizabeth Herbert

Nightingale met Elizabeth Herbert (1822-1911) and her husband in Rome and spent much time with them in the winter of 1847-48; there are biographical sketches on both of them in *European Travels*. Sidney Herbert's magnificent home, Wilton, was close enough to Embley for the friends to visit. Elizabeth Herbert was on the ladies' committee of the Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness on Harley St. and indeed supported Nightingale strenuously when she most needed it. She assisted with the recruitment of nurses and remained in touch during the war. Also she wrote letters on behalf of Sidney Herbert, as so many wives did. Correspondence with Elizabeth Herbert accordingly appears also in the nursing and war volumes.

The correspondence in this volume shows enormous fondness in the early years, echoing the glowing descriptions of her friend Nightingale sent home from Rome when they first met, in *European Travels* (7:122). There are interesting letters on the course of Sidney Herbert's last illness, kidney failure, with letters to the doctor about his care interspersed. Elizabeth Herbert and Nightingale continued their friendship after his death, often writing each other on the anniversary of his death, 2 August 1861. Nightingale felt that Elizabeth Herbert did not understand her husband's work (although she wrote letters for him) and consequently misrepresented his achievements after his death. Strains arose later when Elizabeth Herbert converted to Roman Catholicism. The letters show their shared spiritual interests (they frequently went together to Catholic services in Rome), but also that Nightingale never seriously considered conversion.

The correspondence here begins in 1848, some months after their respective returns to England. They move on from reminiscences of

Rome to Herbert's pregnancies, births and growing children. The first letter was written while Herbert was expecting the birth of her eldest child.<sup>1</sup> There is a long gap from 1874 to 1890, but whether no letters were written or they were lost or destroyed is not clear.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff2-3

South Cottage

Gt. Malvern

3 November [1848]

My dearest. . . . There is something so unearthly in a Roman moonlight—the scene above and the scene below so equally unlike this old world that it reminds one of the “new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”<sup>2</sup> It is like a “new heaven and a new earth.”<sup>3</sup> And the spirit, fountains playing, one in the moonbeams and one in the shadow of the colonnade. The first looked like a bright crystal (not hard and impenetrable as our earthly crystals, but a clear gushing fountain of the water of life—the life of action). And the second was like a pure pearl, and it hid itself under the deep shadow and it was, if possible, even more lovely than the other, the life of the spirit, the retiring contemplative life, the angel of peace and love, while the other was the angel of joy and glory. St John was wont to slake his thirst at the one, while St Paul was drinking deep at the other.

Did you ever see that “cloud of witnesses”<sup>4</sup> crowning the colonnade on either hand, by moonlight—and the light so bright that there seemed no “need of the sun nor of the moon” to shine in this new city, for there was no night here, but the light seemed to come from the glory of God.<sup>5</sup> And when up those broad steps you see the great white temple you feel almost as if this were the throne of God and as if it were this which seemed to lighten the whole city with its dazzling front. . . .

---

1 Mary Catherine Herbert (1849-1935), later Baroness Huegel; Nightingale left her a framed portrait of Sidney Herbert given her by Elizabeth Herbert—see *Life and Family* (1:855).

2 Rev 21:2.

3 An allusion to Rev 21:1.

4 An allusion to Heb 12:1.

5 A paraphrase of Rev 21:23.

Source: From a letter to Hilary Bonham Carter or Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8993/9

[end 1848]

I think you had better not tell Fanny yet about Lizzie H.'s hopes, not for the latter's, but the *former's* sake because, though I could not tell *Lizzie* so, as she has a medical man's opinion, yet I don't feel at all sure myself that she is not mistaken even yet, as I have seen what the medical man has not seen, viz., the wonderful way in which her imagination can represent facts, owing to her having been brought up without the knowledge by which even a hen lays eggs.

Don't you see what she has done? She has told the doctor that she has had two *miscarriages* and he, in consequence, lays a healthy young woman on her back (the very way to produce one). Now it would be such a double discouragement to Fanny if it were to turn out all wrong, wherefore I don't mean to say a word about it to anyone. God grant it *is* all right!

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f8

[6 July 1850]

Dearest, very dearest, it makes me almost too happy to write, when I think of your happiness.<sup>6</sup> I feel as if I could never ask for anything more for myself, now that you have obtained this great blessing. God is very good to us, and that He may bless you and yours is the prayer of,

your ever loving  
E.N.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8993/76

Wednesday [21 March 1852]

I am going to Clewer<sup>7</sup> with Mrs Herbert on Friday to spend the day, but shall be back at night. She wants me to fix a day for going there to stay, which I must talk over with you.

6 The birth of a son and heir, George Robert Charles Herbert (1850-95), the 13th earl of Pembroke.

7 An Anglican women's religious community.

Source: Incomplete letter, probably to Elizabeth Herbert, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

30 Old Burlington St.

28 June [1852?]

I send you, dearest friend, a few nos. of an account of Kaiserswerth, which perhaps is more suited to the spirit of the age than one written in a wider and more socialist sense. At all events, you may [breaks off]

Source: From an incomplete letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

1 Upper Harley St.

29 May 1854

My dearest, The chief facts I observed, when I used to go to St Bartholomew's Hospital were, first, that the nurses (not the sisters) slept in wooden cages on the landing places outside the doors of the wards, where it was impossible for any woman of character to sleep, where it was impossible for the night nurse, taking her night in the day, to sleep at all, owing to the noise. Where there was no light or air but that admitted through the glass doors and where three were together in this small space though only two, it is true, slept at a time.

Second, it was *preferred* that the nurses (again, not the sisters) should be women who had lost their characters, i.e., who should have had one child, because it is supposed, in England, that these only can be made to work hard (for the sake of the child) and be pitiful to the patients and that no other woman will take a hospital nurse's place.

Third, the excessive want of personal cleanliness of the patients—they could *never* wash their feet—and it was with difficulty and only in great haste that they could have a drop of water just to *dab* their hands and face. But these things are just the same in all the other hospitals. I have not been to St Bartholomew's for two years. If I possibly can, I will go there tomorrow or Wednesday and ascertain whether the cages and other varieties are there still.

The case of Dr Kirkes is the most flagrant we have yet had—for his book on physiology<sup>8</sup> is one of our textbooks, in the medical world. But these are not the only instances of jobbing in hospitals. The “*dressers*” (who are students) buy their places, which are much sought after, as dressers—so that not he who is most skillful, but he who has most money gets on. At Guy's this shameful practice is done away

---

8 W.S. Kirkes, *Handbook of Physiology*, 1848.

with, but not, I believe, at the other hospitals. I will try and learn whether it is still so at St Bartholomew's.

I was overjoyed to see your handwriting again. God bless the little Bab<sup>9</sup> and you and believe me,

ever yours

F.N.

Three years ago, all the front of St Bartholomew's was remodelled and beautified, while the nurses were [breaks off]

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

1 Upper Harley St.

1 June 1854

Dearest, I am sorry that I have little satisfactory to tell you, good or bad, about St Bartholomew's. But you will find it, as I do, impossible to bring people "up to the scratch." I think the best plan would be for Mr Herbert to write a line to Mr Bentley, the treasurer, who lives at St Bartholomew's, and is a really honest, industrious treasurer, and ask him to come and tell him all about it. Mr Bentley would be glad to be helped, and whatever *he* chose to let out, would be of value.

My own feeling, however, is that it is best not to mix up this question of the nurses with that of Dr Kirkes. The latter will not thank you for it and it will do his election no good to have it mixed up with the general question of the glaring abuses of hospitals "en masse."

I have seen one of the most useful and independent officials of St B.'s today, but he retracted almost all that he has ever said before, through fear of its being made use of. He would only say that the subject of the nurses required a thorough, systematic revolution and that it was no use correcting (or enlarging upon) details.

With regard to these details, I find some things amended since two years ago, entirely through this Mr Bentley's influence. The day nurses still sleep in the wooden cages, but the night nurses have rooms allotted to them to sleep in *in the day* at the top of the house. The nurses are still as disrespectable as ever. The sisters are only respectable, not religious. Though there are now four chaplains, the patients are not individually visited. The chaplain reads prayers between the two wards, which is mere mockery. Every time a patient wishes to be visited individually, he is obliged to send down a printed

---

9 William Reginald Herbert, who died young at sea, on whom more below.



card by the sister to the chaplain—called the “chaplain’s card.” And it used to be constantly my lot to hear the jubilation of the R. Catholic and the dissenter patient, “Look at *our* priest,” or “at *our* minister,” contrasting his zeal with the Church of England’s.

The “dressers” do not give any fee to the hospital, but to the surgeon, whose pupils they are and who recommends them every year to the board, which nominates them.

If you chose to separate the two subjects of the nurses and Dr Kirkes, I would try and see Mr Bentley and different people belonging to St B.’s *promiscuously* and ascertain what I could. But this the short time does not allow and I believe it almost useless to see people officially because they ask, what use are you going to make of this, and will never stand to their words—I have tried it a hundred times.

We have had some very bad cases at our “shop” and I have not been in my bed for a fortnight. I am afraid it will be quite impossible for me to rout out St Bartholomew for another fortnight and I do think the two questions had better be treated apart—I do not see how exposure of the general abuses of hospitals will influence the election of Dr Kirkes.

Will you thank Mr A’Court for his note and his tidings of you and the bab and believe me,

ever, dearest, yours

F.N.

Source: Copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

Scutari

9 July 1855

Dearest, I cannot tell you how the record of Athena’s little life and death affected us all.<sup>10</sup> It is worthwhile to have died to be so remembered. Curious instinct, a little, tinier, rat catcher, sent us by Mr Herbert, the most engaging of all animals except Athena, was so aware that we were reading about something we loved more than it, that it never ceased whining, howling, caressing and fidgeting while the book of Athena’s exploits was being read.

My own effigies and praises were less welcome. I do not affect indifference toward *real* sympathy, but I have felt painfully, the more

---

10 Athena, Nightingale’s owl rescued from the Parthenon on her Greek trip, 1850, died on her departure for the Crimean War.

painfully since I have had time to hear of it, the *éclat* which has been given to this adventure of mine, an *everyday* one in another church. The small, still beginning, the simple hardship, the silent and *gradual* struggle upwards, these are the climate in which an enterprise really thrives and grows. Time has not altered our Saviour's lesson on that point, which has been learnt successively by all reformers from their own experience. The vanity and frivolity which the *éclat* thrown upon this affair has called forth has done us unmitigated harm, and brought mischief on perhaps the most promising enterprise that ever set sail from England. Our own old party, which began its work in hardship, toil, struggle and obscurity has done better than any other, and I like Tory am now trying to get back to all my old regulations.

Dr Sutherland has given it as his opinion that to go back to England is neither necessary nor advantageous for me. He says it would be too great a strain, that Switzerland would be best, and Therapia next best.

Σ and I are going to Poinhip for a couple of days and then must decide what I really ought to do, feeling that if I go, all this will fall to pieces.

yours ever, whatever betides  
F.N.

**Editor:** Elizabeth Herbert perhaps had a miscarriage in 1857—at least there is a gap in births between 1854 and 1859. A letter to Sidney Herbert in 1857 hopes that “Mrs Herbert is observing absolute ‘recumbency’ (a hospital word) till 2 P.M. daily.”<sup>11</sup>

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff54-56

Gt Malvern

7 January 1858

My very dear soul, I do beg and hope that you will not trouble your dear self in scampering after lodgings for me. I supposed that you would have to go to London for this.

Very vulgar marriage, poor little thing! And I do hope beg, on the knees of my heart, that you will not increase the fatigue by house hunting for me. It would make me quite miserable. And I assure you that you are very much out of health. Farther, I assure you that my uncle and an aunt are going to town on Monday for some business,

---

11 Letter 19 December 1857, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/66.

which common minds cannot understand, and which always begins three weeks before Parliament. And they will look out.

I was very sorry to hear that Mr Herbert had tic in his face. It is a “confounded” complaint. And I am afraid the inspections this cold weather will be a kill or cure kind of remedy. However, they are better than close rooms. I have heard a very bad account from poor Anne Dunsany.

In re ventilation, I hope Mr Herbert will stick to his beam, the best thing ever invented. Captain Galton is at his old Scientific tricks again.

Now, please, my dearest, do remember what I have said. It really would bring me out of my grave, were I in it, to see you looking for lodgings for me. I shall never forget all your kindness to me this last year in Burlington St. and more than that, all you did for me in Harley St. I always consider you and Mr Herbert are the authors of all the little good I have done in life. Believe me,

ever yours gratefully

F.N.

The “report” is well “*on*” for next week.

Source: Letter, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/67

Gt. Malvern

4 February 1858

Dear Mr Herbert

I am very, very sorry to hear that you have your old enemy. I think it is mere quackery to advise a man to come down here for a few days or to try water treatment in London when going on with all his House of Commons business, etc. The causes which brought the thing on must be suspended in order to send it away again. And I think both homeopathy and hydropathy, when they say otherwise, are quacks.

But I do very much wish you could give this place and the man here a fair trial of four or six weeks, if it were possible. I believe it is the only cure for neuralgia and that it would destroy your liability to its recurrence, which surely is worthwhile. I asked the man here, who is *not* a quack, in a general way your question, and he said the same thing.

Without pretending to judge about the House of Commons business, surely such a lull as this might be managed sometime soon. And, about our business, we would disinterestedly do *all we could* in your absence, viz., the detail, leaving the management of the principles till you could come back.

ever yours faithfully

F.N.

Source: From a typed copy of an incomplete letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f59

Ascension Day [13 May] 1858

Dearest, I must thank you my own self for your grapes, as I would not trouble Mr Herbert with carrying them. My thanks to you. “Rev Mother”<sup>12</sup> (of Bermondsey), whose name you will remember, has been and is dangerously ill. She has had all her food from here, and your grapes have almost kept both her and me.

I shall not be sorry if she dies—she is too good for her “place”—a woman in whom is no one earthly failing that I ever could discover. The high authorities of her own church never could see the difference between [breaks off]

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/67

Gt Malvern

28 September 1858

Dearest, I write to *you* to trouble you with this because I suppose you will hardly have been able to make that melancholy journey north. I will say nothing about her whom you have lost, because praise of her, as of Lady Pembroke, would seem almost sacrilege from me to you. I write but little and only on business, knowing I can say nothing you will not have already felt, and believing you understand me sufficiently to make it needless.

I had a few lines from Mr Herbert yesterday, a few of his kind, manly words of deep feeling such as he only can write. What I want to say is only this: Will you, when he resumes his guardianship of your infirmary, tell him that, of the three “schemes” I sent for his consideration, I think that marked (I) in the second letter is the best and that I would, upon further thinking, quite decidedly give the discretion about “patients’ exercise” to the “sister” and ALL the “staircases” to the “matron.” I think this will prevent some collision, the wards and all their appurtenances remaining to the “sister,” responsible to the “matron,” the “patients’ exercise” remaining to the “sister,” responsible to the surgeon. . . .

I am going up to London on Saturday, because I don’t want them to do anything about some regimental hospital plans without me.

---

12 Mary Clare Moore, a close friend, on whom see p 1013 below.

When Mr Herbert has anything to say to me, perhaps he will write to me there. I hope you are pretty well. Believe me, dearest,  
ever yours anxiously and sorrowfully  
F. Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Sidney Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/68

12 April 1859

Will you be so good as to tell your nurse, or whomever you may please, to write to me, when Mrs Herbert's seventh is arrived?

28 April 1859

Thank you so much for your news about Mrs Herbert and the little thing.<sup>13</sup> It was like you to write yourself and so much.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff63-64

Highgate

15 June 1859

Dearest, I hardly can congratulate you, but you know what I think about it. I don't expect even him to turn asses into wise men or lions into Unas. I am afraid he has inefficient servants, a disorganized department and a silly commander-in-chief to deal with.

But for all that (and all the more because of all that) it is a great national benefit his undertaking it. And certainly he is the only man who could do it. The more difficulty, the more necessity and the greater the duty—if there is the power, of which there can be no doubt in this case. I don't believe there exists a more unorganized office than the War Office. I hope you observed that, while the last debate was nothing but a vilifying of every statesman by every other, like so many dirty boys, no one even made the attempt or had anything to say against Mr Herbert. This is a great public acknowledgment.

I have had a message on my conscience for a great many days from Louisa Ashburton to you, though why she charged me with it I can't conceive—which can be best rendered in English that she is very much obliged to you for making her marriage. They are to be at Paris on the 18th, in town for a few days only in July, then down to the Grange with Mrs S. Mackenzie.

---

13 The birth of Constance Gladys Herbert (1859-1917).

Source: From a note by Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 ff81-82

[printed address] 49 Belgrave Square

11 November [1859]

**Reggy:**<sup>14</sup> “Oh! What a big moon coming right out of Miss Nightingale’s house! I shall always think of her and the moon together. Baby, I tell oo” (this confidentially) “that moon hasn’t any light at all of its own—it comes from the sun and there are people live in it, though it’s so high up and mountains in it, very big ones.”

(A pause.) “Mama, when shall I be a man?”

“Not yet, my child.”

“Shall I be a man when I’m six years old?”

“Why?”

“Because then, you know, I shall be able to go out when I like and then I’ll walk every day to see Miss Nightingale. Baby! Baby! Do oo know that lady left her own house *and all her toys* and went out to nurse the poor sick soldiers and *give them tea like us?* Wasn’t that *dood* of her? Mama, when I’m a man, will she let me be *her friend?*”

**EH:** Alas, alas! Where will our darling Flo be when he is a man? I told him she was very ill and might die before he was grown up and he eagerly said, “Oh! No, God won’t let her die. She’s too *dood*.”

Source: Typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f87

20 March 1860

Dearest, Hilary Carter told me of what you said about the men’s desire to pray for me, and I believe the chaplain-general has been here about the same thing. Now I had rather have the men’s prayers than a vote of thanks from the House of Commons, and I think there can be no more precious acknowledgment of service done for them, but I should not like a War Office circular to order them to do it. And then you must also have a W.O. circular to Almighty God to tell Him to listen, and you must kill a queen’s messenger to take it.

Altogether I think the men had better be left to pray willingly, please, and I know they do it in some regiments. This is my feeling about the matter, not because I do not value the prayers of the men, but because I value them so much.

---

14 This is the Reginald Herbert who died at age nineteen in 1870 (see p 700 below).

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff89-96

Hampstead, N.W.

5 December 1860

Dearest, I cannot help writing to you of what I think of night and day, though perhaps I ought not to write. I do trust you will make Mr Herbert have farther advice. All that he told me on Sunday makes me only wish this the more.

The reason Bence Jones<sup>15</sup> gives for *not* consulting Williams appears to me the strongest reason for doing so. Williams is an old “muff,” I know, but he is one of the cleverest pathologists we have—and he has known Mr Herbert a long time, which is the main reason. It is difficult to me to say why, in so important a matter, Bence Jones’s opinion ought not to be considered *a verdict*, although the fact of there being albumen I do not in the least doubt, and the necessity of Mr Herbert giving up the House of Commons is, alas! I believe, paramount.

But I will try to give you the reasons: Bence Jones is a chemical doctor, the best we have. But a chemical doctor’s opinion is not always the best. I can only show this by taking the converse. I have known B. Jones make up a diet for a patient by the purest rules of chemical science—only the patient’s stomach did not think so. And this *only* was everything.

Take the converse: B. Jones tries his patient (Mr Herbert) and condemns him in chemical evidence furnished by himself (the albumen). I want to know how many men there are suffering from London “Cachexia”<sup>16</sup> (which is only a fine word for ill health, i.e., imperfect nutrition) who would *not* show albumen, if they were tried.

Why is nature parting with all this albumen? Generally because she is *helping herself*. Give her fair play to help herself, but don’t despair of her. You do not know how strong a temptation it is to a conscientious chemical doctor, like Bence Jones, to give such an opinion as he has done. Because it would be relieving himself of such a terrible responsibility if he could persuade Mr Herbert into giving up all work. You do not know how often this is done with patients who are merchants or professional men. And what happens? Nine times out of ten the man dies within a year after “retiring,” as it is called. This is quite a proverb. I believe that leaving political life or any life interest *altogether*

---

15 Henry Bence Jones (1813-73), whom they all knew when he was attending physician at Harley St.

16 Latin for a poor state of the body, defective nutrition.

is more likely to kill than to cure—always. You will not find that these opinions as to *mere chemical* doctors, or *mere pathological* doctors, are unique. The best, those who have most common sense of these men, will say so *of themselves*.

II I wish Mr Herbert would see Williams, the latter being acquainted with Bence Jones's opinion and in concurrence with him. These need not meet till after they have seen Mr Herbert separately. If they differ, then I do wish Mr Herbert would see some doctor of strong common sense himself and let *him* settle the difference.

Brodie is the best, but Brodie is blind, and though I had rather have blind Brodie than another man with his eyesight (for a *consultation*) perhaps Brodie does not think so himself. Christison<sup>17</sup> is the next best, i.e., the best chemical doctor with the strongest common sense. But perhaps Christison is not so much acknowledged as to make it worthwhile to have him from Edinbro'. Watson is the next best. And Watson is at hand, has got his eyes and has an acknowledged reputation. What you want is somebody to take Nature's part. I do not say all this by way of comforting you but because it is the truth.

I tried to tell Mr Herbert this on Sunday, but I did not feel I made myself clear. I would not the least undervalue the danger of Mr Herbert going on as he is now. It is imperative that he should leave the House of Commons. I believe it is imperative that, when in London, he should sleep just out of town every night, even if he dined in London. Many professional men, who have, of course, not the command of horses and carriages he has, do this, who are compelled to keep up a house in town too.

I deprecate Belgrave Sq. for him, but only *sleeping* out of it would be a great thing. (I doubt the rightness of his riding. It irritates just those parts which are now irritable. But this is solely an old nurse's opinion. And I should be the first to give it up, if doctors in *his* case say "yes.") The other things I have said are matters of almost *universal* experience.

ever dearest yours

F.N.

---

<sup>17</sup> Robert Christison (1797-1882), Edinburgh medical professor.



Source: From a letter to Sidney Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/68

Hampstead, N.W.

8 December 1860

I hope you will not judge too hardly of yourself from these doctors' opinions. Doctors get to consider diseases as accidents (to organs). Nothing can be more false. It is true that you cannot mend your broken leg by rest only or by fresh air, absence of anxiety, etc. But it is *not* true that you cannot (sometimes) absolutely mend a damaged organ, almost always keep it comfortably going for many, many years by giving Nature fair play. The presence of a large amount of albumen is no test in itself of anything but that Nature is getting rid of something which ought not to be there. Help her by trying not to make any more. I know a very active intellectual London man, now sixty-five, whose albuminous symptoms were accompanied by one, the most advanced of all, which you have never had, but who by sleeping in the country, etc., has given himself fifteen years' good life and may have fifteen more.

I am not going to bore you with a medical lecture. But I do hope you won't have any vain ideas that you can be spared out of the W.O. You said yourself that there was no one to take your place—and you must know *that* as well as everybody else. It is quite absurd to think that Lord de Grey can do it. He is a very good little man. I wish he would take Hawes's place. *That would* be a good act on his part. But I suppose that is contrary to the British Lion.

You cannot be the only person who does not know that you are necessary to the reorganizing of the W.O. It is more important to originate good measures than to defend them in the House of Commons. As for "sacrificing yourself" to the "good of the Cabinet" or to Lord de Grey or to anyone by going out, it is not sacrificing *yourself* but hundreds of thousands of men. I hope you don't think of this.

Faithfully and from the bottom of my heart I do believe that it is much more depressing to the physical health to give up entirely a life's interest, and to change completely a life's habits, than to carry such on reasonably and modifying them according to common sense.

I don't believe there is anything in your constitution which makes it evident that disease is getting the upper hand. On the contrary. It would be well worth your while if you could give yourself a month's *complete* rest now. Also no rushing about.

If you could be relieved of a great deal of the detail of the W.O. and the reorganization *ought* to do this—it would be well. Did you ever think of Robert Lowe for your Parliamentary under secretary?

Greatly as he is disliked, I never heard anything but praise of him from his own subordinates (i.e., the best of them) both at the Board of Trade and Privy Council. I have heard them speak of his fearless administrative ability with admiration. For myself, I once applied to him to remove a great and long-standing abuse at the Chelsea Hospital, which I was able to prove—and he removed it—and that is more than can be said of anybody at the W.O. It would be an ill wind, this, which had blown some good, if, among the changes could be that of ousting Hawes. Forgive anything which seems like impertinence.

ever yours sincerely

F.N.

I am not sorry that B. Jones and Williams agreed—in order to determine on a line of action *not* in order to believe the case hopeless.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff97-102

Hampstead, N.W.

13 December 1860

Dearest, I cannot tell you how very glad I was to hear that Mr Herbert had been “out hunting” and had “slept like a top” after it. Because I do believe this settles the point as to whether *organic* mischief can have made any progress to signify.

I am quite persuaded that it *cannot*, from this good news alone. If this were only my own opinion, it would not matter. But I have asked this very question often of good-sense doctors of the largest experience. And have never had but one answer.

I wish you would tell Mr Herbert this. There is another danger which people in general are very little aware of. And that is that doctors often produce the very disease they prescribe for—and often *nail* the disease upon the patient *by assuring him he has it*. On the Continent, doctors are much more aware of this than in England. A European authority, a doctor, wrote to me the other day, upon reading my little book on nursing, to ask me why I had not put this very fact in mentioning numerous cases which had come within my own experience. (So have they within mine. But I did not mention it, because my book is written not to doctors but to nurses.)

The remark is especially applicable to three classes of disease, which I need not trouble you with, but one is “diseases of the kidneys.” This is why it is so dangerous to alter a patient’s whole mode of life, to impress upon him that he is *doomed* to die by “*that* particular disease.” And the strong brain is not at all more exempt from this

danger than the weak one. On the contrary, it often lays hold of it with greater tenacity. I wish you would tell Mr Herbert this.

Sleep, fresh air, regular food: these are the three grand medicines. And he **MUST** put himself into the way of life to procure these. And no medicine will do any good, if he does not. I always look upon such a patient as doomed, not because he has this disease or that, but because he *cannot get natural sleep*, natural sleep during which all the repair of the body takes place. This is what makes it really a medicine.

If a patient is too weak to take the exercise, fresh air and food, necessary to procure sleep, *then* you *may* consider anything like recovery impossible. I wish Mr Herbert could avoid *any* railroad journeying at present.

I told  $\Sigma$  all you told me. But she will write to you herself. God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

P.S. In all famines the one symptom familiar to the nurse is the patient's complaint, "I cannot get any *sleep*—and it's the only thing which would do me any good." No one who has ever heard them can forget the cries of famishing men to the doctor to give something "to make them sleep." Now, in rich life, there is much more famine from imperfect digestion than people at all consider.

And regular food and regular sleep, which depend upon one another, *must* be secured by those habits such as fresh air and exercise which the patient finds, do, in his own particular case, procure them. But doctors often lay an amazing stress upon some particular diet. And they don't consider that "a man can exist as many days without food as he can seconds without air." I should add (only the whole thing is so connected that you cannot *disconnect* it) that a man may exist the same number of days without food with less damage than he can that number of nights without sleep.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/68

Hampstead, N.W.  
27 December 1860

Dearest, I think your account a very favourable one. Thank God for it and thank you for sending it. It *is* favourable, and favours the idea that the disease is more functional than organic, when the albumen diminishes with sleep, exercise and fresh air, although of course it is liable to return with any exhausting cause.

I am sure that Mr Herbert could not have felt himself his leaving the House of Commons more than I did (you know how you and I have always quarrelled on that point). And yet I am thankful that all that is over and settled. Of all exhausting causes, the House of Commons is the most exhausting.

Yet I know that Mr Herbert will feel without his House of Commons as I feel without my men, now that I have only regulations and not human beings to deal with. But it is not true in his case.

I am quite ready to sing an Io paean<sup>18</sup> now to Lord de Grey, as much as you like, to his goodness and his disinterestedness. Also, I will say, if you like, that his minutes have always been the only good ones (*not* excepting Godley's<sup>19</sup>) in that blessed War Office. I am very sorry to lose him. I don't at all undervalue his sacrifice in being willing to give up office under Mr Herbert, which I am sure was very great. But he is quite certain to be able to get office again if he likes it by and bye. Altogether I am very thankful.

You may have a whole wilderness of Haweses<sup>20</sup> now, if you like; keep them in the park at Wilton, if there is room for them, though I still think my Netley plan the best.

ever dearest yours

F.N.

I am not "wedded" to Lowe.<sup>21</sup> If he has been sounded there is, as you say, "no more to be said." But, if he has not, he told Clough (his private secretary) some time ago that he did not like his present post, it ennuyéd [bored] him; there was nothing to do. And, generally, I have always heard men say that the under secretaryship of the War Office was so interesting that men would give up more independent places for it, if asked. But I will not bother you with another word about that.

Will you tell Mr Herbert that the Lisbon Hospital plans, about which he spoke to me some time ago, from the princes, have come. They want a deal of rearranging, but the wards will be the *finest in Europe*. The proportions are beautiful.

F.N.

---

18 "I praise" in Italian. Possibly from the 1761 opera *Siena Pasquini* by Pietro Metastasio.

19 J.R. Godley (d. 1861), assistant under secretary for war.

20 Sir Benjamin Hawes (1797-1862), under secretary for war.

21 Robert Lowe (1811-92), MP, vice-president of a committee of Council of Education.

Every “man Jack” of my belongings is or have been at Embley for my cousin Bertha’s marriage to William Coltman (son of the late judge). You have always been so kindly interested about Bertha that I meant to have told you of it, especially once when you said to me something “en l’air” about her marriage. But it was not settled then. And, last time I saw you, you know why we could not speak of anything else but one thing. It is a very happy concern, except that they are to live with his mother, Lady Coltman, always a great mistake, I think. People may have the tempers of angels, as in this case, but it never answers.

Source: From a letter to the physician of Sidney Herbert, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/61/1

7 January 1861

*Private*

My dear Sir

I have seen both Mr Herbert and Mrs Herbert (I cannot bear to call him by his new name) since I saw you. I know him so very well that I can see that the strong impression (somewhat falsely derived from your words) is upon his mind, *viz.*, that he is the subject of hopeless disease, that, whatever he does, he cannot expect to live a year, that he ought to have devoted this year to retirement and his children, although he has yielded to our prayers that he would retain office.

His wife tells me that her difficulty now is much more to raise his spirits than to make him take precautions, that both he and she are sufficiently “alarmed” to do right. I am sure that we must all of us bless you for having been the means of prolonging his life by *pulling* him out of the House of Commons and that we do not wish one word unsaid which you did say.

But, if you would just say to him now what you did to me, *viz.*, that you have known worse cases recover, that, because a man is told to prop up his house, he need not think it *must* tumble down. I am sure that you would not make him more careless, but that you would give him more vitality. Indeed, his wife asked me to ask you to do so. For the sake of sparing your time, I have written. But, if you liked to call here, I would tell you the circumstances.

Common sense tells one never to interfere between a physician and his patient. So that I hope I trust you will not think this is interfering. And, above all, that, whatever you may think it right to say to Mr Herbert, you will not let him know that I have written to you. I told him what you had said to me.

He is so very peculiar in temperament that I think scarcely any man knows him. When I told you that he ennuyéd [bored] himself without political life, I did not mean that it was like the ennui of a tiresome party at dinner. But it is a collapse. God forbid that I should liken such a pure political life as his to delirium tremens. But it is like leaving a case of d.t. without his brandy. I should never in the least wonder to see him collapse and die if he were without political occupation. How often you see this in professional men returning from their profession.

yours sincerely (and contrite)

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff110-19

17 January 1861

Dearest, about your houses, I have made inquiries in Hampstead. My *penultimate* house in Oak Hill Park is to be let on lease unfurnished. But, as a favour, my proprietor, Mr Neave, would let it for a few months, either letting his agent put in furniture, or the tenant. You have seen the house, therefore I need not describe it. But I never was in a house with so many windows and so little light, with so much exposure and so little sun, with such a view and so little possibility of seeing it.

The largest bedroom (although it has windows on two sides) could by *no* exertions be warmed. Nor does a ray of sun ever enter it. *Ditto* for drawing room. A house which I should much prefer is to be let (close to it) at the top of Oak Hill Park and furnished. It is a semi-detached, and sheltered by its twin from the north. Two of the sitting rooms and two bedrooms over these are really cheerful, with great big windows, not like my den. The furniture is very scanty but might be added to. And it could be ready in a week or two. But my grand objection remains that these bedroom windows look S.S.W. I think you should make it a *sine qua non* in a house you mean to inhabit only at night that the windows should look S. or S.E. The last house I had (Upper Terrace) is also to be let.

But I don't think you would like it. It is incurably musty and tasted of the dust of centuries. But if I were you, I should do as the crowned heads do: have a cottage where it would be *impossible* to ask anyone, send two servants to live in it, and send a third, if you wanted to spend the day. It is more difficult to find a small cottage with large rooms than a large one with small rooms. But other people *have* done it. Also, I am not at all sure that Hampstead *is* preferable. Hampstead is damp, cold and on clay.

Wimbledon is mild and on gravel. Wimbledon is rather far, but Richmond is nearer. Many a busy professional man *walks* out to his home at Richmond. I believe houses (at both) are better built than at Hampstead. In another direction, there is Upper Dulwich only about half a mile farther than Hampstead in this.

All this is quite against my own interest. Still I do believe that Hampstead and Highgate, for many reasons, are not healthy. But first and foremost, I do hope that Mr Herbert will have *any* house he takes “inspected,” as he has the barracks. He well knows what I mean. Commanding officers complained that he went “so much into detail.” Now do make “detail” be “gone into” as much in the case of his own sleeping place. And do adhere to a S. or S.E. exposure. I do believe it is very little use sleeping out of town without attending to these minutiae.

The longer I live, the more I am amazed at the superstitions of the cleverest and most scientific men. E.g., all the people about me have an impression that I may be right, although “exaggerated,” about my “views” (as to sun, light, airing always through the windows and never through the doors, etc.) but that these neglects “never can produce” ill health, while they are in transports of terror if they have so much as seen a person who had scarlet fever a month ago.

Hardened credulity always goes with hardened incredulity and the things people do believe are much more extraordinary than those they don’t believe. I hope Mr Herbert will not be less careful about his house than about his barracks.

ever yours

F.N.

P.S. If you would send me a great heap of envelopes, directed to you in your new name (as one does to servants) I would try to use it perhaps—with you, but with Mr Herbert never. I do so sympathize with the children’s exclamations, though Miss Maud evinces a profound knowledge of human nature I should not have expected in so young a lady.

I had a humble letter from *D. News*, in answer to my last. *But I don’t expect anything.* I venture to think that the wisest people’s views on the importance of newspapers are exaggerated, exaggerated *both ways*.

In the first place, people *don’t* form their *working* opinions upon newspapers, their *talking* opinions they may. I never altered an opinion nor an action in my life upon anything I read in a newspaper. “Yes,” says Mr Herbert, “because you yourself know more on that one subject.” And does not everybody know more on their one subject

than the newspaper? and is not that the subject upon which they have to act? It is said that nobody *ever* altered a vote in consequence of *any* speech in the House of Commons. I believe this to be true as to newspapers.

On the other hand (and this tells rather against me) they *are* the indication of what people *do* think, for they are nothing but mercantile speculations—they indicate only what is the current opinion of those who buy them—but they do not create this opinion.

Just as the great expensive glass windows of Atkinson, the perfumer, in Bond St. only indicate that people will give 6d more for their eau de Cologne to buy it in such a fine place.

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff120-23

24 January 1861

Dearest, the cottage with the *little* rooms to the *southeast*, very small indeed but very cheerful (and which I should have taken had I not had Mr Clough's children with me) is Mr Charles Ellis's Heathside Cottage, North End Hampstead. He is an upholsterer, living at 21 Bedford St., Covent Garden. And, if you want his house, you are always recommended to go to him direct.

The other cottage is Mr John Woodroffe's Fern Cottage, Hampstead Heath. He is the one which I don't know whether he will let, a "lawyer and very hard man" and it is said of him that it is no use going to anyone but the agent, for, if he takes it into his head not to let till he goes out of town for the autumn, *he won't*—neither for love nor money. I will find out for you from *Clouser*, the house agent at Hampstead, whether you must have tickets to "view" the two houses at Oak Hill Park, also whether this Mr J. Woodroffe will listen to letting.

I have heard of nothing nice yet at Wimbledon. But I will find out who are the good house agents there. Should you mind Richmond? Mr Herbert knows the house I once had at Highgate—the Howitts. It was very small and certainly more noisy than London and the hill was tremendous. But it was the cleanest, cheerfulest, gayest little place I have had yet. It was the difference between being in a gentleman's house and a house regularly "to let." The Howitts would let it now, if asked. What do you think?

ever yours

F.N.



I respectfully invite Lord de Grey's attention to the system of "*minuting*" as pursued in the time of Philip of Spain, when, to a most important state document about the Armada, that it had been in Lisbon *quassi un mes*, Philip minutes, "There is only one *s* in *quasi*." And to another about Queen Elizabeth's presence chamber in Whitehall, where "lice had been discovered," Philip minutes "Perhaps they were fleas." I think Hawes must be descended from that prince. I see the *Quarterly* quotes both these. Pray look (in the article on Netley).

F.N.

Dearest, the principal house agent at Wimbledon is *Mason Putney Heath* however (keeping far away from the river) is recommended in preference. It is on gravel and not so bleak as Hampstead, but the houses are few and small. *Waller's*, close to the station at Putney, is the place to inquire. *Richmond Town* is not recommended—subsoil used up, cause of much fever. *Richmond parish* has some good healthy spots. *Montague Villas* is one. But the great apostle of sewers lives there.<sup>22</sup>

I will send some more information about Hampstead tomorrow. You do not think of that place at Highgate, do you? If I might suggest, it would be that you send down Pharaoh's chief butler, a man I always liked, to the two house agents at Putney and Wimbledon and let him see what houses there are. It may be that there is nothing worth your even going to look at.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff124-25

25 January 1861

Dearest, here is the "card to view," the two Oak Hill Park houses (I had the name of "Mrs Sutherland" put, because I thought you might not like your plans made known to all the house agents). The lodge people at the entrance of Oak Hill Park will show the way to the houses. The advantage of these houses is that you can have them directly and for any time, though, with regard to mine, they will tell you you must take it *on lease*—this is not true.

I send some other houses at Hampstead, but I think it possible they may not suit you at all. And it might be as well to send your steward first for this purpose. Also, two of them are not to be had for some weeks. Please observe *William Paxon* as *this* house agent. (There is another "Paxon" also in Hampstead and also a house agent.)

---

22 The great Victorian "sanitarian," Edwin Chadwick (1800-90), lived at 5 Montague Villas, Richmond.

I find this is a very bad time of year for looking for houses. The winter people are not out and the summer people have not begun, so that there is hardly any choice of empty houses now. Mr John Woodroffe's Fern Cottage, Hampstead Heath, which was really pretty, is not empty. You will find a much better choice in March. But you scarcely ever get a really fresh and clean house from an agent. It is only by a chance (from gentlemen) that you succeed. What I wanted to find for you was the cottage of some luxurious old bachelor, e.g., a retired Indian, and I thought I had succeeded at Wimbledon.

Since I wrote this I have your letter. And by all means, if you can, get the Wimbledon cottage—though the long ride would certainly be better later on in the spring. As for Putney houses looking north, if they do, they probably have some windows looking south. What I complain of in *Hampstead Houses* is that they all look N.W., which is very little better than N., and have no windows looking S.E. But the thing is *to look* at them *all* in this view. (I *never* knew anyone who did without being specially charged.)

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

23 March 1861

Dearest, Thank you 1000 times for your splendid amms. and rhododendrons and flowers. I am sure you will be glad to hear that my father is coming to see me next week.

As for Galton, if he said *himself* to Lord Herbert that "the ventilation was of no use without the grates" (and if this was not a speech made for him by Baring) there is no meaning in words. He *writes*: "Baring has stopped all ventilation till the grates have had another year's trial. It is just what I feel will happen as soon as Lord Herbert goes. All these sanitary improvements are only skin-deep and the whole thing will revert to what it was before." This is exactly my own opinion.

But what I want to do now is to get *back* our £10,000 in the Estimates (taken for ventilation) or whatever the sum is. If Lord Herbert would answer the minute in this way: take the £10,000 for ventilation shafts and inlets and wait the result of the trials with the altered grates before putting in any more. This is the only common sense. What Baring says, and Galton (if he did say it) is *not* common sense.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff128-33

10 April 1861

Dearest, I wanted very much to have seen you on Tuesday, to have said a little word about “his” health. So now I write. If I am wrong, you know you need only put me behind the fire. He is a great deal better—of that there is no doubt. If he would observe five things, he might consult Tom (the kitten) and it would do just as well as “Ben Jonson”<sup>23</sup> or French. These are (some of them he does do already, I know):

1. Eating as much of good food as he can (not sauces or acids, such as acid fruit) and drinking claret. French tells him to eat beef and beer, because “that makes blood.” So did Sganarelle<sup>24</sup> tell the dumb woman to take wine and bread, because that made parrots talk. “Vite, vite, quantité de pain et de vin” [Quick, quick, lots of bread and wine].

2. Clothing warmly and wearing a flannel belt round the body. This Grainger, who has albuminuria of a very advanced stage, and fancies he has granular disease of the kidneys, which he has not, lays great stress upon.

3. Doing no night society which he can possibly help. One night’s party is worth ten days’ disease to him.

4. Sleeping out of doors, that is, out of London.

5. Taking his exercise regularly in the fresh air, especially in the fresh morning air. If he would do these things, he might never see Ben Jonson again. Anyone who knows “him” would have known that, unless he had died in a week or ten days after B.J.’s fiat, he would never have confidence in him again. B.J. has turned out a false prophet, and therefore “he” will not believe in him.

“He” is, you know, a very bad patient. I can safely assert that a man in his condition ought not to take steels [severe water cure] without seeing his doctor every day or at least every other day. It (the steel) requires intermitting, varying with gentle purgatives, etc. (But this seeing his doctor every day he would *never* stand.) Otherwise the liver is *very likely* to get into the state in which his was at Wilton—a congested state—not “congestion.” If a little country apothecary like French takes up a patient in this condition, it makes his fortune, because a dose of medicine gives almost certain and immediate relief.

---

23 Not the Elizabethan dramatist but a joking name in the Herbert household for Bence Jones.

24 The dim-witted valet in Molière’s play, *Don Juan*, 1665.

But you know I am too old a “cove” to be taken in by French’s sayings. Again, “he” is a very bad patient because he is quite capable of taking all his day’s medicines at a dose—and because he would not stand the London doctor coming to see him every day. If “he” were a manageable patient, his is just the case that a good physician delights in keeping him alive, keeping him in “working order,” because it *is* a manageable case.

But again, as all highly educated men are (about the *body*) “he” is superstitious, i.e., he assigns causes to effects which are not causes at all—sometimes only symptoms.

Of one thing I feel more positive than I ever did: if he were to leave his political interests, *he would die*. I should not wonder if he began to sink at once. Now, if he really has lost confidence in B.J., it is no use urging him to go on. And if he thinks that in dismissing B.J., he has dismissed the albuminuria, perhaps it is even better so. But whom will you have? You have dismissed Williams. Ben Jonson is certainly one of the most sensible and most masterful men in England, which is what the patient wants. He got “him” out of the House of Commons, which is certainly the worst kind of *night party* (vide No. 3). You know you won’t take Tom’s advice, which I have given you in five heads, and which would enable you to dispense with all physic and with which physic will *not* enable you to dispense, which is worse.

You know “he” doctors his doctor. It is as if he were the doctor himself and not the patient. With that extraordinary acuteness which he has above all men, which enables him to take up rapidly all the threads of a new subject and put the knot on, he fancies he can do the same thing with medicine that he does with politics. Now he can’t. Medicine is a mere matter of experience of which we do not yet know the rules. If I were a doctor I never would argue with my patient—because then “*he*” thinks his argument may be as good as mine. I would say, “*this* is the matter with you. *That* is what you are to do. If you don’t do it, send me away.”

I think B.J. has been arguing with his patient. Now, what is to be done? If you mean to go on with French, would you let me see his prescriptions? At least I could give you an opinion upon them. You need not take it. As to an “ox-gall” prescription I once saw of his having anything to do with the cure of albuminuria, the thing is absurd. And beer in any quantities will just bring on the state which he says he has rescued the patient out of, i.e., liver. Ben Jonson is very angry that you gave him no account of your patient while at Wilton. *Let him be angry,*

so long as the patient is all right. But you know I think you were all wrong in not letting him know. As for your Lord Clanwilliam<sup>25</sup> and your Mr Gladstone, I think they are more superstitious (about the body) than “he” is.

But, for God’s sake, never adopt any treatment which tends to lower the powers of life. If I could see your prescriptions, I could at all events tell you this. There are two men about whose constitutions (and only two) I think I can speak with confidence. Because it is impossible for a old nurse like me to see a man every day without learning him off by heart. (One is “he,” and the other is Mr Clough.) I am sure that, if you show “him” this letter, he will pardon my freedom of speech, *vu* the vital importance of the subject. Believe me,

ever yours

F.N.

You know “he” always sees doctors and doctoring on the ridiculous side, which greatly lessens their usefulness. I never heard of any mart where you could barter one disease for another, which is what he thinks B.J. has done for him.

Source: Letter, Cambridge University Library, Manuscripts and Archives Add 8546/I/165

30 O. Burlington St.

14 April 1861

My dear Sir [Dr Bence Jones]

I hear that you have seen S. Herbert again. The very fact is satisfactory. May I ask what measures you have taken to secure his confidence that the steel will not bring about the same result which he thinks it did before?

If this were to tell him that he “must take it once instead of twice, if he found it disagree,” *how is he to know?* He does not know himself from Abraham. He will take it three times when he remembers it, and once (or not at all) when he forgets it. If this were to tell him to send for you, he *won’t*.

That you have no time to see him more than once a week I can easily guess. But, pray, pray, recommend to them someone to see him (under you). The man they would like best is Mr Hewett, of St George’s. But I suppose he is much too great a man to do this. As to S. Herbert—the *case* may not be a case to require seeing more than once a week, but

---

25 Richard Meade, earl of Clanwilliam (1795-1879), an Irish peer, spouse of Sidney Herbert’s sister.

the *character* (both of the patient and of the medicine) requires seeing at least twice or even three times a week. It is rather the medicine than the case which requires watching. You have no idea what ignorant, superstitious or extraordinary things they are capable of doing. No poor people, consulting quacks, are more in the power of quacks than they are. Delane (of the *Times*) has been one of their quacks!!!!

Nothing is more provoking than to have someone interfere between doctor and patient, but *I* interfere in order to “strengthen your hands,” as you once said to *me*. Pray, pray, pray think of what I say.

yours sincerely AND RESPECTFULLY  
F.N.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff134-37

13 May 1861

Thank you very much for your dear letter. Don't think I am siding with Ben Jonson. You know he was no recommending of mine. And it is *above all* necessary that you should have confidence in *any* man who attends you. If you have lost your confidence, do pray send him away. It would be difficult to say, whom else to send for? because B.J. is known to be one of the best in common sense and practical firmness in his professional opinion (I *don't* say in his other opinions, because he was certainly wrong in his “*alarming* system” at first).

As to the little impostor, whether he is wrong or right about his advice, he has quite put himself in the wrong by urging a different treatment, unhinging you, making you think you had lost five weeks and giving so very lugubrious an opinion *to you* without going to say it to B.J. first. It is quite contrary to all professional law, to all right. And B.J. would be perfectly justified in refusing to attend you, afterwards.

As to the steel, if “a Herbert could never take steel,” why did Impostor give it him? Why is he now sent to “Spa or Pyrmont,” both steel waters. I agree with you that God Almighty's steel is far better than Savory and Moore's. But if it is the steel which disagrees, he would not be sent to steel waters at all. What makes you such a very bad patient is that, while you look upon the case as worse than the truth, according to actual experience—you are disappointed and surprised because what has been done in thirty years is not undone in five weeks. For I deny that, till you went to Dufferin Lodge, any “course of good living” had been entered upon, except the leaving the House of Commons.

Add to this that so trying a spring has perhaps never been known and that if he kept his ground as to the *disease* this was all that was to be hoped for. *And he has kept his ground.* There are other reasons to account for the weakness.

What I think B.J. has done for you (which no one else would have done) is pulling him out of the H. of C. and compelling him to sleep out of town. And this he did by his inexorable common sense. As to the steels, the cods, the ox-galls and all the rest—they are all tarred with the same stick—they are all tricks to try and make nature do by a shortcut what she says she won't do except she be permanently put into conditions to do it. And you know I don't care whom (whether B.J. or Impostor or Tom) you have, so far as medicines are concerned. Brodie is at this moment in this house. If you would like to see him with B.J., I have no doubt he would give a consultation.

I am glad he has left off the steel. But that is a thing always done before going to a steel water. I think Pyrmont was the dullest place I ever was in. It was the true picture of German Bürger life. And there used to be no good doctor there. I think you would like Spa better.

B.J. told me last night that he was certainly not worse and you know he has always been a croaker. If you are going to leave for Whitsuntide, which I hope you are—please write me one line to say when you will come and I will take care to be well enough to see you. The practical result of all this is that you must either repose your confidence in B.J., *or in someone else*, or in B.J. *and* someone else—and, having done this, you must give your confidence and trust the rest to God. The reason is that very few in the medical profession have studied this class of diseases. If you were to send for half a dozen little men, they would each give you a different opinion and prescribe a different remedy—and this is the true way in which time is lost and patients are lost.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff138-40

14 May 1861

Dearest, would Thursday between 4 and 5 suit you? But don't think it necessary to come then, if it does not. It is only that I am so provoked when you come and I am not able to see you. It is not that I think it "necessary to dress to see" you. It is that now, when I have been doing work, I cannot do anything more, not even sit up in bed. But I was fortunate enough to be dressed and downstairs today when the Cid came—which I have not been for nearly a fortnight, except just to see B. Jonson on Sunday, whom I wanted to see and to scold, though you don't think so.

Dearest, I am *sure*, he (the Cid) thinks, “Oh! she does not know how weak I feel and how much worse in general health.” But I do. I see it every time I see him and sorrowfully perceive that he *is* weaker and thinner. And yet I don’t think him worse in general health—not materially worse. He has not one cardinal symptom of confirmed disease. And, therefore, although he will always require unremitting care, I do hope and believe he will rally from this weakness. Dearest, after you, who has such a stake in his life as I have?

It is not because I *don’t see* but because I think there is more ground for hope and I have more experience (“out of experience, hope”) than you have. It is quite common to see people who, when in great danger, did not feel their weakness but when they are actually either progressing or holding their ground, feel weakness increasing.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Bence Jones, Cambridge University Library, Manuscripts and Archives ADD 8546/I/166-67

15 May 1861

I saw S. Herbert yesterday. He spoke much more fully about himself than he has ever done before to me. I think he is a very difficult patient to examine. He says that the drain upon him of the excess of water is so great that it makes him feel as if he were sinking. I asked him to observe so as to be able to give a guess at the quantity. He says that the nausea in the mornings is always great, and lately it has been *retching*, though without “bringing up anything.” He says that he is so breathless in the mornings, *always*, that he “can hardly speak,” that in the afternoon it comes on again at the slightest exertion, quite as much going *down* stairs as up.

As I told you that I saw no difference since 9 January, I ought to say that I observed yesterday a great increase of breathlessness and also of the trembling (which he never mentions and does not like one to observe. He could scarcely carry his cup to his lips).

He says that when you see him he feels “so different,” viz., in the afternoons. (He has had his “ride, his luncheon and his glass of wine.” He feels “a little flushed”) and that you can “form no idea from seeing him then of what he is in the mornings.” He says that “both days you have seen him lately were good days with him,” but that Sunday (before the Monday you saw him) was “the most seedy” day he had ever felt. He says that he has no appetite just now. But he attributes that to biliousness and his sleep has been worse, owing to cramps. He says that he does feel a great increase of weakness even in riding, which tires him least. And of thinness, which I do not see. But



I was struck yesterday with the total want of muscular expression in his face and with his aged look, although he was flushed.

I know so well in patients (much more reasonable than he) that feeling of “aggravation,” that when they have been as sick as a dog all the morning and know they are going to have a dreadful night, and “the doctor” comes at their “good moment.” They fancy he does not know what they feel. Consulting physicians never do see patients at their worst time. I dare say you know all this, but I have thought it as well to tell you what he feels.

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Bence Jones, Cambridge University Library, Manuscripts and Archives ADD 8546/I/167

27 May 1861

PRIVATE. The Herberts return to town today. I have not troubled you with their accounts of themselves (while at Wilton), all more unreasonable the one than the other. And indeed I have not been able to write at all. So you must just trust me for knowing the Herberts morally as you do (one of them), physically, when I ask you to do this: would you earnestly and faithfully urge upon *Mr Hewett* (for love of you) to go and see him *every day*, taking the case in communication with you?

I have no excuse to make for them, but here is a valuable life being sacrificed to ignorance, superstition and the most foolish indecisions. I cannot describe to you *how* ignorant, at least *her* letters are. Both “he” and “she” are, however, anxious for this arrangement, at least they *say* so. (And I shall keep the letters to prove it to themselves.) I am convinced that this is the best thing which can be done *under the* circumstances. Even you can hardly tell how difficult they are to deal with.

One thing is *her* incessant restlessness, which is quite incredible, *and the worst* thing in his case he could have. This arrangement would steady them more than anything. And I do most earnestly hope you will think so practically too.

ever yours

F.N.

*Private.* *Her* penultimate letter was so foolish that I vowed to myself I never would interfere again, that I only made matters worse. And here I am *at it* again and bothering you. I do hope you will think this right and will speak to Mr Hewett.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Bence Jones, Cambridge University Library, Manuscripts and Archives Add 8546/I/168

Monday [April-May 1861]

There *was* no “henbane”<sup>26</sup> in your prescription for S. Herbert. It was only one of their mistakes, a written one though. There was just what you said, “ammonia, chloric ether, steel and glycerine.” (I have seen it.)

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

They have promised today that they will go to Dufferin Lodge *every* night this week. How long these good resolutions will last I don’t know, but whoever has done it, it is a good deed. And I think they are both much more reasonable, both as to what is to be feared and as to what is to be done, than ever before.

Source: From a letter, part copy, to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff142-43

28 May 1861

Dearest, he is better—that is *the* thing. God be thanked for it. And if the devil had written the prescription, I would have fallen down and worshipped him. But you know I think the arrangement you propose, viz., Hewett *every day* (and B.J. to come when he is sent for) the *very best that could* be made. B.J. will have no objection. You know he made none before when it was proposed to him. Within an hour of my receiving your note yesterday morning, I wrote to him in your sense.

The Cid *ought* to be seen *every day* (of that there never has been any doubt). And now he will be seen by someone in whom you have confidence. Hewett has science, great experience and very excellent good sense. I trust there will be perfect firmness in carrying out this arrangement. For remember every break of confidence is as bad for him as falling back for months. It always is in cases like his. I do believe he is better materially as well as apparently. God bless you both.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff144-46

31 May 1861

Dearest, Dr Wolff’s opinion does not say the same to me at all that it does to you. All that it says amounts to this: (1) that medicine is of little use, (2) that Germany is too cold and too damp for such cases, (3) that a dry warm climate is the best. This is an excellent common-

---

<sup>26</sup> A plant with narcotic and poisonous properties, and the drug extracted from it.

sense opinion (and agrees exactly with mine!!!) but all this we knew before.

As to steel, all that he says is that *when* it does not diminish the quantity of albumen (which both the analysis of the man whom you do trust and of the man whom you do not says that it has, i.e., that the quantity *is* diminished). Bark is better—which alas we knew before.

“September” is too early to go to Nice. As for the German baths, I leave that to wiser heads than mine, i.e., I would go by the opinion you have most confidence in, which is at the present time Hewett. I would only repeat now what you must be perfectly sick of hearing me say: There is no great use in physic either way. You can’t help Nature much in that way. There is no proof that he has organic disease, other than incipient. There is proof that he has blood disease, i.e., that he is in a state of thorough London ill health, with poverty of blood, which deposits this albumen, which physic will neither materially add to nor take away. That organic disease may at any time be set up (whether morbus Brightii<sup>27</sup> or not, B.J. himself does not know). And his capital error was in arguing, from the presence of albumen, that there was organic kidney disease.

Your “capital error” is, if I may say so, in thinking that four days will cure him or that four days will kill him and in being correspondingly elated or despondent. His rapid improvement at Wilton shows that there is no *confirmed* organic disease—his continual drawbacks show that there is not a *confirmed* improvement in the state of general ill health. Yet you are either always in the clouds or in the slough of despair<sup>28</sup> about him. Dearest, what you have to do is to help Nature in every way to remedy this state of the blood. She will only do it as a work of time and in her own way. Exercise and excitement are both good up to a certain point. But fatigue is always bad. The bill comes in the next morning and has to be paid. The fewer of these bills you run up, the better, for they eat up the capital in the end.

**Editor:** A letter from Dr Williams 2 August 1861 6 P.M. advised Nightingale of Sidney Herbert’s death:

All is over! Poor Lord Herbert breathed his last about 11 this morning, half an hour after I got there. He had a convulsion in the night and was thought to be sinking then but rallied after and was quite

---

27 Bright’s disease, of the kidneys, from Richard Bright (1789-1858).

28 From John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

sensible—took leave of them all—quite aware of his approaching end. Except at the last he suffered no pain. When I asked him, he then said he had pain in the chest—the death pang—but it did not last and he passed away quite quietly. A telegram from Lady Herbert requesting me to acquaint you awaited my return and I lost no time.<sup>29</sup>

Letters were sent to Nightingale from Catherine Dunmore, Sidney Herbert's sister, 4 August and Elizabeth Herbert 12 August.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the letters below during the immediate aftermath there is a letter from Elizabeth Herbert about her son's illness and the proposed memorial to Sidney Herbert (on which latter there is correspondence in *Hospital Reform*). An undated fragment of about this time shows Nightingale's sympathizing with her friend's sadness: "So much in your desolation coming to that Belgrave Sq. once so dear—now no longer the same either in spirit or in body. I know what it is, for I could not bear even to look down Burlington St. where I had seen him so often."<sup>31</sup> Nightingale was extensively involved in the memorials to him, in words, a convalescent home, the Herbert Hospital and the statue, as these next letters show.

Source: Letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

3 August 1861

I loved him. No one ever loved him and served him as I did. Others loved him for himself, but I knew him and loved him for the sake of God and mankind. After you, no one can mourn him as I do. I feel as you do that no one can know the greatness of your loss. There is no comfort but to know how noble he was, how you and he were married for eternity, how the worst that can happen to you is to be separated for a few years.

But you have a comfort which I have not, for you can carry out his wishes, while I am prevented from his very death itself from having the power to carry out his own wishes.

God bless you, and He will bless you.

F.N.

29 Letter of C.J.B. Williams, ADD Mss 45797 ff246-47.

30 ADD Mss 43396 ff147-50 and 153 respectively.

31 Typed copy of fragment [1862], ADD Mss 43396 ff182, 183-84 and 187.

Source: From a letter to Dr Henry Bence Jones, Cambridge University Library, Manuscripts and Archives ADD 8546/I/169

Hampstead, N.W.

7 August 1861

I think that you will go to Burlington St. to tell me what you will have learnt from Mr Hewett about the last days of my dear master. I should have liked to tell you what I know from those about him. But I am gone. I can hardly hope that you will find time to drive down here, as you leave England so soon. I need hardly say that I should be glad to see you.

I am at Miss Mayo's. It is the first house on the right as you drive in at the private gate (with a lodge on the left) into Oak Hill Park.

Source: Fragment of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

15 August 1861

Returned with many many thanks. I thought of you on your wedding day and all day. As for me, he takes my life with him. My work, the object of my life, the means to do it, all in one depart with him.<sup>32</sup>

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

Hampstead, N.W.

17 August 1861

Dearest, I enclose exactly what I believe to have been his "wishes" as to what was "to be Galton's position in the office," quoting, as far as I could, his own words. The P.S. is not essential though it would make it more complete. The reason why I could not answer yesterday is that I had to send for some papers concerning it. I hope this is not too late for you.

The reign of intelligence is gone at the War Office. The reign of muffishness has begun. Lord de Grey is the only one (who *can*) who wishes to carry out *his* plans. The present master is a man without intelligence and without experience who opposes all principles because they are new, and who cannot even avail himself of the knowl-

---

<sup>32</sup> A paraphrase from Felicia Browne Hemans: The flower, the tone / The music of our being, all in one / Depart with thee.

edge and experience of others. The “royal boy,”<sup>33</sup> as you used to call him, appears to have forgotten already the lessons he had been so wisely taught. Lord de Grey stands out nobly, and, as in this, so in other things is active and *obstinate* in following up *his* wishes.

I wish I could hide myself underground not to see what I do see.  
God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

Hampstead, N.W.

29 August 1861

Dearest, You say, “If” I “can think of anything else, only tell” you and you “will forward it.” I would have done this before and thank you, but I have not been able to write. Two things which lay at *his* heart were (I speak now merely of small administrative things):

1. He always recognized the fact that the men had no place, either in or out of barracks, they could call their own. *He* considered our soldiers as his countrymen, having homelike English feelings, and that they would seek their homes, if *he* did not find them for the men, in the worst of places.

You know that one of his last official acts was to call together the commission on soldiers’ dayrooms and institutes, that the resolutions were sent to him as soon as they were drawn up and before the report was signed, and that, no sooner were these resolutions sent in, than he immediately instructed Captain Jackson, R.A. (who had had successful experience in founding soldiers’ “homes” at Gibraltar) to go to Aldershot and report to him on the facilities of forming soldiers’ “homes” (or institutes) there immediately.

Had he lived, I am certain (and I believe you are, too) that he would immediately have given effect to Captain Jackson’s report, forming a “home” at Aldershot in the *first* place. He attached particular importance to Aldershot, as you know, on account of the terrible immorality of the men there. If you could say anything most strong to Lord de Grey from your own knowledge of his wishes, greater than mine, I am sure it would be most true, as to his intention with regard to the Aldershot plan. And it would be one of the best tributes to his

---

33 The duke of Cambridge, commander-in-chief of the army.

memory, to *him* who was always thinking how to improve the soldier's body and mind.

The Report of the Commission on Day Rooms went in yesterday. Captain Jackson's report goes in this week, as to Aldershot. And he had been farther instructed to go to Portsmouth about a "home" for the garrison there, and he has similarly reported as to its great facility. Portsmouth, I expect, will be done, for it entails hardly any expense. But Aldershot will not, without a helping hand from those who loved *him*, for it will be more expensive.

The success of the new "*general hospital*" arrangement at Woolwich, begun the very day of his death, to which he looked as a school for training officers for "general hospital" service, wherever required in time of war, in order to prevent the recurrence of the Scutari catastrophe. *He* thought that this new organization would require its wheels oiling for the first two years, but he was certain that it would "go," if only a little care were given to make the parts go easily, upon which reference is certain to be made to the War Office. He himself wished these references to be made to Colonel Clark Kennedy, who headed the commission which organized this new arrangement AND the hospital corps, and to whose exertions *he* ascribed its having been done so well. I have this in his writing. But I would not risk enlisting Lord de Grey's interest for the new organization, so that references should be made to him and *not* to Hawes, in case of friction, by mentioning Colonel Clark Kennedy's name as a referee, if you judged it better not.

These are the two last points he spoke and wrote to me about. I need hardly say that there were other more important points which lay still nearer his heart.

In the very letter, 7 June, which told me of his intended resignation, in letters and conversations before and since, he always spoke of Lord de Grey as looking to him to *reorganize* the office. I can scarcely bear to recall what he said and wrote, except to carry out his wish. He said, "de Grey will do it better than I," and "de Grey understands it better than I." He even spoke and wrote of resigning as if it were to open the way for Lord de Grey to carry out that plan of "reorganization" of the War Office, dated 1 January 1861, in Lord de Grey's writing, and which he showed me on 9 January 1861.

You will know better than I whether to recall these things to Lord de Grey, whether it would be well to tell him how he looked to him only to do this, which *he* would certainly have done had he had time

given him. God knows best. By taking back this one of His servants to Himself He has put back five hundred thousand men to deteriorate physically, mentally, spiritually. It is hard to say, His will be done.

Let me say (for you alone) that Lord de Grey is working nobly to follow in *his* steps. What Lord de Grey's weight is I do not know, but at all events he spares no work. On one occasion when the "royal boy" came in to G. Lewis's room to try to upset something which our master had done (it was the *new* Woolwich Hospital), Lord de Grey, who happened to be in the room (everything *happens* there, is not systematically done, under the new reign) said, "Sir, it is impossible, Lord Herbert decided it and the House of Commons voted it." And he silenced them both. Many similar assertions of *our* master's decisions I have heard of Lord de Grey making. God bless you.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

12 December 1861

I send you a copy of Dr Farr's paper, read at Manchester before the British Association. And I was in hopes to have sent you a paper of mine on hospital statistics and hospital plans, read at Dublin before the Social Science Association. But I have only this day got the first proof of it and therefore I can only enclose one (the last) page, which perhaps you may like to see.

You know that we have lost our poor Clough. He was dying when I saw you, but I had not the heart to tell you. He died on 12 November at Florence. His wife had joined him a few months, his sister a few days before. The end was very rapid.

He was a man of rare mind and temper, of the highest and tenderest of spirit it has ever been my lot to meet, of uncommon genius, worn and fretted by the necessity of working at hard and uncongenial matters for daily bread. He has left his poor widow and three children, of which the youngest was only three months old, when he died, in a most anxious position. He was my *support* in life, as my dear master was my *object* in life. "The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart, none considering that he is taken away from"<sup>34</sup> *the good he might have done.*

The last words I ever had from him were when he heard (abroad) of my dear master's death. I shall never hear such words of sympathy

---

34 A paraphrase of Isa 57:1.



again. He felt so much for us all and was so entirely overcome when he spoke of us to his wife that I cannot help believing it hastened his death. He was only forty-one. But death for him was not premature. He was already worn out in life. He had worked so hard at Oxford that his peculiar impressionable temperament never recovered it.

Source: Unsigned note to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

[late 1861 or early 1862]

The Horse Guards have taken quite a different tone lately, owing, I believe, to the “meeting” of the 28th. Everyone said that *he* was the only man in England for whom such a meeting could have been held, men of all parties, the representative of the Crown, the representative of Parliament, uniting to do him honour.

Mr Rathbone of Liverpool tells me that they are going to have a similar meeting there, as soon as the immediate turmoil of this terrible American business has past. You know that Liverpool has always stood out prominent, about *him* and about the Crimean War.

For the statue, I have most earnestly recommended that it should be in Westminster Abbey. He deserves a place there, for he is the initiator of a new era, that of taking the *human* side of the policy as regards the soldier, looking upon him as a man and not as a machine. After all, politics are ephemeral and Westminster Abbey a higher and worthier place than the House of Commons or Palace Yard.<sup>35</sup>

Wiltshire does not think of building yet, but of applying the funds to your Charmouth Institution. The “Herbert” Gold Medal will be for the best proficient in “preserving the soldier’s health” at the Chatham School. This as a tribute to *his* particular object.

The duke of Cambridge has written to Sir G. Lewis to ask for the quartermaster general to be president, in *his* room of the Barrack Commission (Galton, Sutherland and Burrell, you know). I was sorry and I was glad. But it was impossible to refuse. On the one hand it shows that they mean to keep on the Barrack Commission, which I never thought they would, after *he* was gone, and that they mean to play the game of treading in his steps for the sake of his popularity. On the other hand, to have Airey or Percy Herbert in *his* place and with a president’s power of putting a stop to everything (this commis-

---

35 The statue was placed in fact in the quadrangle of the War Office until it was moved after Nightingale’s death to be next hers.

sion has had the spending of £50,000 a year since 1857), is very gallant.

Lord de Grey works his very best at the War Office. (Sir G. Lewis is studying the astronomy of the ancients, profitable speculation!) Lord de Grey has the whole of the charge of this expedition to Canada. Everything is being raised to war establishment. Lord de Grey applied to us to know what *he* had done, in reference to the China Expeditionary Force and followed *exactly in his steps*. And I was very glad to be able to show how beautifully *his* "regulations" work and meet every emergency. Lord de Grey did exactly what *he* did, and we revised the sanitary instructions.

I have no doubt that this American business is one of the things which have made the Horse Guards turn sharp round and think it might be as well for them if they, too, would tread a little in *his* steps. The country would never forgive them if they were to lose another army (in Canada).

But I see more and more every day how different it is having only Lord de Grey in the War Office. He does his very best, but he has no power. He cannot remodel the engineering (fortifications) department as *HE* had intended, and written to me in his very last letter. And Galton remains *tale quale* [what you see is what you get].

You know that poor Godley is dead. Had Lord de Grey been powerful he could have used this opportunity for remodelling in some degree the position, as I am sure he wished.

Let me tell you one thing which I think will give you pleasure. The choral society are going to give a series of performances to the soldiers gratuitously. I was consulted. And they open tonight at Exeter Hall with a dirge to *his* memory and the Messiah afterwards. It will be a grand performance, a great tribute to [breaks abruptly here] for Lord Stanley. And *his* work was all for mankind!

Lord de Grey will, I think, carry the soldiers' day rooms *in time*. The commander-in-chief *had* taken the Iron House at Aldershot we wished to have (for his officers' club), but I think the War Office will buy a house there for £2000 for us. I have recommended that a tract containing the account of the meeting of the 28th and an address with appeal to the soldiers, to be done by Dickens, shall be sent to every soldiers' reading room and every commanding officer by the War Office.

Source: From a note to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

1 January 1862

He was sitting in an armchair by the fire, with some writing on his knee. He was looking at you, who were just leaving the room. When you were gone, he said, almost to himself, "This is what I call heaven, *loving* love."

Aeschylus uses the true expression "*unloving* love." Perhaps he was thinking of the difference between this and *his* love when he used the words, "*loving* love."<sup>36</sup>

He so seldom spoke of his feelings, at least to me, that I was the more struck.

Florence Nightingale  
This sad New Year 1862.

**Editor:** Correspondence in 1862 indicates that Elizabeth Herbert passed on correspondence from Lord Palmerston to her about the Herbert statue. Nightingale hoped that it would be placed "within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament," having given up on Westminster Abbey. Westminster Hall would be "second best." She reported to her brother-in-law that the Fine Arts Committee turned down the proposal for placement in Parliament, although Palmerston had written Herbert that it "*would* admit the statue." She did not think a bronze statue should be placed outdoors (which it was). Nightingale passed on hints on how to handle the matter to her brother-in-law."<sup>37</sup>

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff188-89

4 Cleveland Row  
St James', S.W.

14 February 1863

Dearest, I have no right to expect to hear from you, for you are the good Samaritan who have written last. My strength protests against my writing, which I don't wonder at, for I am of the same opinion myself.

Sometimes I have a little thing I want to tell you—some remembrance (in someone's heart) of *him*. I had a note from the duke of Cambridge a few days ago, speaking "of our late dear friend, you know well how greatly I valued him for his own noble qualities, as also

---

<sup>36</sup> Aeschylus, *Choëphori*, or *the Libation-Pourers*.

<sup>37</sup> Letter to Harry Verney 20 March 1862, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/14.

for the great good," etc., to the army and "deploring that he was so early taken from amongst us." Perhaps these heartfelt words are the more expressive as coming from one who usually I suppose does not feel much.

I hope you will be able to tell me that George's [her oldest son] cough is *quite* gone. Dr Williams always asks after this. I have taken this house in order to be near the W.O. and shall be here till autumn, if I am obliged to live so long. *He* used to laugh at me and say he would give me lodgings over the W.O. Things are perpetually hanging fire there, mainly owing to that Sir G. Lewis. Sometimes they seem to make some progress. But more often I have not the joy to see his reforms carried on.

I have had many touching letters (from professional men chiefly) speaking of the little paper with the diagram on *him* saying "What a work to have done in a short life time," and "what a memorial that diagram is to that noble man."<sup>38</sup> The queen asked for a copy and gave one of her own accord to P. Louis of Hesse.<sup>39</sup> And in return she sent me *her book*, with such a touching inscription. She always reminds me of the woman in the Greek chorus, with her hands clasped above her head, wailing out her irrepressible despair. I think -- is far from well. And Mrs Walter Bracebridge's illness (she is eighty) tries her much.

I am sorry that Manning<sup>40</sup> is gone to Rome. I am afraid he will worry you sadly. He has lost his nobleness of soul, since the struggle in it was over. God bless you.

forever yours  
F.N.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f190

26 May 1863

Dearest, I offer you a sad welcome to your sad home, but it may be *well* "come" still for you. I heard only today that you came last week. I thought it was not till this week to be.

I was very sorry to hear of your anxiety about Eton. I shall be back in London next week, but you must be overwhelmed with business. I

<sup>38</sup> A pamphlet by Nightingale, "Army Sanitary Administration and Its Reform under the Late Lord Herbert," 1862, in a war volume.

<sup>39</sup> Probably her daughter Princess Alice (1844-1900), wife of Frederick William Louis of Hesse-Darmstadt, hence "Princess Louis," or him.

<sup>40</sup> Henry Manning (1808-92), later cardinal, a prominent Anglican convert to Roman Catholicism and a mutual friend.

am trying to break a daily intermittent fever at Hampstead. This day week, after four years' heavy work (how much those four years have done!) the Indian Sanitary Commission signed their report, begun by *him*. There were three days of as sharp fighting as the Americans', to carry a clause which I was determined should be carried on the report not signed, viz., to have a "working" commission at home, after the fashion of *his*, to carry out the reforms indicated in the report.

It is curious that people should think a report self-executive, should not see that, when the report is finished, the work begins. It was *his* glory to have introduced this new fashion of working reports. And upon *his* name we carried it.

God bless you.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f191

Hampstead, N.W.

8 August 1863

My dearest, very dearest, it was very, very good of you to write to me on that dreadful day, kneeling as you were (and as I was too) at the foot of the cross. I thought of you all day— $\Sigma$  was with me—and every hour—and many hours and days besides. But it is a blessing to feel that you belong to him in all the misery, and *he* is not in the crypt.

I am here—7 Oak Hill Park—if you can find time to drive down and see me, when you go, or when you come back, through London. But I hardly expect it—you must be so busy.

Thanks for the beautiful flowers received the very evening before 2 August. Do you know you sent me flowers the very day before that terrible day two years ago when you left London for Wilton? I shall never forget it—your thinking of me at such a time. And I saw the last sunset on which *his* eyes were fixed.

I have been so ill and so busy (in answer to your question), the business of the India Commission does not at all intermit. I wrote to Count Strzelecki something about it and asked him to tell you, so that I have not been able to write a word that I could put off.

My abominable proprietor turned me out of 4 C. Row and I was obliged to take a lodging at 2 C. Row, which I have still, but could not stay in long, because of the noise. Otherwise I should be there now. God bless you.

ever and ever yours

F.N.

I hope Pembroke is better—how unfortunate those repeated attacks.

Source: From a letter probably to Elizabeth Herbert, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Osborne Mss folder 10945

Hampstead, N.W.  
19 September 1863

Dearest, I have been so ill that I have scarcely been able to struggle through my daily work. We have not got the (home) working India Commission yet out of the I. and W.O.s. I shall be here on the 29th and thankful to see you in the afternoon, as you kindly propose, for half an hour. Will you have a little tea, luncheon? about 5 o'clock?

I am so very glad that  $\Sigma$  is going to you.

Please to thank Mr Wyatt<sup>41</sup> for his offer to send me the hospital French books, but the "Assistance Publique" sent me the two quartos from Paris this spring. And I have already made great use of them. God bless you.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f192

Hampstead, N.W.  
30 September 1863

Dearest, we carried (at last) the *home* advising India Commission yesterday—not exactly as we wanted—but enough, I trust, to carry out *his* plans for, after hard fighting, the Instructions, written by me at Lord de Grey's desire, were passed. We have now to get the three presidency commissions in India.

Many many thanks for the Burke. The passage about the "ourang-outang and the tyger," which I wanted, was in Vol. IV, in the speech on Mr Fox's E. India bill in 1783.<sup>42</sup> I have used it and I return the

41 Probably hospital architect T.H. Wyatt.

42 Edmund Burke (1729-97), MP, persuaded Charles James Fox (1749-1806) to introduce a vigorous bill on the administration of India, 1783, which ultimately never came into force. Burke's speech denounced the East India Company's administration of India (although he was a shareholder): "England has erected no churches, no hospitals, no palaces, no schools; England has built no bridges, made no high roads, cut no navigation, dug out no reservoirs. Every other conqueror of every other description has left some monument, either of state or beneficence. Were we to be driven out of India this day, nothing would remain to tell that it had been possessed during the inglorious period of our dominion by anything better than the ouran-outang or the tiger" (*The Works of the Rt Hon Edmund Burke* 4:40-41).

Burke to Andrews' Library today. 1000 thanks and blessings too—God bless you again and again.

ever yours and *his*

F.N.

*He* used always to say, whenever he left me (at Burlington St.) God bless you, and there was something so touching to me in *his* way of saying it that I can never hear or say the words without thinking of him. And I can hardly bear them now.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

Hampstead N.W.

7 September 1864

Dearest, I thought your note to Dr Parkes was just what it ought to be.

With regard to Lady Bath's village nurse, we have quite forsworn recommending people for that position. We train people whom their future employers recommend. This makes the employer responsible for her village nurse, makes the employer infinitely more wise in her superintendence—instead of being only occupied, as often happens, in picking holes in the village nurse who has been recommended to *her*, and who requires all her employer's countenance to carry out her most difficult task.

If Lady Bath will choose (and send us) a woman, we will give her six months' midwifery training, if she is to be a midwifery nurse, at the lying-in ward at King's College Hospital. And she can also have *general* nurse training, if desired, and if special arrangements are made. Already in different parts of England we have nurses sent out after this fashion.

1000 thanks for game. God bless you.

ever your

F.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff193-94

Oak Hill Park

Hampstead, N.W.

19 July 1865

Dearest, I am totally unable to sit up or to talk and I am sure, for the next fortnight at least, I should not be able to see even you, were you so good as to call. I have been obliged even to put off an Indian, one of "our" presidents of sanitary commissions, who was engaged to

come here to talk with me. But I have written to Mr Wyatt telling him how gladly I would answer, in writing, any points he may wish to put, in writing, and how much interested I am in the plans and also that I *might* be able to see him in ten days or a fortnight. But I myself have very little hope of the same.

I saw my mother on Sunday, and have scarcely been able to breathe since. Poor Hilary Carter is dying of internal tumour. God bless you.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f195

Oak Hill Park  
Hampstead, N.W.  
2 August 1865

Dearest, I can't let this terrible anniversary pass, without a word to you—terrible I call it because the wreck occasioned by his loss is from year to year more complete—not terrible to *him*, God knows.

I cannot write any more, for I am too ill. I must keep all my strength for his work. I am almost glad to be so suffering as to feel this day less. God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

I feel every day more and more, as I feel his loss every day more and more, how priceless, how noble his memory—how great his service to God—how great the future, of an eternity of service to God, before him. God did bless him and God will bless all who follow in his steps.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff204-05

Hampstead, N.W.  
9 September 1865

Dearest, though scarcely able to write, I cannot help suggesting to you whether, if not done already, you would not invite Mr Thomas, the architect, to this stone laying. He has never received any remuneration. He had an acknowledgment from you which pleased him so much (he even wrote me word about it). And I have sometimes sent him game, as from you.

But, so far as I know, he has never received so much as a line of thanks, except from you, for what cost him weeks of labour—and labour which is very highly paid in London. And he is a poor man.

If his plans are accepted, I am sure it would give him very great pleasure, if you, in your own gracious way, would have him invited to



the laying of the stone, as architect. If they are rejected, I really don't know whether the invitation would be a compliment. God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

Hilary Carter died on Wednesday morning early. I cannot say my gratitude to God—the suffering had been so cruel, but the end was peace—all peace and rest.

James L. Thomas Esq, Surveyor's Department, War Office, Pall Mall, S.W. is his address and he is now in London.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f206

21 February 1867

Dearest, I have not written, solely in order not to add another to your already overwhelming troubles. I am thankful to see your handwriting again—thankful to know that at least all immediate danger is passed. I am afraid that you still look forward to a tedious convalescence—still look forward to some difficulty as to knowing what best to do next. But it is well that the winter appears to be past—and that at this moment there are no London east wind fogs. May God restore him entirely to an useful active life is the earnest prayer of his father's friend.

F. Nightingale

P.S. I have had for seventeen nights such an attack on my chest that I have been able neither to lie down nor to sit up *nor to speak*. It would not have signified so much but that, as you know, we are never so busy as at this time of year. And *his* work is always sacred to me—always to be carried on, spite of everything. *Just now* I am afraid to see even your dear face or to speak is impossible to me.

F.N.

Source: From a letter to W.E. Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/159

[ca. May 1867?]

Mrs Herbert was here last Saturday. Her visits always tear me to pieces. But she appeared calmer than usual. She takes the eldest boy to Algeria next week. "O insupportable and touching loss!"<sup>43</sup> I say daily of her husband, still.

F.N.

---

43 Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act 4, scene 3.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f207

5 September 1867

Dearest, thanks, loving thanks for your news of the "Herbert Home." I wish I could tell you how I rejoice over it. It is so much to have one good thing really done. (I scarcely ever waste a thought upon my imprisonment, thanks to God. But I should have liked to have been able to see that one thing before I die.)

I never look forward for more than a week, but, if possible, when you are in London on the 28th, I shall hope to see you, as you are so good as to propose. I always long to hear of your children, *his* children, especially of his "Molly." I am very sorry that George has had another attack. I trust it is past. We are very busy (about the Indian Public Health Service) which has grown out of "*his*" work. God bless you and yours.

ever yours

Florence Nightingale

I grieved indeed for you when I heard of Mr Chermiside's<sup>44</sup> too early death. If poor Mrs Chermiside remembers me at all, would you tell her how I think of her—and how I valued and appreciated even the little intercourse I had with him. (He has been but six years later than the one he honoured so much.) I pray that God will make her "brave."

Source: From a letter to Mrs Chermiside, University of Virginia 9380/1/1830-1899, Correspondence of the Cochran Family

10 November 1867

Dear Mrs A'Court<sup>45</sup>

I feel so very anxious about Liz that I can't help asking your kindness to tell me whether you know or think that there is any cause for anxiety about them in this great W. Indian disaster to the steamers by the gale.

ever yours gratefully

Florence Nightingale

44 Richard Seymour Chermiside, a clergyman, published a eulogy of Sidney Herbert immediately after his death. At Elizabeth Herbert's request Nightingale sent a duplicate copy of the information she gave her on their work.

45 Mother or sister-in-law of Elizabeth Herbert.

Source: From a letter to Mrs Chermside, University of Virginia 9300/1, Correspondence of the Cochran Family

9 March 1868

Indeed I did know, dear Mrs Chermside, that our dear friend Mr Chermside was gone. Indeed I have thought of you continually in your overwhelming loss—I sent a long written message to you of my poor sympathy (by Lady Herbert, which apparently she forgot to give you) such as it was. But indeed she was sincerely attached to him and to you, notwithstanding her terrible “change of views.”<sup>46</sup> You may well say that “he and Lord Herbert” are “happy.” Every day of my life I think so. Every day of my life I miss Sidney Herbert more and more.

I am a woman overdone with cares and business—at this time with double grief and trouble—for I have lost my dearest friend and pupil, the lady superintendent of the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary [Agnes Jones], and know not how to replace her—I am entirely a prisoner to bed—and never know what it is to have ten minutes’ leisure. How much has passed since you and I last met. We must both look forward to our rest—though both have many duties still to God. Remember that *he* said to you, Be brave. I think that must be a very inspiring and comforting remembrance to you.

I hope you will do me the favour of sending me two copies of his sermons—which you mention to me—and for which I enclose the 10/. Pray believe me, dear Mrs Chermside,

ever yours sorrowfully

Florence Nightingale

My darling, of the Liverpool Workhouse, died of typhus. She was pretty and rich and young and witty—and the hardest worker in God’s service I ever knew—and she is gone before me.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, annotated by her: “on my sad anniversary and Herbert “Meade’s death.”<sup>47</sup> Add Mss 43396 f214

1 August 1868

My thoughts always turn to you at the loss, now more terrible to me year by year, which actually will have been seven years tomorrow. And

---

46 Elizabeth Herbert converted to Roman Catholicism in 1866, abjuring the Anglican faith in Latin; see her thirty-two page pamphlet, “How I Came Home,” 1893, published by the Catholic Truth Society, of which she was a founder.

47 Herbert Meade (1842-68), son of a sister of Sidney Herbert and her husband, the 7th earl of Clanwilliam (see p 676 above).

now there is another loss which, however smaller in importance, is still most painful (I remember walking about with those boys, about ten and eleven, at Wilton). But how noble was his thought of others at the last, like his uncle!

I feel now how the extra overwork (I am always overworked) of the last eighteen months has told upon me. The fact is I had to be moved from South St. and to “disappear” and even not to have my letters given me, so that I did not receive yours till after you had left London, I believe.

The order has come from Rome to reopen the hospital of the nuns who served your husband (in Great Ormond St.). Perhaps we are indebted to you for this, but it is not yet reopened. They are still haggling about money with the nuns, wanting to cut them down, after having invited them there as a community, from being a community. A word from you would set this right.

Source: From a typed copy of an incomplete letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f215

12 January 1869

Dearest, indeed I do know how very ill you have been. There have been those who wished for nothing, neither to die nor to live,<sup>48</sup> except as they fulfilled God’s will—who had so strong a feeling of their own lives being one with the will of God as to exclude every other feeling, every care, every hope or fear of living or dying.

How far I am from this. True, it is easier in a contemplative life than in an active strife in God’s service, such as you and I have to live. But may we not hope that each year of strife may bring us nearer to this absolute oneness with God’s will, making our active life a “spiritual exercise”? I am glad that you have been able to leave London.

I submitted Sister Lame’s letter (enclosed) to those of the W.O. who made the working plans of the “Convalescent Home,” omitting some uncomplimentary [breaks off]

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 f216

1 August 1869

(eve of Sidney Herbert)

Dearest, I am sure that you know how I always keep this eve—the eve of a loss of which I feel more and more every year how “agonizing” it

---

48 An allusion to Rom 14:8.

is—a loss which is national, not personal. Personal losses one can bear. May God bless you and give you joy in your children is the unceasing prayer of,

yours ever

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert on the death of her son Reginald, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/65

10 September 1870

Dearest, I feel a more than common union in sorrow with you now that you are so ill, we two who have been so united in sorrow for these last nine years.

I know that you have long since been able to say, with our Lord, even when your soul was sorrowful, even unto death, Father, Thy will, not mine, be done,<sup>49</sup> and that you have not waited till now to offer yourself to seek Him *on* the cross, and *with* every cross that He who uses every means to procure us so great a good as that of His love, shall send. You are not one who will be satisfied to hear His voice only from the foot of the mountain. Even where the cup is so bitter that our Lord himself says, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,<sup>50</sup> you will hold out both hands for it. It seems, indeed, as if He would try you in every way, and give you the opportunity of victories in your bed more pleasing to Him than even those of open struggle with evil.

Let us thank Him even though the flesh is weak, that He treats us as He treated His son. Having desired to suffer with Him, let us thank Him for granting our prayer. When we think that *He* has sent this we know that *He* will give the strength to bear it. His strength is made perfect in our weakness.<sup>51</sup> Our Lord chose the path of the passion and the cross for himself. O that we may be able, of our own free will, to choose it too! That we may be able to run, not only with patience, but with joy, the appointed course,<sup>52</sup> at the end of which *He* waits for us, *He* is expecting us.

You have now to suffer in everything. Pray for me, now that you are so suffering, that *I* may never have any other thought, any other feeling, but to know and do His will. For so many years I have every day been “delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake.” Would I could add that

---

49 A paraphrase of Luke 22:42.

50 A paraphrase of Matt 26:39.

51 A paraphrase of 2 Cor 12:9.

52 An allusion to Heb 12:1.

“the *life* of Jesus” has been “made manifest” in me!<sup>53</sup> That I feel as if I could unite now in prayer and sympathy with you, so that, like St Paul, we might esteem ourselves happy to suffer for Him. God be with you always.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/106

12 September [1870]

Of course I know by this time that Reggie Herbert (*my* boy, as they used always to call him) was on board the *Captain*. I do not know how, or whether, they will tell his mother—who, after a severe illness at Paris, is lying very ill at Wilton.

Reggie was a noble, gallant lad—worthy of his father—he and Sidney,<sup>54</sup> the flower of the flock—very silent—full of his “duty.” Two or three years ago, when he was only thirteen, he saved a man from drowning—never mentioned it—it was only “his duty” (he had a horror of publicity—they heard of it afterwards from the men and when they asked him, he said this), a dark brown thin boy, like an Italian picture. Last year he escaped yellow fever—was nursed by his poor mother at Lisbon this spring out of a dangerous illness. And all to end thus? as far as serving his county is concerned.

The whole world seems so hanging between life and death, in such a cloud and tempest of agony that words are no use. If this siege of Paris—what horror has ever been seen like this in all the history of mankind? takes place—what words will express the woe? how insufferably mean and childish the newspapers, French, Prussian, English, appear! what but Christ weeping over Jerusalem? how can we speak but weep? If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace but now they are hid from thy eyes.<sup>55</sup> Behold thy house is left unto thee desolate<sup>56</sup> and thousands and tens of thousands of mothers are left desolate.

May Herbert, the eldest, is not, I believe, returned from the Engadine [Switzerland], poor child.

---

53 2 Cor 4:11: “For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.”

54 Son Sidney Herbert (1853-1913); both he and the eldest son, “Pembroke,” were later members of the Nightingale Fund Council.

55 Luke 19:42.

56 Luke 13:35.

**Editor:** Another letter to Harry Verney said that “Lady Herbert too ill to be told of her loss,” and added: “I don’t think there was a lad of greater promise in all England than Reginald Herbert.” A further one said that “Lady Herbert, who was dangerously ill at Wilton, was told on Saturday of her loss—bore it very well. Reginald was just going off his watch at 12, a few minutes before the catastrophe. One of the survivors met him on the ladder coming off his watch. A few minutes and he might have been on deck and he might have been saved. We hoped to the last, till Mr May, the gunner, told this to the boy’s uncle, Mr A’Court.”<sup>57</sup> In December Nightingale reported to Emily Verney: “I saw poor Sidney Herbert’s widow on Saturday—she has death in her face.”<sup>58</sup>

Source: From a letter from Lord Pembroke, with an extract of a letter of Reginald Herbert to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 45755 ff273-74

4 December 1870

I feel as if the news of Reggie’s death had quite stunned and broken me. I cannot write about it. It is beyond all words:

[Reginald Herbert:] All through the Leeward Society Islands our course was a perfect triumph, almost worshipped by the people and loaded with valuable presents. It all seems now like some beautiful dream that I can hardly realize with this sorrow freezing my heart.

Levuka capital of Fiji group, 150 islands, wrecked on the 21st October, on one of the group S. of the Namako passage. Everything pathetic or tragical has something comical about it—nine days Robinson Crusoe life on this island 21st to 30th, Nukuni Varanga[?] near Ringgold Islands. We must have looked like a gang of firemen from the lower world. As for Mitchell you would think he had been brought up to the shipwrecking business all his life. Nothing but sorrow everywhere.

your loving son  
Pembroke

The behaviour of the men to us was so nice that I feel a lump in my throat whenever I think of it. I could give 100 little instances if I had room.

---

57 Letters 14 and 19 September 1870, Wellcome (Claydon copies) Ms 9004/108 and 110.

58 Letter 15 December 1870, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/168.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 ff218-19

8 November 1871

Dearest, I heard of the “dear old boy’s” accident and felt so uneasy that I could not help writing to Mr A’Court (who is always so good in responding to my cry of news of you). I hope, from his account, that it is not so bad as I had fancied. Still it is quite bad enough—the thought of him seemed to pursue me all through the nights.

But I am sure that, like his father (you know the Sidney blood will always “out” when there is occasion for it) he will show that gentleness which is the highest strength and submit to rest and restriction however irksome for a time.

The constitution, as well as the sight, requires such absolute rest after a blow like that! It is a “grande bonne fortune” [great good luck] that he can have it where he is now—among you all.

I was touched by your bringing your noble fellow (of the Fiji shipwreck) to see me (that very day I had left for my father’s). If God spares me, I should like so much to make his acquaintance some day. (But I never had time to acknowledge your kind visit.)

God bless you and all those children, full of promise, is my unceasing, fervent prayer. In great press of business and illness, but believe me,

ever yours

Florence Nightingale

I do not even know whether your boy “Pembroke” has left you. I do not ask you to write—I know your many claims.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 ff220-21

8 January 1874

I was glad to see your dear hand again. Yes, my dear father went home quite suddenly on Monday morning at 8 o’clock: he had got up at his usual early hour; when they ran to him, there was no breath, nothing. I do not feel his death awful for *him*; it is *his* New Year. It is what he would have chosen—he was quite ready to part with his life—he always wished to go out of the world quietly—it was part of his single-minded character. I think his was the purest mind and most single heart I have ever known.

But it is very dreary not to have seen him once more, that none of us were by him at the last, not a last word or farewell. But for *him* it is best so. The Almighty Goodness has done with him what was best. No



one knows what a break-up it is to us, for me especially; I had only just received the idea that I might survive my mother; I never once thought that *I* should survive *him*. I thought he had ten years of life in him—I perhaps not one.

The funeral is on Saturday: a walking funeral—what *he* would have wished—only the family and the tenants—his cottagers carry him. One of the very last things he did, though ailing, was to see after building fresh rooms to a cottage. And the night before he died he carved for a large family party, including children, as usual.

No, his death is not awful for *him*: he was the truest father to all his people and cottagers, not pauperizing them but wise and careful, helping them to help themselves, even seeing that the wives kept their husbands' houses tidy himself. There was hardly a pauper on his places. May those who come after him do as well for those he so loved and cared for. He said a few words, evidently meant as a farewell to us, to one of his nieces that last day, repeated two lines about meeting again, which my dear mother treasures up.

Her grief is sweet and gentle: she begged to go in and “kiss him” but yielded when she was told that it was only his “old garment” there: *he* was not “there.” The grand old head was much changed, though death came without the least struggle. We had been anxious for her, not him, and I had actually had the invalid carriage ordered every day for a fortnight to go down to her. He wrote himself to prevent me—on account of my weakness. I had not seen so much of them as usual this last year: work was so heavy in London and I had only been two months with them at Lea Hurst.

I shall try to do my work as much as possible and as soon as possible as usual, as *he* would have had me. I must go on for a few months or years longer and try to “finish the work” which God and *Sidney Herbert* “gave me to do.”<sup>59</sup> I never forget *him* for a hour. Nay, I think that every month since 2 August 1861 I remember him more.

I wrote to  $\Sigma$  and sent my letter by a friend, who saw her but could not tell her, and finally left my letter for the doctor to give her or not as he judged right. It seems a dreary end for *her*, when the doctor decides for her what she is to feel and know. Please tell dear Mrs Fowler. I cannot write much and have so much to write. God bless you ever.

---

59 An allusion to John 17:4.

**Editor:** Nightingale received gifts from Wilton on 9 January 1874, a pheasant and two rabbits, which she sent to T.G. Balfour in memory of Sidney Herbert.<sup>60</sup>

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, ADD Mss 43396 ff223-24

Embley

Romsey

3 February 1874

Yes, she [Selina Bracebridge] is gone, dearest. She was more than mother to me and oh that I could not be a daughter to her in her latter times. What should I have been without her? And what would many have been without her?

To one living with her, as I have, she was unlike any other being here below: hers *was* faith, real sympathy with God, as unlike other as a picture of a sunny scene is to the real light and warmth of sunshine: or as this February lamp we call our sun is to her own eastern sun of living light in Palestine.

It is my last parting with my past from aught but pain: to her all joy. And *her* rising again, but *she* would not have me say it, so I can only think of that Saturday morning after the suffering darkness of her last sad months—as of the first time I saw with her, after a bad voyage (this but a pale likeness of her rising again, heaven will be the happier for her), the sun spring out of eastern seas, not with the chill damp of an English dawn, but rejoicing like a giant to run his course—in the glory of God.

Hers *was* “another dawn than ours,”<sup>61</sup> but “oh the difference to me.”<sup>62</sup> In thought I always lived with her in the days of her sorrows. May we be with her now in thought in the days of her joy! Other people live together to make each other worse: she lived to make others better: such real Christian humility. Excepting my dear father, I never knew any so really humble. And, with her, the most active heart and mind and buoyant soul that could well be conceived: was it not the more remarkable?

I can but think of her with words which she said almost with a divine rapture: Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.<sup>63</sup> Now let us

60 Letter 9 January 1874, ADD Mss 45772 f262.

61 A paraphrase from T. Hood, “The Death Bed.”

62 From William Wordsworth, “She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways”: But she is in her grave, and, oh / The difference to me!

63 Luke 23:43.

fetch a real blessing from our Father in heaven when saying God bless you and I am,

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I hope to be in London again in two or three weeks for I have much to do. I came down here to be with my poor mother. She wandered (much and painfully) when I first came. But now there is sometimes a gleam of divine happiness on her face, worth living to see. For me the place all “withered since my father died.”<sup>64</sup> God gives me no time or strength to write much.

Source: From a typed copy of a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 f225

7 July 1874

Dearest, Lord Panmure’s<sup>65</sup> death and your note received this morning overflowed me with bitter sweet memories. I have a little more to do than can be done in the twenty-four hours and ever-declining strength to do it with. This afternoon I had a business appointment (the afternoon you offer me) I could not possibly put off. I have another tomorrow afternoon. I have two of our matrons staying (different nights) in the house this week. The seeing our matrons and nurses forms a great addition to my present fatigues.

And we have had to remove my poor mother from her homes of fifty-six years. As you say, so much has happened—and so few to care for it. But I could not bear not to see you if you wish it.

I can scarcely ever make an appointment under a week to see my nearest or dearest, but would gladly see *you* any day at 5 for ¼ of an hour that you would now fix, *provided* I knew a day or two beforehand. I am full of Indian business, overweighted. God bless you.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I have not a copy by me of my pamphlet on “Life or Death in India” (Harrison: 59 Pall Mall)<sup>66</sup> or would send it you.

---

64 An allusion to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Act 2, scene 2, where Ophelia says: I would give you some violets, but they all withered when my father died.”

65 Lord Panmure (1801-74), secretary of state for war at the time of the royal commission on the Crimean War.

66 Nightingale’s paper read at the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, 1873, published the next year as a short book, *Life or Death in India*, in a later India volume.

Source: From a letter to Elizabeth Herbert, Add Mss 43396 ff226-29

24 February 1890

Dearest, indeed that loss [Sidney Herbert's death], unspeakable, irreparable, is always before me. But he has kindled a fire which will never go out,<sup>67</sup> whose life-giving light and warmth is spreading all over the world, and *will* spread. The tree is sown in India and is beginning to grow. But fire and tree all sadly want an artificer now like him to take the work in hand. And where will such a one be found? Perhaps this *Life* of him (proposed) may give the requisite impulse.<sup>68</sup>

And this is what *he* would have wished. God grant that his work, with his wonderful insight and perception, his self-devotion and laboriousness, his power, amounting to genius, of working out practically in administration the principles he had, so to speak discovered—his power so increased by his kindness and courtesy, of “multiplying himself,” organizing men so that they should see with his eyes and work with his hands, which *is* genius, as to create a new era and organization for what he did thirty years ago. *That* would be a work indeed worthy of him. Would that I could help you in giving you materials for the proposed *Life*, as you ask. But alas! I cannot, I am altogether unable, I am sorry to say, to do what you wish and what I should wish so much.

I have no letters from him that I could send you. His letters while I was in the Crimean War were not on very important business, and not such as one cared to preserve. Afterwards, there were the five years all but a week from 7 August 1856, the day we came back, to 2 August 1861—NOT “Dies irae” [day of wrath] it was the day that took him home to minister to still greater works for His, for our Heavenly Father—you know, who better? how it was—letters do not pass between those who see each other day after day.

For about two years or three I saw him in business almost every day—letters do not pass between those who see each other day after day; papers passed continually between us even during the years when I did not see him often. But during the whole period there were no letters, none kept, and not a line of record or of copy have I, nor a line of diary. He sometimes made little headings of the subjects we had to discuss—sometimes little notes of what we discussed. But these he always took away and I dare say they were not kept beyond the next day.

67 An allusion to the Czech reformer Jan Huss's burning at the stake in 1415.

68 Lord Stanmore's two-volume *Sidney Herbert: Lord Herbert of Lea, A Memoir*, on which there is strained correspondence shortly.

How sorry I am to have to say this to you—you will know for I can never forget the kindly precious *aid* your hand gave to all this communication. After this, perhaps you may hardly wish to see me, as you kindly offer.

My illness has so much increased that I am not equal to the work constantly increasing upon me. And I hardly see anyone not closely connected with that present work. I hope you are pretty well. May all blessings attend you.

ever your old friend

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** There was correspondence between Nightingale and Herbert in 1890 regarding the admission of Roman Catholics to training as nurses. Herbert wrote twice; Nightingale replied, “No, we can never misunderstand one another; that is my comfort.” Nightingale had no objection to training Roman Catholics (or adherents of any other religion) at the Nightingale School. But she explained: “With regard to the management of St Thomas’ Hospital I am not the responsible authority, as I dare say you know; and other questions, as you readily admit, have to be considered by the manager, besides the wishes or views of the Committee of the N. Fund.”<sup>69</sup>

The next surviving correspondence is from 1896, when the biographer to whom Elizabeth Herbert had given Nightingale’s letters to Sidney Herbert asked Nightingale for his to her. Nightingale was outraged by the choice of someone who had never known Sidney Herbert, by the fact that her friend had already handed over her letters and by the biographer’s request for Sidney Herbert’s to her. She explained to Margaret Verney:

Mr Gladstone and Lady Herbert have asked Lord Stanmore (Sir A. Gordon, you know) to write Sidney Herbert’s *Life*, S. Herbert whom he did not know and whom he is quite incapable of appreciating. And Lady Herbert, with whom I was as intimate as with her husband, *without my KNOWLEDGE or consent*, has sent the whole of my letters to S. Herbert to Lord Stanmore!! who now coolly writes and asks me for all Sidney Herbert’s!! letters to me!!! My letters to S. Herbert include all the time of the two royal sanitary commis-

---

69 Letter of Elizabeth Herbert 18 March 1890, Add Mss 43396 ff235-38, and of Nightingale 29 March 1890, ff239-40; Herbert’s is signed coolly with “M.E. Herbert.”

sions, of which he was president, and during a time when he called every day while he was in London upon me, and I wrote to him upon the matter of those confidential conversations.<sup>70</sup>

She consulted Frederick Verney, a lawyer, about copyright, stalled, eventually let Stanmore see some, but held back much. He retaliated with disparaging remarks about Nightingale in the *Memoir*: “jealous impatience . . . undue intolerance of all opposition of difference of opinion . . . censorious spirit,” and other “womanly weaknesses.”<sup>71</sup> Moreover he sought to exonerate Sidney Herbert’s conduct of the war, so had reason to side with him in matters of dispute with Nightingale.

Quite what happened about the letters is not clear; perhaps they were returned. Biographer E.T. Cook was “puzzled at there being among our papers so few of F.N.’s letters to Sidney Herbert. Were they not sent to the executor by Lord Stanmore?” He wondered also about the extracts from letters, which could not be found “among our papers. And one can by no means assume that his extracts give a fair account. He is very spiteful.”<sup>72</sup> The letters seem to have disappeared, some for decades at least, and some still are missing. Three boxes can be consulted at the Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection, which Cook evidently did not see, which are misleadingly described at the National Register of Archives as correspondence with Lord Pembroke, and which do not appear in Sue Goldie’s excellent compilation, *A Calendar of the Letters of Florence Nightingale*, 1983.

An undated fragment of a letter (to a person unknown) from about this time shows that Nightingale preferred to avoid her old friend:

I cannot thank you enough for your kind thought about my not seeing poor Sidney Herbert’s widow. As you say, there is nothing I would not do, if I could be of even the least use to those poor children. But I don’t believe it is possible—and therefore I shall most likely let things hang on, because I should not like Mrs Herbert to think I had “quarrelled” with her. And so probably her stay in London will end without my seeing her, which I shall be glad of.<sup>73</sup>

70 Letter 23 April 1896, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/71.

71 Arthur Hamilton-Gordon Stanmore, *Sidney Herbert: Lord Herbert of Lea, A Memoir* 1:404-06.

72 Letter of E.T. Cook to Rosalind Nash 15 December 1912, Woodward Biomedical Library C.21.

73 Fragment, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9014/138.

Nightingale also asked Douglas Galton for his advice,<sup>74</sup> and her own notes on the matter survive as well.<sup>75</sup>

### **Louisa Stewart-Mackenzie, Lady Ashburton**

**Editor:** Louisa Caroline Stewart-Mackenzie (1827-1903) was a friend from at least the 1840s, when the two young women visited each other and made calls together in London. For example, a note in Frances Nightingale's journal of engagements for 1846 shows that she (with her daughters?) "went to the British and Foreign to see Mrs S. Mackenzie, Mrs Keith and Louisa dressed for the D. room." A note 28 February has "Florence with Louisa Mackenzie to call upon Miss Dutton."<sup>76</sup> There are references to Louisa Mackenzie in Nightingale's correspondence with other family members. For example, she reported to her sister, "I wrote, as you desired me, to Louisa Mackenzie one night, from ten to twelve pages of Moral Reflections adapted to the Use of *cheerful* Youth, and have had a most melancholy answer."<sup>77</sup> They shared information on servants.

Louisa Mackenzie, her sister-in-law and Anne Dutton were highly praised in a letter to Hilary Bonham Carter that same year: "Mrs Keith M., Miss Dutton and Louisa Mackenzie may be shortly described as the respective representatives of the soul, the mind and the heart: the first has one's whole *worship*, the second one's greatest *admiration*, and the third one's most lively *interest*" (in *Life and Family* 1:435).

In 1858 Louisa Stewart-Mackenzie became the second wife of the wealthy second Baron Ashburton (Alexander Baring), a member of a prominent political, Liberal family. He was president of the British and Foreign Bible Society, hence presumably shared his wife's (and Nightingale's) evangelical views. He took his bride for their wedding trip up the Nile (eight years after Nightingale's trip with the Bracebridges). The Nile emerges several times as a link with Nightingale, for the Ashburtons' daughter, Mary Florence Baring (1860-1902), married the marquess of Northampton and he took her on a Nile trip. Others of his family, "The Northamptons," were on the Nile at the same time as Nightingale and the Bracebridges in 1850 (in *Mysti-*

---

74 Letter 8 January 1896, ADD Mss 45767 f185.

75 Notes 31 August 1896, ADD Mss 45845 ff201-07.

76 The first entry, 26 February 1846, refers to the queen's drawing room, or reception, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9040/8.

77 Letter c1844, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/68.

*cism and Eastern Religions* 4:150). Louisa Ashburton herself made another trip there late in life, 1898.

After Lord Ashburton's death in 1864 Louisa Ashburton did much charitable work, notably for sailors' homes. She shared Nightingale's interest in General Gordon's work (a letter to Frederick Verney reports that she had collected "slips" on him, which could be used for a speech). Louisa Ashburton also acted for Nightingale in seeking support for causes, for example, in 1892 approaching Lady Burdett-Coutts for a donation to a girls' high school in India (see p 810 below).

The friends remained in touch throughout Nightingale's working life; Lady Ashburton sent flowers and fruit from her country home and offered it for her use. Nightingale indeed borrowed her house, Seaforth Lodge, Seaton, South Devon, in 1880 when recuperating from the death of her mother.

There is much surviving correspondence from this long and happy association. Forty-eight letters from Nightingale (one is to the daughter), some with messages on envelopes, are in the Stewart-Mackenzie Collection at the National Library of Scotland. They begin in 1857; there is a gap in the 1870s (possibly because of a fire at the Ashburton country home) and end in 1901. Evidently letters from before 1861 were returned to Nightingale at her request, to prevent their falling into the hands of "female ink bottles" (see p 720 below); those few from before the request are not at all personal. The letters cover her friend's marriage, plans for their wedding trip to Egypt, the birth of their only child, named after Nightingale but called "Maysie" or "Maisie," the death of Lord Ashburton and Louisa Ashburton's resolve to do God's work in her widowhood, the daughter's growing up, her marriage, the birth of their son, and yet another trip to Egypt (forty-five years after Nightingale's). As well as mundane subjects, such as the need for a private nurse, cats and a clothes' order (it seems Lady Ashburton went shopping for Nightingale), the letters deal with getting Lord Ashburton to intervene on the siting of the new Winchester Infirmary, a memorial for General Gordon and a request for Lady Ashburton to meet Princess Narès and her two sons on their Scottish travels.

The two friends evidently discussed their common faith. Blessings and prayers abound in the correspondence and Nightingale acknowledged insights she received from her friend. In 1892 Louisa Ashburton gave Nightingale a commemorative Bible published 1887 on the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign, to which Nightingale added



some annotations (see *Spiritual Journey* 2:321). There are quotations from an Italian novel (in Italian) and comments on the latest book by Martineau.

Nightingale and her family also knew the first Baron Ashburton, a diplomat who negotiated a boundary treaty, and his wife, daughter of an American senator. Nightingale's fascinated praise of the first Lady Ashburton occurs in a letter to her sister immediately below. It describes a royal visit to the duke of Wellington's country estate, Stratfieldsaye, to which Nightingale incorrectly refers as "Strathfieldsaye," a matter of some confusion because there is a Strathfieldsaye in Nottinghamshire, the property of the duke of Newcastle. The *Times* notice of the projected visit misspells the name. The story was presumably recounted to Nightingale by the first Lady Ashburton (or possibly Sir William or Lady Heathcote, neighbours and acquaintances at Embley). A shorter version of the visit appears in a letter to another woman friend (see p 763 below).

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were at Stratfieldsaye 20-23 January 1845 and the visit is recorded in detail in the queen's diary (available now as excerpted by her daughter, Princess Beatrice). In it the place is correctly given as Stratfieldsaye. The queen's entries give quite a different account from the one Nightingale heard. There is nothing of the tedium the first Lady Ashburton experienced (they left early, the queen noted!). Possibly the queen's sparse comments, "After dinner we sat in the Library and a few neighbours came in" and "Some few other gentlemen came to dinner and more neighbours afterwards," may be coded references to the dreadful "masters of hounds" (see p 713 below). The queen's entries show her using the time for political discussions with the prime minister, Sir Robert Peel, a point which evidently escaped Nightingale's source. Another difference, the queen's journal has no mention of billiards being played, but Prince Albert seems not to have done very well at tennis!

Source: From an incomplete letter to Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/127

Thursday [1845]

Lady Heathcote excessively pretty and very cordial. I sat next Sir William and he told me some most curious stories about the discoveries of the "Opening of Letters Committee," on which he sat.<sup>78</sup> I never

---

<sup>78</sup> This secret committee was appointed to investigate a scandal regarding the home secretary, for authorizing the opening of private letters, on request of the foreign secretary.

realized before the propriety of literally observing the psalmist's command to go up with a merry shout and a joyful noise, till I heard him hurra the grace. If I had been properly brought up to the responses at church I should have joined in the shout.

The Ashburtons were the party—she is an American, you know—he does not look like a settler of a boundary question.<sup>79</sup> As to her, with a predilection for Americans, you know, she and I had so much to say about Boston, and I had so much curious information to give her upon that city and its inhabitants! then Boston exclusiveness, then mesmerism, and she told me, though she does not believe in it herself, certainly the most curious story I have heard, because it was done by Lady Bath, her daughter, in her presence and in joke, on her governess, but it ended tragically, then Vestiges, which she says is by Combe and here we had just got up so high into the Law of Development and Organic Nature that when goodnight came, I could not get down again, and was obliged to go off as an angel.

I wish I could get up the steam to profit by all the curious stories we have heard, and tell you them. First then, the Strathfieldsaye concern was the most ill-managed crash that ever was heard of. The Ashburtons were the only people of the queen's society asked and the not inviting the Palmerstons was considered quite a personal insult and almost unaccountable. But the old duke,<sup>80</sup> they say, cares for nothing now but flattery, and asks nobody but masters of hounds. He quite ill-treated the speaker George Shaw Lefevre. The dullness of it was beyond anything: *reggnava il terror nella città* [terror reigned in the city]. Not a sound was heard, not a funeral note as the queen's corse was carried into dinner, and afterwards in the drawing room it was still worse. They all stood at ease and behaved just like so many soldiers on parade. She did her very best, but was finally overpowered by numbers, gagged and her hands tied.

The only amusement of the evening was seeing Albert taught billiards, when, if he missed, which he did every time, they said, Oh that does not count, You play again and a chance cannon was considered as the first remarkable stroke beneath the stars. Lord Palmerston says the queen is stanch, that, at Lord Hardwicke's, she asked "who that

79 The Webster-Ashburton Treaty fixed boundaries between the United States and the eastern colonies of what would become Canada, signed in 1842, much to the disadvantage of Canada.

80 The "old duke" of Wellington was in his late seventies and a thorough Conservative; the Palmerstons who were not invited, although neighbours, were Liberals.

bishop of Ely was.” “The bishop of Ely and a violent Whig.” “No worse than a violent Tory, at least I have not found it so.” “I hope your majesty has no reason to complain of the violent Tories.” “No, but perhaps the prince may have.”

A little more passed of the same sort and Lord Hardwicke finished with “We trust your majesty will forgive, at least, any *désagrément* that she may think have been caused her by them.” “Forgive them, certainly my lord, but forget them, no,” in her own peculiarly quiet way. It comes from high authority, added Lord P., for it comes from Lord Hardwicke himself. He ended with saying that the Tories had mistaken her altogether, had treated her like a child, whereas she is a woman and a woman of strong character. Her passion has always been to travel, and her rapture at finding herself on French ground, she said, was the happiest moment of her life.

Lady Jocelyn<sup>81</sup> always reminds me of a saint as she sits and works and works and works, and does not speak, but always looks as if she sufficed to herself, and as if her serenity was unalterable by any human touch. I could always see a white lily in her hand, and a St Bertha crown upon her passionless forehead. She looks like Lamartine’s *lac*. What is the secret of these people and what is the depth of their characters which makes them find no emptiness, no want in life, for she never talked to Lord Palmerston. She was very fond of her baby, but told me herself she did not care to play with it, so those are not her interests and there never were passed four and twenty years of more excitement than hers. I believe all the young peerage has proposed to her. So what makes all this sublime Heiterkeit [cheerfulness] makes her so completely enough for herself, I declare though so monotonous [illeg]. One could have called her great, if greatness is to be one with oneself, without change, without Unruhe [agitation]. And her manner just the same, to Lord Palmerston, and to the shoemaker Godfrey, where I walked with her.

You will say that it is want of earnestness perhaps, but good gracious, my dear, if earnestness breaks one’s heart, who is fulfilling the creation end most, one, who is breaking their heart, or this woman, who is her own fullness of life, to whom others are so little, who has kept her serenity in a life of excitement, and her simplicity in boundless admiration. But I was not sorry to go away without learning her

---

81 Frances Elizabeth Cowper, daughter of the 5th Earl Cowper, married to Viscount Jocelyn.

secret, for I dare say she could not have told me. But she is so unlike everybody else in this restless, uneasy age. She is like the idyllic ladies, or Helena, walking in the contemplation of her own beauty, or my dear, passez-moi this profanity, sometimes I thought she was thinking of her confinement, which she is within a few days of, and if I could have got out of my head the exquisite little lace cap, I should have thot her like the Behold the handmaid of the Lord.<sup>82</sup>

How different from her mother. She did not seem to find an interest in any of all the things which all the world is bestirring itself after. I dare say she never got up every morning to see the post come in, even when she was going to be married.

I am afraid I did not attend enough to Sir W. Heathcote to give you as much as I ought, but the first case he said which came out (of a secretary of state's opening letters) was in Cardinal Wolsey's time,<sup>83</sup> when the Austrian ambassador's messenger home had his letters taken from him (from some idea of a sub-official) but as nobody could read them, they passed from hand to hand, till they came to Sir T. More<sup>84</sup> and lastly to the cardinal, who read them, and, finding something unpleasant to himself in the highest degree, sent off to Portsmouth to stop an ambassador's messenger who was just going to sail, read *his* letters and then wrote to his imperial highness Charles V<sup>85</sup> saying that he had found in his ambassador's letters so many lies about himself (Cardinal Wolsey) that he begged he might be recalled, openly avowing how he had opened the letters. And such was the dread of the cardinal that Charles V actually put up with this sublime shamefulnes, adding insult to injury and recalled the ambassador.

Lady Ashburton is the most unexclusive person I ever saw; she had a raspberry tart of diamonds on her forehead worth seeing. Adoo, mein Kind, I hope thou art enjoying thyself and do not doubt it, indeed how can I? I do not think I shall be able to get Mama to write, but if she doesn't, tenez-le vous pour dit [assume] that you may stay, and we will send for Shore independently of you. If there is a letter from you to her tomorrow, I shall abstract it, as it would spoil your cause to remind her of what she let fall and only annoy her. I am sure that au fond it is only for me that she thinks it right to hasten you

---

82 Luke 1:38.

83 Cardinal Wolsey (c1473-1530), lord chancellor of England under Henry VIII.

84 Thomas More (1477-1535), successor of Cardinal Wolsey as lord chancellor in 1529.

85 Charles V (1500-58), Holy Roman emperor.

home. Papa is so busy that he would not profit much by your sweet companies. Thank William much for his letter. I am so glad he likes the harrier. I did all I could on Wednesday to make Mama write herself but could not so I wrote myself in a fit of daring. Good bye mein Beste.

Source: From three letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

4 February 1857

Dearest, Mrs [Susan] *Cator*, the nurse I so highly recommended to you, has long since been placed in a very good situation, which I do not think her likely to leave. The only nurse I now know of (out of a situation) whom I could recommend is Mrs Montague. She is perfectly sober and trustworthy—a little eccentric and by no means equal to Mrs Cator—but I have recommended her to Lady Coltman, whose son she has been nursing and who likes her. She is still at Lady Coltman's, 8 Hyde Park Garden, if you like to write to her. I do not think a more trustworthy person than Montague could be found.

With grateful love to Mrs Mackenzie,

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Dearest, I wrote to you a few days ago to tell you that Mrs Cator had a permanent situation and is not at all likely to leave it—and that Mrs Montague is the only trustworthy nurse I have left without a permanent situation. You will judge of her in  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour of seeing her, as there is nothing more eccentric about her or deeper than her manner.

You could never take any permanent nurse without trying her. If I hear of anyone else, I will let you know.

With love to Mrs Stewart Mackenzie.

19 February 1857

Dearest, I have heard of two nurses out of situations—one, Mary Robbins, 20 Bossi's Gardens, Brighton, was out with me in the East. She was sober, very kind, efficient, a good nurse, with a knowledge of cooking and housekeeping, and perfectly respectable—the sort of person one grows very fond of but more as an old nurse than a “confidential” maid.

There is this advantage, that you could see her without having her up on purpose.

Mrs [Anne Ayre] Hely, Ravenstone, Ashby de la Zouch is not personally known to me. She was at Smyrna and Renkioi hospitals and

has the highest character as a good nurse, a good housekeeper and a good temper. She would, of course, give you her references.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I do not think either of these ladies likely to be particularly strong-minded, although sensible—both of them.

Source: From four letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

2 December 1858

I cannot let you go on your Eastern journey, and at the beginning of a journey, too, of far more interest than that, without saying God bless you, God be with you. But I will not say more, for you have no time for more. You have my heart's best wishes and hopes, for you have chosen a man whom to praise would be in me impertinence. It was very good of you to come here and at such a time to think of me.

6 December 1858

All I knew (I wish I could say know) of Egyptian history or hieroglyphics was from Bunsen, Lepsius, Wilkinson and Gliddon.<sup>86</sup> But this is eight years ago and I am sorry to say I know nothing of what has been doing in that line of business during these eight years. The two Germans are, like all Germans, profound and systematic, but pedantic and pudding-headed. Bunsen far less of the two last and far more of the second first than Lepsius. The Englishman and the American have the very reverse of both qualities and faults.

I stick to Bunsen, however, as my authority in historical matters. But perhaps during these last eight years, “nous avons changé tout cela” [we have changed all that] as above-said. All my Egyptian library, which is at Embley and of which I do not even remember the titles (or authors indeed, except these four) is very much at your service. Say but one word by return of post and I will write to Embley to send it to you. I would do so at once but that I think it so unlikely that Lord Ashburton may not have all these books with you at this moment.

I think Miss Martineau's *Eastern Life: Past and Present* a very good popular handbook, though there is much in it entirely to be disagreed with—Murray, of course, you have. Keep out of the way of the

---

86 George Robins Gliddon, John Gardner Wilkinson; for references on Nightingale's use of Bunsen's, Lepsius's and their works see *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:124, 221, 270, 303 and 362-63).

(missionary) Lieders at Cairo,<sup>87</sup> if still there. They are the most frightful charlatans I know.

I hope you are going to the second cataract. After Thebes there is nothing like Abu Simbul *the whole way* for interest. Take by no means less than three weeks for Thebes. And oh give Philae a week—though of the worst period of Egyptian art. But there is nothing like it for sentiment in the world—as there is nothing like Abu Simbul for art.

Take care to take plenty of candles with you from Cairo. For if you don't, not all your money will get them for you afterwards, unless you rob the Coptic church at Asyut, which we did. But perhaps things are altered now.

If you like to telegraph back to me for the books, do. I was only afraid that, if I sent them uncalled for, you would be in Don Abbondio's predicament, "il quale, reduto quel gran soccorso, si pentì di averlo invocato" [which, having seen all the great help he regretted having asked for it]."<sup>88</sup>

6 December 1858

It occurred to me after I wrote to you, my dearest, that a very humble historical manual which I made for our own use in Egypt, which follows Bunsen entirely, might be of use to you if the botheration of reading Ms does not negative the advantage of its being short. Anyhow, I enclose it. Please return it to my father, who values it for my sake.

9 December 1858

I send today to Bath House<sup>89</sup> (in time for package for Alexandria) besides the books on the list I wrote you today: Bunsen Vols IV and V, published since I was in Egypt; map of Egypt. I now send per post to you a book which will take very little room and which you should certainly look at in Egypt by Gliddon.

---

87 See *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:422).

88 Don Abbondio was the priest in Alessandro Manzoni's famous novel, *The Betrothed*. In the complicated plot he was trying to avoid a couple he had agreed to marry, but was pressed not to; when they confronted him he called for help, which came and made things worse.

89 Bath House was the Ashburton London residence. On 8 December Nightingale had already sent a number of books: five volumes of Wilkinson, vol. 1 of Bunsen, the first two volumes in English of Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, for him, and Sale's *Horace* for her, and she made other recommendations (see *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* 4:124).

My properties have never been kept together at Embley and half my books could not be found when I sent down there for you. Therefore these divers things have been procured by driblets. I do not know who our consul-general at Cairo is now—so little do I know of things. But whoever he is he will most likely be able to lend you maps and books.

Farewell.

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

16 July 1860

Dearest, If you wish to call your daughter after me, as a token of my affection for her, as your child, and of yours for me, it cannot but be VERY grateful to me. But, if you have any superstitions, I don't think you would like my fate for your child. Not but that I think it a very happy one—God has given me a larger measure of usefulness than I had ever expected—of usefulness, which *is* happiness, which *is* success—He has given me the “roc's egg,” which I had never dreamed of, as some do.

But bitter have been my disappointments—heartbreaking. And not the least of them is the failure of health—not followed so soon by death, as doctors had told me and as I had hoped—which limits now all usefulness. I need not tell you that I have thought much of your “daughter.” God bless her! Good wishes speed her!

ever yours

Florence Nightingale

Would you let me see your “daughter” when she is supposed old enough to “go out”?

Source: From two letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

11 March 1861

My dear (what shall I say?) I have no village nurse to recommend. I wish I had. And none of the nurses whom I am training at St Thomas' Hospital will be “passed” or certificated before July.

I will forward your inquiry to Hilary, in case she should think a person would do, whom we both know, but whom I have not seen for three years.

Yours is such an universal inquiry now that I think the “supply” must soon be equal to the “demand.” Your “terms” are *exceedingly* liberal. Have you been applied to about the Winchester Infirmary? Both



Winchester and Reading infirmaries have applied to me with regard to *plans*. Nothing can be done for the Winchester one but removal and rebuilding. The subsoil is tainted past the power of cure. The space for the patients is half what it ought to be. They must rebuild on a better site. I hope that, if Lord Ashburton is applied to, which he is sure to be, he will require a copy to be sent him of the report of Mr Rawlinson, a civil engineer (who was sent for to examine it), and which is admirable. And I trust you will persuade him to give his influence to *rebuild and remove*. Patients had much better stay at home than go into the present hospital.

So much for the ancient city of Winchester.

Commend me to the little lady who, when I saw her infant face, was the most striking likeness of you.

14 April 1861

My dear friend, You will be surprised to hear from me and still more at my request. If you have still any of my letters to you, would you send them back to me? One of those female ink bottles, who are my dread and despair, is collecting materials for a life of me.

And, though I am quite sure you would never lend yourself to such a purpose, the only thing which could make me quite happy on this score would be to burn all the letters I have ever written with my own hand.

It is only on the ground of auld lang syne that I could ask you to take the trouble to return any letters you may have of mine by railway parcel. You have not left any such maiden stores at Brahan, have you? I beg your pardon for suspecting that you could have been so foolish.

I hope the little “daughter of your house and name” is well and growing up vigorous and beautiful.

for auld lang syne

**Editor:** Nightingale had to find a nurse for her friend (or her husband or child) in Paris in 1863, for which the intermediary was Richard Monckton Milnes, in the letter below. Presumably the medical crisis passed, for a letter from Milnes to Lady Ashburton, 3 April 1863, has him sending off an autograph signature of Nightingale’s for a bazaar, expected to fetch £1.<sup>90</sup> Lord Ashburton died the following year, the subject of the next letters and visits.

---

90 Letter postmarked 3 April 1863, Wellcome Ms 5482/52.

Source: From a letter to Richard Monckton Milnes, Wellcome Ms 5482/52, envelope addressed to Lady Ashburton, Champs Elysee, Paris

31 March 1863

I have got a nurse from King's College Hospital (St John's House) who will be at *your house* prepared to go to Paris at 3:00 P.M. today. Could you give such directions as that the junction may be effected there (at 16 Upper Brook St.) with Lord Ashburton's servant, so that the two may start for Paris with as little fatigue to the nurse as possible, if, as seems likely, she will have to enter upon her duties at once.

You know St John's House is a society which lets out nurses affiliated to itself, the nurse remaining the servant of the society and not becoming the servant of the patient.

ever yours

F.N.

Source: From four letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

Sunday

15 May [1864]

My poor dearest, I have indeed thought of you in your great loneliness—the loss of one so great, so worthy—of the *one*, *the* one who could not be spared, when so many, many live on, whom nobody would miss, nobody mourn. It seems so hard that always *the* one is taken who makes such a gap in the world. But better to have known *the* one and have lost him than never to have known him or lost anything worth caring for.

Yes, if it is right for your little one to go out today, I should be so glad to see her—between 3 and 5 is a good time for me, if it is for her. I am entirely a sick prisoner now, scarcely able to do my business—never able to write more than a few words after that is done.

Indeed I have felt for you and with you, my poor dearest—your happiness so short—but it *was* full while it lasted.

yours overflowing

F. Nightingale

16 May [1864]

Dearest, very dearest, It did me good to see you—did me good to see you bearing that intense loss with such real seconding of the will of God—such as he himself whom you have lost would have wished.

I trust your precious one will go on well and did not make her throat worse yesterday.

I shall never forget your generous wish to help me. Perhaps we may meet again even before another world. God bless you and He does bless you.

yours ever

F.N.

I have been thinking of you all night and how noble is your entering into the design of God, so that His design and yours are as it were one. As you say, it is not resignation, it is *oneness*.

7 June 1864

My dearest friend, The little kitten, which your little Mary wished for, is ready to leave its mother. How shall it come, and where? (I am afraid, if it were to come by one of your magnificent return boxes, it would spend the night at some office in London, which it would not like.)

I have never thanked you for your beautiful and welcome flowers, fruit and vegetables. It is not likely you should remember our old cook, Burton, who lived with us more than twenty years. She is dying a slow and painful death near here—and has shared largely in the contents of your generous baskets—which I am sure have smoothed her lingering deathbed.

My brother-in-law, Sir Harry Verney, finds time to go and pray with her. How touching that is in a very busy man!

It is three years today since Sidney Herbert sent me the news of Cavour's death with these words: "This is the life I should like to have lived; this is the death I should like to die."<sup>91</sup> In less than seven weeks he had his wish. To our eyes, how incalculable has been the mischief from those two deaths. These great things, as well as small, I am sure you sympathize in. I feel for you more than I can say. I hope I make some slow progress in "*laissant Dieu vouloir pour moi*" [letting God *will for me*]. I am sure you make giant steps. God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

Hampstead, N.W.

1 September 1864

My poor dearest, You cannot think what a pleasure those beautiful photographs of your darling are to me. They are so unlike photographs. They are really beautiful pictures. Thank you so much for thinking of me and her together.

---

91 Camillo di Cavour (1810-61); see *European Travels* (7:330).

I did not know you were at Melchet Park.<sup>92</sup> I am afraid the last wrench must have been a sore one. But, as you feel it, your present home is all lighted up with the thoughts of him who created it for you and whose every wish was for you.

Thank you so much too for all your beautiful flowers and fruit. I wish I had anything to tell *you* that would give you pleasure. But we have been so driven lately, as we always are after the Parliamentary session is over, with trifles concerning *only* the lives and morals of men which government always puts off till then!! But we have a tower of strength in our great John Lawrence. Last winter I had a correspondence with Dr John Brown of Edinburgh, which he began on the score of his acquaintance with *you*. You know he has since lost his wife. But, poor thing, I suppose her mental state made death a release. He sent me his books. "Rab" was an old friend.<sup>93</sup> But of all he has written, I like his sketch of his dead father the best. God bless you.

ever yours, dearest life

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

8 May 1865

Dearest, I did not receive your Tuesday's note till twenty-four hours *after* "the twenty-four hours" you said you were to be in London. Else I *should* have been tempted to have seen you, as you so kindly proposed. I do so long to hear of you and of your dear little one. I never saw any human so interesting as she is. And I keep her photograph always opposite me. She does not look unwell, but she looks like a spirit which might slip off its mortal coil like a pinafore.

I believe it was better for me that I *could* not take advantage of the opportunity you offered me—I am so pressed and harassed that I feel, if I cannot get a week or two's rest, my working life may be merely a question of days.

This was my reason dear beloved one for not answering directly I received yours. *Indeed I do feel* your lot a very suffering one. God bless you.

<sup>92</sup> The magnificent country home Lord Ashburton had built for her.

<sup>93</sup> Dr John Brown (1810-82); *Rab and his Friends* relates the sad story of a noble bull terrier, "Rab," who was killed by his cruel new owner for mourning the death of his previous master.

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

28 January 1867

Dearest, Be sure that I am always glad to hear of you and of your dear little Mary and that I delight in the characteristic little photographs of her which you have so kindly sent me. She does not look (in these) so fragile as she did. I trust that her fragility is rapidly passing off.

I am afraid I cannot serve you, as I would so gladly do in the matter about which you write to me. *Sick* nurses are the only people—and those chiefly for the poor and for hospitals—who *really* come under my cognizance. And latterly I have made it a rule never to recommend anyone whom I did not really know. For I have been so deceived by recommendations myself from those I thought I could trust. Whom *does* one know?

I have made several inquiries for you, but without result. If I hear of anyone, be sure that I will let you know. It seems to me that the sort of person you want is a very experienced woman and that yours is a *very* easy place that therefore Lizzie Herbert's Mrs Lorton, or Lady Belper's nurse, when leaving a place where they have brought up a large family of children are the people for you, as to *kind*. I cannot find a person for myself though I give any wages—and there is absolutely no nursing to do with me—and mine is a very easy place.

Dearest, I only write to tell you how much I think of you and how gladly I would help you. We are overdone with work, especially at this time of the year, before Parliament meets. I have never known for more than thirteen years what it is to have a half hour of leisure. And I am quite a prisoner to bed. God bless you.

**Editor:** In 1872 Nightingale reported, apparently to her sister and brother-in-law:

You know of course that Melchet is burnt down—all the most valuable things got out—house uninsured. Lady Ashburton who had been ill before is not the better, of course. She was taken to Broadlands,<sup>94</sup> whence as soon as she is able to move, she will go to the Devonshire place, where her little girl went (before the fire). Fire burnt from 11 A.M. on Saturday to Sunday morning. All the gentlemen and men in the neighbourhood went to help—many worked

---

94 Broadlands was the Hampshire home of Lord Palmerston, near both Melchet and Embley.

all night. Rev Berthon of Romsey and our schoolmaster Kneller seem to have worked the best. Whole fire might have been put out at once (tank full of water) had not the fire-extinguishing apparatus been out of order.

I am afraid the shock to Lady Ashburton has been very severe. She walked about bravely for two hours giving orders, then quite sank for a time; our men worked all night, saved Lady Ashburton's private rooms, it is said (they and others).<sup>95</sup>

Source: From a letter to Parthenope and Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/38

Good Friday [26 March] 1880

Yesterday I had Mary Baring at your desire and the day before her mother. I delight in the child: so natural and so sensible. And of course I addressed her as a "painful" Conservative and we had a great deal of pleasant chaff. She has plenty in her. I thought her mother quite broken-down. She asked me to Seaton.

Source: From three letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

Seaton

12 May 1880

Dearest and best beloved, I am obliged to return to business and London tomorrow. and leave this lovely place and waves and birds (but a hawk has eaten my thrush) and rocks which your kindness has made so doubly dear.

Forgive my great anxiety to hear of your matters. I think you can hardly be more anxious yourself about them. But the Heavenly Father will arrange it all better than we could ourselves.

I am not the less grateful, but the more, because I put off telling you how much I am ever, with Aunt Florence's love to Mary, dearest of friends,

your loving and grateful

F. Nightingale

I have had a nice account of Berry from Mrs Hanbury at Mentone. But she does specify one thing (nothing which would prevent my taking her) and proposes I should see Mr Hanbury who is in England, which I will do. I have not written to Berry, not at all on this account. She asked me for a few days to go and see her mother (who is living at

95 Letter 5 August 1872, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/155.

Embley) after she leaves you. And when I have seen Mr Hanbury, I will write to you and to her, ascertaining when it will be convenient for your dear self for her to leave Melchet (though you generously said “*any*” time). Again fare you very well, as well as God loves you.

Whitsunday

16 May 1880

O dearest and best beloved, At this blessed Whitsuntide I can’t help wishing you all the Holy Spirit has to give—*what* a promise it is, not only from the bottom of my heart but in words aloud—and sending to ask after you—for I fear late anxieties have not been conducive to health.

I am glad you are going out of London. If you should be so good as to wish to see me before you go, but you must be so overburdened, only God takes the burdens Himself.

But, if you should wish, please say. I *have* engagements both for *tomorrow* and *today*. But I would put either off so as to see you *today* or *tomorrow* at 5 or at 6, if you will let me know beforehand. But, dear old friend, I am not *asking* to see you—I ALWAYS bear you in my heart—poor worthless heart. God bless you ever—*His* is the heart to leave you in.

12 June 1880

A thousand and a thousand thanks, my dearest friend, for the lovely flowers and fruit. “I keep them all for me,” as “Rejected Addresses” say. I am so sorry for your cough I trust to see you, when you are able to go out, if you can spare time.

All loves and blessings to you and Mary.

Glad Mrs Barry is of use. (I am rather broken-down, you ask.) God forever bless you.

ever your old

Flo

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

26 June 1881

Dearest friend, I have only now heard that your brother, the Keith I knew so well so many years ago, has “resigned that earthly load of death called life which us from life doth sever” (my dear mother’s favourite words). O may it be so with him! O may you feel, dearest, that he leant on you for the highest comfort, and that you led him there where only it can be found, O you who are “highly favoured”!<sup>96</sup>

---

96 Luke 1:28. The “resigned” quotation is from John Milton, sonnet 14.

I have heard no particulars, whether the end was blessed, whether you were with him at the end.

Aunt Florence's best love to dear Mary. May she prosper in "sinless" joy! She always reminds me of the paradise state—the "sinless" man in the bronze Génie Adorant. How fares it with her?

We are opening the new Marylebone Infirmary at Notting Hill—which we are to nurse with trained nurses, thank God. I have to see each of these for three or four hours alone before she begins work (760 beds). *Pray* that it may succeed in the highest sense—that there may be devotion and self-denial as well as skill and training. I am sure you do pray for us.

I have also had great Indian responsibilities which do not prosper. Pray too for these.

Dearest, I have heard nothing of you this year. I do not know whether you have been in London. What do you think of Amicia's marriage?<sup>97</sup>

I saw Lady Lothian<sup>98</sup> the other day about St Pancras. She looks worn to a shade. May God bless her—and may God pour His choicest blessing on you is the fervent prayer of,

your old friend as ever

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

2 July 1883

Dearest ever dearest, How good of you to write. Would 6 o'clock on "Saturday," as you kindly propose, suit you? Today I am more than full.

I was in hopes you were going North with dear Mary soon.

ever thy

old Flo

97 Amicia Henrietta Milnes (b. 1852), daughter of former suitor Richard Monckton Milnes, recently married to an officer in the Indian Civil Service, Gerald Fitzgerald.

98 Constance, marchioness of Lothian (1836-1901), supporter of workhouse infirmary reform; Nightingale's notes on their two meetings appear in *Public Health Care* (6:474-78).



Source: From four letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

22 June 1884

Dearest, How good of you to come yesterday. I am so very, very sorry that it is impossible for me to find a moment to hear all that is so near my heart before you leave town—and you say you go tomorrow afternoon. Then—when you come back, may I not? How is dear Mary?

I cannot say much for poor Parthe. The nurses tell me she has been better for the last fortnight. But she herself will not allow it. Sir Harry feels far from strong but he is so entirely himself again in mind, so thankful for this added life, and so anxious to dedicate every hour to the service of God and man.

As you are, my darling. I do hope that the blank has not been too painful and has been partly filled at least by this absorbing interest—God bless you ever—and *au revoir* shall it not be? I know you would not wish me to sacrifice a duty even for the great pleasure of seeing my dearest.

ever yours with  
loving love  
F.N.

29 June 1884

Dearest, How good of you! I am very glad you did not let Colonel Mackenzie come today. And I shall be very glad to see him *tomorrow* (*Monday*) at 5, as you so kindly propose. I wish I could save you the trouble of sending to let him know. And if you are going on Wednesday, dearest of friends, would you really come on TUESDAY at 5 or at 6? I am afraid it is the last day I shall have vacant this week. God bless you.

1 July 1884

Dearest, How is Mary? I feel so anxious about you both. Come *this afternoon* at 5 or 6, if it is convenient. But do not come if it is not. God bless you both.

ever yours in loving love  
Flo

Colonel Mackenzie was so good as to come yesterday with such a fund of interest. Many thanks.

Could you give me Lord *Houghton's* address, for our nursing committee wants him as chairman.

6 July 1884

Dearest, very dearest, How are you? and how is Mary?

As you are not going till “Wednesday,” might I hope that you will make an appointment for me to hear your dear voice again, either on Monday (tomorrow) or Tuesday at 5 or at 6? God bless you.

with great love

Source: From three letters to Louisa Ashburton and one to Mary Florence Baring, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

10 March 1885

Dearest, very dearest, I am sorry to say that I am engaged to see Mr Commissary Young who is only a few days in England and returning to Egypt on “*Thursday* afternoon” and Sunday I have to see an Anglo-Indian, also Friday and Saturday. Alas! when can I see thee?

most dearly beloved  
ever thine

18 March 1885

Dearest Mary

God giveth His beloved sleep.<sup>99</sup> We trust that He has given rest both of body and soul to our beloved, and to you too. I was so thankful to hear Mrs Stewart’s account yesterday. How He has borne her up in His loving hands—and will do so always.

ever yours and hers  
Aunt Florence

17 May 1885

[with an envelope]

To inquire after Lady Ashburton, Kent House Knightsbridge

Dearest, I do so want to know how you are, after having blessed me with your dear presence yesterday. You may have been the worse for it, I fear so much. But your spirit is strong.

Thank you, thank you so much for coming. And God has been so loving. I am so glad about Addiscombe. The pain—how has it been? God bless you.

ever yours  
F.N.

---

99 A paraphrase of Ps 127:2.

Claydon House  
Winslow, Bucks  
7 August 1885

Dearest, ever dearest, and dear Maysie (who is to rest and enjoy herself, and *not* think, for nine days), welcome to the dear baby boy.<sup>100</sup> And first, thanks to our Almighty Father for his mother's safety and success—thanks unspeakable.

O may we not say, though in a different sense, still the same—the Holy Spirit has overshadowed her—therefore that holy thing that has been born of her shall be called the son of God. *You* taught me to think of our creation, the creation of each one of us, as such an immense gift, such a divine gift.

Now here is the dearest man-child born into the world. The Jewish mothers rejoiced and hoped, because each one of them might be the mother of the Messiah. May *we* not pray with the fondest hope that *this* child may be a Gordon or a Lawrence—not in profession or in destiny but in spirit and in truth?

Let us always be ambitious for the child of Maysie. But first let us rejoice with joy unspeakable that it *is* at all—God bless it and all of you. We do pray and we do sympathize this blessed day.

Source: From five letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

16 August 1886

Dearest, Thank you so many times for your converse on Saturday, telling me of so much that was deeply interesting. Perhaps I may be able to hear of some “manager.” May God send him!

Things are so very different from what they were ten and twenty years ago—we find it in our hospital wards, and everywhere—I mean the young workmen are now in a sense so highly educated. All the infidel arguments are at their tongues' ends. Scripture readers are no longer a match for them and an inferior scripture reader who gets into an argument with them only hardens them in their infidelity. They watch the ward “sisters” like lynxes—*this is good*—to see whether their conduct tallies with their professions, their deeds and temper with their words.

But I send to inquire after *Mary* and still more after *you*, my dearest. You don't look well. And might, before you go to Claydon, *my Messen-*

---

100 Birth of a son, William Bingham (1885-1978), 6th marquess of Northampton, a diplomat.

*ger bring back the collection*, so invaluable, *of slips* you have been so very, very good *to make about Gordon?* if it will not trouble you much to find it. There is no danger that I shall do anything with it without you, my dearest. But I could now look over it, if you could kindly send it, as you were so very good as to say on Saturday.

Don't trouble to write. God bless you and He does bless you and your work.

19 August 1886

Thanks many for your kind letter from Claydon. The precious Gordon slips<sup>101</sup> did not arrive yesterday, as you so kindly wished them. To save you trouble, might I send a man with this note, who will wait in case you wish them to come back by him?

I was so vexed that on Monday they took my note to you to Mary—dear Mary. How is she? and how are you? Don't trouble to write now—a verbal message, please. God bless you always and your work.

25 August 1886

I send back the precious Gordon extract books to be continued. Perhaps I ought to have sent them before back to you for the additions from Gordon in Central Africa.<sup>102</sup> God bless you and Maysie.

29 August 1886

Dearest, Might I have the loan of the precious books of Gordon extracts for this afternoon? How are you and Maysie? and the little (big) soul? Thanks a thousand for the lovely flowers and roses and fruit. God bless you.

Dearest, I was so shocked to trouble you this morning just as you were going to church. There is a meeting at Aldershot tomorrow to interest the soldiers in the Gordon Boys' Home. I have been asked to write a letter, which I do. Don't trouble about the books now. Don't send them now. It is all settled. God bless you. So sorry not to see you tonight, but I have had someone till just this moment.

ever and ever yours

F.N.

How good of you to come. How tired you must be.

---

101 Letter 19 April 1886, ADD Mss 68884 f123.

102 George Birkbeck Hill, *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa 1874-1879*.

2 September 1886

Dearest, I am starting today for Claydon. Parthe is alone, so sorry not to see you again now. So sorry for the “scompiglio” last Sunday. I only wanted you to let my Messenger come for the books after church—never dreamed for one instant of keeping you from church. So sorry to bother. But no harm came of not having the books—Aldershot Gordon meeting was successful. Fred Verney did it all. Pray that the executive committee of non-commissioned officers may now do its work well and the men have an example in Gordon.

Best love to Maysie and to thyself. God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

Just starting.

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

12 August 1890

Dearest, ever dearest, Claydon is sad and strange—all the same yet all changed.

But I am going to write to you about something else, yet knowing how busy you are. You are so good to my “boy Shore Smith” of Embley, and so kindly interested in his children, Rosalind and the rest. His younger boy, Louis, who has just left Oxford, is taking north for their holidays two Siamese princelets, sons of Prince Narès, half brother of the king of Siam, and lately Siamese minister here (Fred Verney being secretary). I knew Princess Narès, mother of these boys, and *only* wife to her husband. She was one of the most interesting women I ever met. She might have been a great reformer—as “grande dame.” Now I want her boys to see a great reformer and “grande dame” in Scotland. May they? Prince Cheroon, the elder boy, is doing quite remarkably well at Harrow. Prince Bobbie, the younger, is at a private school.

Nothing would do them so much good in their travels as to see how a great British lady lives. My Louis is a remarkably nice lad. I don’t want to prey upon you, especially at this time, so will only say, if you, dearest, feel inclined and it is not too much to ask, if only for the day, they are to be heard of (as thus) during this week. Louis Shore Smith c/o W.A. Ramsey Esq. Loyal House, Alyth, N.B. And they will be in N. Scotland during the fortnight beginning 18 August. Don’t think of this again, if inconvenient.

God bless you, dearest, in all your works.

Source: From two letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

30 March 1891

Dearest, ever dearest, Your dear precious note only arrived this morning. I know now you will be setting out. Please, please, don't trouble. I send my measurements (over my clothes) in obedience to your great kindness: 45½ inches all round under the armpits; 42½ all round the waist; 17½ inch. from shoulder to shoulder. But please let me manage it myself with Finsbury Square now.

All Easter blessings attend you. You do not say if you have found [district nurse] Miss Julia Farrer. That is the important thing.  
ever thy F.N.

16 July 1891

[with an envelope]

Ask if she is in London or when coming: Louisa Lady Ashburton, Kent House, Knightsbridge

Dearest friend, I am longing to see you; you kindly say by telegram "this week's latter end." But I have a difficulty in making an appointment, having twice failed on the day you appointed.

I *could* see you at 5 or 6 on Friday (tomorrow) or Saturday. But I must, please, know.

ever your  
F.

Source: From four letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

4 May 1894

Dearest, You cannot tell how sorry I was not to be able to see you last night. And I was so anxious to know about Maisie.

But I had one of our best women with me, an assistant matron from the enormous workhouse infirmary at Birmingham, who came up on business and in fact did not leave me till the last train to Birmingham. I am sure your gentleness would not wish me to prevent these things, even if I could. I will keep this afternoon (after 4) free, in case you are able to come, my dearest,

ever your  
old Flo

29 August 1894

Dearest, It was so good of you to come last night. And I was so grieved not to be able to see you. But I was so dead-beat that I could not have

spoken And I had no idea that you were in (or near) London. Today I have work that cannot be put off. But if you were staying in London till tomorrow afternoon (Thursday) and could spare me half an hour in the afternoon, I should be so glad if you will tell me the hour. God bless you.

ever your loving

F.N.

12 October 1894

Dearest, I am so grieved that you are so poorly. I trust in God that He will raise you up again soon—dearest child of God. He is always with you. I will not trouble you now—ever in His name.

your loving

F.N.

Claydon

30 October 1894

Dearest, Oh thank you, thank you a thousand times for your most kind and lovely letter. I am almost sorry that you are not going to Egypt and very, very sorry for the reason.

I am afraid I cannot be of any real service to dear Maisey about Egypt. It is forty-five years since I was in Egypt. The very climate has changed since then. And I have not kept up my knowledge of books in the least.

As a general rule I think *modern* books are 50 percent better than fifty years ago. There is ancient old Herodotus<sup>103</sup> always new. But I will think over things and inquire if possible and send you word. God speed them. I do not even know whether they are going up the Nile or staying at Cairo, or where.

I am sure that Mr Robertson will “do well” “with you” and “by” you too. He is so conscientious, so well equipped for work, so good. But I will write more about him too. I gave your dear message to Mrs Verney. She thinks of you so much.

ever, dearest

your loving old Flo

Source: From a letter to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

6 July 1895

My dear friend, I am so very sorry that I do not know of the sort of person you need. (You know we do not train for *private* nursing. And

---

103 Herodotus, *History*, fifth century BCE.

the sort of person does not come in our way.) I will make inquiries. But I think, if I were you, I would send to Miss Pyne, Westminster Hospital, who has a large staff of private nurses, carefully telling her *what* you want, that she may see if she has anyone that would suit you. I am so afraid you are the worse for coming here yesterday.

Source: From two letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

20 April 1897

Dearest, I have not yet heard from you, as you kindly promised, whether you will be able to come *this afternoon* at 5. I have arranged to come downstairs to save you a storey. I do not know of any other day that I shall be able to have the great pleasure of seeing you again after such a long while.

We have so much work. God bless you and Maysey.  
ever your loving  
F. Nightingale

2 May 1897

*Private.* Dearest, very dearest, Thank you again and again for your most lovely flowers—your roses of which the sight and fragrance are equally delightful, “I keep ’em all for me.”

When you were here the other blessed day you said a few very kind and true words about the Robertsons. Would you put those on paper and send them to me? It would be a kindness worthy of you. You know I would make no bad use of them. God bless you.

Source: From five letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

21 January 1898

Dearest, I was so sorry not to see you on Sunday when you were so good as to call, but I did not even know that you were in London and I was as usual chuckfull of engagements which I could not put off and which you would not ask me to put off.

Is there any chance of your being able to come tomorrow (Saturday) or Sunday at say 3:30 or 4?

ever your loving  
F. Nightingale  
R.S.V.P.



21 February 1898

Dearest, Thank you so much for your note. I am so grieved that you are so poorly. PRAY don't run any risks but keep warm till you go off for Cairo—dear Cairo.

ever your most loving

F.N.

7 July 1898

Dearest, Please come at one o'clock, as you are so good as to wish to come.

yours ever lovingly

F. Nightingale

A thousand thanks for the most lovely flowers and for the rich treat of grapes and peaches and strawberries and vegetables which you were so good as to send.

10 July 1898

Dearest, I am so very sorry that I shall not see you again, I am afraid, before you leave London tomorrow, now. I would have been ready for you at one, when you were so good as to call, if I had known you were coming. Till you return, and ever, I can only say, I commend you to Him who is perfect Love and Perfect Wisdom.

ever your

old Flo

Take care of yourself.

24 November 1898

Dearest, I waited and watched for you to come yesterday as you kindly promised. But you never came—too busy I dare say. Will you give my dearest and most reverent love to Maisie, who is a saint and an angel. I do not know where she is in Egypt—nor how to address to you there. But if you have not time to send it, I will apply at Kent House for it—your address.

All blessings attend you, and the dear saint *will* have all blessings. Fare you very well in delightful Egypt. May God bless you and her and He *will* bless you both.

ever your loving

F. Nightingale

I do not know whether you are going all the way by sea or across France, but I will learn at Kent House.

Source: From two letters to Louisa Ashburton, National Library of Scotland Acc 11388/90

1 March 1900

Dearest, I am very sorry I certainly shall not have a free day until after next Tuesday. But I am not sure of that even. Would next Wednesday at 5 do? if free?

with love

Sunday

18 March 1900

Dearest, We are rather busy and Easter coming on. But I will make time to see you (WITHOUT your Police) is understood, happy Police!) on "Friday at 5" (not "earlier") as you propose for a short time—as this is the last time I can see thee before Easter.

ever your

old Flo

24 October 1901

Dearest, Many thanks for your kind note. I am sorry that I do not know of any suitable person that I could really recommend, as I have so little to do with nurses—now that I have to keep my room. I was so pleased to have a talk with you the other day. It was good of you to come now that you are so poorly. And it is such a drag up my stairs. God bless you.

with much love yours

Flo

### Georgina Tollet

**Editor:** There are four delightful letters to Georgina Tollet that appear to have escaped the notice of Nightingale scholars, buried in Bundle 369 at Claydon House and not copied to the Wellcome Trust. They date between 1848 and 1852, a period of intense political activity, evident in *European Travels*, and theological reflection, in the drafts for *Suggestions for Thought*. They are whimsical, funny, especially on men, women and marriage. The two families exchanged visits over many years—there are references in 1827, 1836, 1845 and 1852 in family letters.<sup>104</sup> A sister, Ellen Tollet, was evidently also a friend but there are

104 Letter to Mary Shore 14 October 1827, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8991/1, and to Parthenope Nightingale postmarked 4 September 1836,

no letters to her (she was staying with the Nightingales in 1842 when Nightingale was ill).

Georgina Tollet obviously followed French politics for she asked for information about developments there, provoking another tirade against Louis-Napoléon and predictions (not far off base) about war. She evidently shared Nightingale's interest in speculation about the afterlife.

Source: From a letter to Georgina Tollet, Claydon House Bundle 369

Lea Hurst

Monday [1847?]

It seems to me as if a heap of old moons must have piled themselves up as rubbish in the worn-out furniture [illeg] of the Creation since there has been any communication between you and me and yet it is not a fortnight. And many's the half hour I have spent with you, which is not to be wondered at as many moons had worked off their time without ever producing so much happiness as Betley<sup>105</sup> did. I'm a pretty fellow not to have told you so before, but the day when time shall be no more has so long since come with me (the material interests having maintained a great consumption of that article. What a lie those political economists do propagate when they say the supply is always equal to the demand—but they're little better in honesty than the publicans of old), that I have not had a word to throw at a dog, much less at thee, who art of more value than many dogs.

I suppose you expect a Clive dithyramb, but I really have nothing to say upon that extremely commonplace and very desirable marriage.<sup>106</sup> I felt desperately in love with the boy Meysey, the house was charming, Mrs Clive was charming, Mr Clive was charming. There is a point strictly between ourselves beyond which I never can get with Mrs Clive, but I attribute it to the fact that there is this difference between her and the rest of the world, that while all her fellow creatures are always endeavouring to say something clever she is always trying to say something stupid.

---

Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8991/78; a passing reference in August 1845 in a letter to Frances Nightingale Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/87; regarding a visit in a letter to Frances Nightingale March 1852, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8993/78.

105 Betley Hall, manor house of the Tollets in Staffordshire.

106 Caroline and Archer Clive visited the Nightingales at Lea Hurst July 1846, and were expected again in July 1847. Meysey was Caroline Clive's maiden name.

We had one night afterwards at the Bracebridges whom I do hope that you will know someday and mind, Ellen, that you cultivate her. (She is too a great friend of Mr Tremenheere's.) I think it is rather a pity as D'Aubigné says to Providence in his *Reformation* that Providence moves the Clives to a larger fortune.<sup>107</sup> She may not be perhaps quite so happy. My dear child, that *is* real love—and you know my doctrine is that it is very difficult to excite real genuine love in the female heart and especially for a clever man, because the admiration of intellect is so inherent in the female fancy, much more so than in the male, that her imagination (and alas! her vanity too often) is pleased before her heart and her heart comes then but little in question. Yes, clever men and heiresses stand at about the same depth of misfortune—both *may* be loved for themselves but both *must* be always suspicious. And I believe they feel it and that is the reason why they so often do not marry. I have much more faith in the love when I see it for a stupid man like Mr Clive. There might be a tariff:

female from £2000 to £6000 per ann., to be saved for 7 years, from £6000-1000, 14 years, etc.;

man distinguished in science to serve 7 years for his love; in politics, 14 years; in literature, 21 years, etc. Security being established and upon these broad bases of a sound insurance policy, I think it then safe even for Macaulays and Burdett-Couttses to marry.

But a clever man knows how to make his wooing so fascinating to the eyes of a woman even as her thousands are to the eyes of poverty. I am going to execute a few cries of Plato for the instruction of the young à la Cruikshanks<sup>108</sup> upon themselves, in which man shall be represented in his various attitudes bowing down at the shrine of Plutus and woman at that of Mercury or whoever the God of Talent is. A woman who marries for the self-love of influencing a clever man richly deserves her fate. They are two. The one and the least bad is that she finds nothing afterwards in herself which can execute the task she has set to herself, viz., the faith and the enthusiasm which alone *can* influence and which are given by love only. She fails and is humbled. Her soul is saved while her happiness is ruined. The other is that her life becomes the acting of a lie and she herself a lie—her success is won, her own soul is lost.

107 An inheritance from a relative of Archer Clive made him a wealthy landowner, so that he gave up parish work; the reference is to Jean-Henri Merle D'Aubigné, *A History of the Reformation*.

108 Prominent cartoonist and illustrator.

Having laid down these “maximums” on the dangers of marriage for your improvement, my young friend (with a very cold hand, as it is 7 o’clock and a frosty morning), you having asked me my sentiments re[garding] Clive, let us proceed to pleasanter themes and let me tell you how very happy were the days I spent at Betley. There is to me so little repose in life. Many people seek repose in distraction—it answers with some and I have been thinking why this remedy does not answer with all. In one class of minds, where the power of suggestion is stronger than that of association, where outward impressions originate ideas, where the mind is very much alive to the exterior world and the organization susceptible, new thoughts are understandable, indeed introduced by a life of excitement and distraction and the old weakened. But in another class, where the power of association is very strong, the person’s energy rather accumulative than sensitive, intellectual variety and change of scene and event rather awaken associations with the old ideas than call up new ones. Every circumstance makes reference to them and every look contains an allusion to them and the associations are but multiplied.

But, my dearest, how tired you will be. Are you asleep? Nay, I won’t wake you—good night. Cold “inhibits” my pen—we have given up the Scotch expedition I am happy to say, shall stay here quietly till the end of September and then return to Embley. And remember your woman’s word is plighted to come to us, either here or there. With most grateful loves to Mr and Mrs Tollet, believe me,

ever yours overflowingly

F.N.

Shake hands, Ellen, and give me a kiss.

Source: Letter, Claydon House Bundle 369

Embley

8 December [1848]

My dearest Georgina [Tollet]

I am a wretch and four pages of apologies could only enlarge upon and diversify that sensitive intellectual vanity and, without putting it in a new and attractive form—whereupon I have it in all its naked horridness. I had your letter when I was a rat, a *water* rat, that is, in the time of Pythagoras,<sup>109</sup> which I can scarcely remember and beg you to believe that I have not thought of you the less for a certain incapacity in making black marks upon white.

---

109 Pythagoras (c568-c500 BCE), Greek philosopher and mathematician.

As births come first in the periodicals (when will my reputation ever rise again to the level of a *periodical*?) I will promise that Mrs Plunkett has a young son, a very young one, who manifests the most obstinate determination to live, notwithstanding the utter impropriety I am told of his doing so, seeing that he was considerably younger than his nine months when he was born. Mrs Plunkett is going to try the Undine under Gully<sup>110</sup> upon her recovery.

Next, as I can't think of a marriage to tell you, the Bracebridges are at Brighton, trying to get well of *her* rheumatism. Thirdly, I would, if I could, for the sake of dramatic propriety and without the strict adherence to truth, upon which I particularly pique myself—class myself and mother under the article deaths—but the fact is my mother is perfect resurrection and I too, after having been in good work (as a water wheel) for six weeks, intend to be better than ever I was in my life.

Gully is a most sensible man (*though* he doesn't agree with me). And I wish I could send all my friends to him—who are visited, that is, with neuralgia or dyspepsia.

You ask for Roman news. I have heard twice from Rome since the row and have little comfort to tell. My friend was in the Chamber at the time of Rossi's murder<sup>111</sup> and says that it was a *useless* crime as they were going to turn him out the next day by a vote. It is some consolation to me to tell that the Quirinal row was not a deliberate piece of ingratitude. It was merely a "noisy demonstration" when those stupid Swiss, in their provoking fidelity and folly, fired through the loopholes—up to that time the crowd was unarmed. But, finding themselves wounded they ran about like wild things, then followed the attempt to set the gate on fire, but not of the papal palace, only of the Swiss quarters—then they armed themselves and the row followed. My friend is such a zealous papist that I take his account as accurately true. It is said the pope left the Quirinal in the disguise of a pilgrim, but where he is now even the last letter I have had this evening hardly seems to know—most probably still at Gaeta.<sup>112</sup> Rome has been in per-

---

110 Dr James Manby Gully (1808-83), water doctor at Malvern; Undine, according to the story, was a sylph who caused great consternation to her family and eventually the death of her husband.

111 Count Pellegrino Luigi Edoardo Rossi (1787-1848), chief minister to Pius IX (1792-1878).

112 Pius IX (1792-1878) was forced out of Rome by the uprising and stayed at the nearby village, Gaeta.

fect quiet and consternation or (whatever the Italian may be for “in a fix”) ever since, quite at a loss to know what to do. The political sagacity of his flight seems beyond all question. Rome had called herself a republic for some days before but without appointing a republican government and hoped, it seems, to make him quietly sign whatever they chose. But now without his signature nothing is legal and as they are not yet quite prepared to throw him completely aside, they are regularly “*stumped*.”

With regard to that faithful single-hearted man himself, who almost alone in Europe had hitherto conducted the great tide of revolution without bloodshed and without a military despotism, I cannot bear to speak of him. What can be said except that the law of this world seems to be that all great benefactors to their race shall be martyrs? They seem hardly accredited without this seal. It is their letters patent as ambassadors from Heaven. My only prayer for him is that he may not doubt the reality of his mission, may not think that, because evil has come of it, he ought not to have done good. That would be hard to bear—“he has begun his passion,” was the expression used with regard to him by a Roman Catholic, who generally I think succeed better than we do in familiarizing the idea of the close connection between the life of the Master and His scholars.

I must urge two things for the wretched Romans. Two great mistakes had been made—no blame to Pius—but the fault of his impossible position, as father of the R.C. Church—one was the not declaring war; he could not do it, it was impossible, against his own children. Still, the Romans were right to ask it, don’t you think so? The other was the keeping the Swiss Guard and Rossi’s abominable contumelious treatment of the curés [priests]. Still, they have got themselves into such a mess now that one must be almost more sorry for them than for Pius, who was the only man who could save them. But ten short months ago and I knelt with 84,000 men in the Piazza of the Quirinal as he addressed the multitude with his preternaturally clear and sweet voice, which was distinctly heard to the farthest man.

I wish those wretched Bonapartes were rooted out leaf and branch. Nothing good can ever come of that blood. I believe Canino<sup>113</sup> is at the bottom of all this mess.

---

113 The prince of Canino, Charles-Lucien Bonaparte (1803-57), eldest son of Napoleon’s brother Lucien; Canino took part in the agitation for independence from Austria and had to leave Italy.

I have written you what news I had, which is but small, because Ellen said you were pleased to be interested. Goodnight, dearest friend, and with best love to Ellen and all whom you love, believe me,  
 ever yours  
 F.N.

Source: From a letter to Georgina Tollet, Claydon House Bundle 369

Lea Hurst  
 Matlock

31 January [1852]

My dear friend, right glad was I to see your hand again. All my friends are married or dead, which is the same thing, and old hands are pleasant in a firm.

I am in great fears about the world, but I will tell you, first, the opinion of a reasonable official at Paris, which is that the president is ruining himself as fast as he can. The proscriptions were a crime, but the confiscations were a “faute”<sup>114</sup> and alienated the bourgeoisie, who were for him as a defender of the rights of property. The provinces are still for him in their absurd panic about socialism. However there will be no disturbance just yet, but, as soon as the king’s iniquitous Cabinet is ready (Casabianca is a common spy) he will make a grab at the Rhine, Belgium, Savoy or even England (but this last the least likely) and, once engaged in war, the country will quietly abide the issue. This is what we hear through the ambassador’s bag—nobody dares to write per post—so you may take it for what it is worth. They say Piedmont is in a terrible fright—no wonder. People keep away from the president’s balls, the only signs of moral life they give. He is quarrelling with all his own family and leading the most disgraceful private life, but that is no novelty. In London he was hardly received.

As for me, my dear, I feel in very low spirits about the universe indeed. Since Lord Palmerston went out<sup>115</sup> I am “weak and weary of the world, which is now altogether the devil’s” as old Luther used to say. I think the Kalmucks will overrun us because they have digestions and we have not, and I am convinced it is dyspepsia which overthrows empires—loss of digestion and loss of religion, these two.

114 “Pire qu’un crime, c’est une faute [worse than a crime, it’s a blunder], originally used in reference to the 1804 execution of a “prince of the blood,” the duc d’Enghiens, in Napoleon’s attempt to put down opposition to his rule by terror.

115 Lord Palmerston had been foreign minister 1846 to December 1851.



You will see—there will be three emperors, emperor of France,<sup>116</sup> emperor of Austria, emperor of Russia—and they will eat up my poor little Piedmontese and dear little Greece. As to poor old Germany, she's gone—sold—"a man and a brother" with a chain round his neck, on his knees, as seen in frontispieces. You seem to expect to see L-Napoléon returning thanks under a catafalque at St Paul's—I have no fears of that kind. I think Q. Victoria's eight cream-colours will enter the Pretoria Tower without any other danger save that of kicking her against the curbstone. Any danger we have comes from within. I believe I speak to a member of the old Whig interest—and therefore I will be mild in my expressions—but, my dear, the Tories are a feeble folk, a feeble and accomplished race. They have turned out the only man of any power among them. However, since they have signified their own willingness to go, we cannot demand anything more of them.

My cousin Bonham Carter is to second the address and in your faithful ear I may whisper, if they have no better supporters growing up—well, mind, I didn't say that. But their minds and his mind are all like the appendix of a book—full of minute facts, developed in the most beautiful detail, but which give you no idea of the general gist of the thing.<sup>117</sup> Peace be with their ashes! I hear from Florence that young Italy is positively desperate at Lord Palmerston's going out and if he were to appear there [they] would rise to make him their leader, willy nilly. What a curious impertinent episode that would be in the romance of a nation's life. But don't abuse the papers for abusing L-N. Who is to speak if we don't? *Fiat justitia*, etc. [let justice prevail]: the proverb is rather musty but let us have justice of that thing, that *Avvocato del Diavolo* [devil's advocate]. I am only afraid that he will bring back the Orléans,<sup>118</sup> whom, if possible, I hate more, by this persecution of them.

If we (England) are running any danger, it arises from within and not from without. If we look back in the history of any nation, Egypt, Rome, etc., we shall always find that the nation fell when they had lost their religion and when civilization had spoilt their constitutions. It seems to me that both catastrophes are now happening to England.

116 Louis-Napoléon was still then "president"; in November 1852, on winning a plebiscite, he took the title "emperor of the French."

117 The speech of John Bonham Carter II, "Jack," seconding the address from the Throne is indeed full of plodding facts (*Parliamentary Debates* 3 February 1852:75-83).

118 The French royal family Louis-Napoléon had replaced.

Well, my dear, let us come to privater and pleasanter things. I am very glad to hear of the Milnes's "coming event."<sup>119</sup> The sofa "casting the shade before" matters comparatively little. It is a great gift of God, I think, when it comes so soon. God bless it and grant that it may come to good. Your friend was so kind as to come to Embley and I was quite smitten with that charm of infinite sweetness over her. I don't think I ever saw anyone who had it to the same degree. Do you know, I do believe she is one of the angels—as I never saw one before it was not to be expected, you know, that I should know one by sight directly. I agree in all your prognostications. I think she will have a VERY happy life and I am sure she deserves it.

As for our own plans, which you ask about, I am sure I don't know what to say. My father was so unwell, so altered, all the autumn, that, at the beginning of the year he and I went into the *freezer* coat of the cold water cure, Umberslade, near Birmingham. Then his business brought him here and after we have concluded visits to my dear old people, his mother and aunt, aged respectively ninety-four and ninety, and wound up matters here, we shall put on the freezer coat again for some weeks, where a letter from you will find me much obliged. This will [illeg] our London so late that I am sadly afraid we shall miss dear Ellen—if we go at all, which what with the dissolution and things I dare say we shall *not*.

My love to dear Ellen and to Miss Crewe when you write, if you do. My corresponding days are over as the young people say of their dancing.

I don't think poor Mrs Warburton has such a loss as she thinks she has—I did not like him. I don't mean to say that was a reason for burning him. But I had an instinct he was a humbug. That however does not diminish the beauty of her martyrdom—for she was devoted in and entirely attached to him, much more than he was to her—and she is very lovable.

It is a curious thing that the only two thoroughly magnanimous people I have ever known have both been women, and both women of no intellect. It is wonderful how little the great of soul are identical with the great of intellect.

To return to poor Mrs Warburton—how does she comfort herself? Does anybody believe in a future state? an old question between us.

---

119 Presumably the birth of Richard Monckton and Annabella Milnes's first child, Amicia Henrietta Milnes, with whom there is correspondence (see p 772 below). The sofa reference is presumably to the fact of their marriage 30 August 1851.

But if we did, should we put on mourning and say “poor” and talk about “melancholy catastrophes.”

Papa, my dear, is coming to you on the knees of a beggar. He wants a couple of those little lanterns which used to run about the drawing room at Betley—if it is not asking too great a favour. When we come here in the summer he means to prefer this request and as we have no other fowls here the question is whether, if his request be granted, is to come in the shape of the living animal, the cock and the hen, or that of the embryo—a few eggs. However I leave this to you and him to settle, hoping to have seen you first before that.

Accept my gratulations on the subject of Mrs Davenport’s marriage and may her second enterprise be better than her first. She will have a pack of grandchildren, but, my friend, eleven grandchildren are better than one Arthur. Will that individual live at Capesthorne by himself?<sup>120</sup>

I can’t say much for my poor relatives in connection with Karlsbad. I left them both all but in bed and would not have come away had not my father positively refused to go alone, which indeed would have been quite impossible.

I hope your nephew is quite well again and give a kiss for me to that dear little soul I saw in London.

My love to all. It is desperately cold up here, which rather damages the beauty of my hand. Believe me,

yours [illeg] till doomsday ‘i th’ afternoon

F.N.

À propos of Paris, there are tribes of my friends in London who would otherwise be at Cayenne<sup>121</sup>—but my friends are always the riffraff, you know. Guizot<sup>122</sup> sticks, you see.

If you know of anybody who wants a German governess with first-rate music, and would give a tiptop bid for her, £130 [£136?]<sup>123</sup>—a friend of mine (*not* a riffraff), the sister of one of the Wurtemberg ministry, now upon his trial, wants a place. To speak my admiration of

---

120 Charlotte Sneyd Davenport, widow of Edward Davies Davenport (1778-1847), eccentric owner of Capesthorne Hall, Cheshire, which he had lavishly rebuilt in the Jacobean style, an MP who sat on the opposite side of the House from his Conservative father; son Arthur Henry Davenport (1832-67), a single man who inherited the house.

121 A prison used for political prisoners in French Guiana.

122 François Pierre Guillaume Guizot (1787-1874), Huguenot historian and Cabinet minister, had been a supporter of Louis-Philippe, whom Louis-Napoléon overthrew.

her I have no words. Half her family are in prison—the other half in America—and she goes out to get bread for a ruined married sister, whose husband has been fifteen years in prison. I have known her for years, her temper, her principle, her genius, and I shan't let her go [illeg line]. She is about thirty.

I must tell you, in defence of the barricades of the 2nd December that my friends—the riffraff—only fought not for success but sternly protesting to the death, if needful. Organized plots there were none, nor faintest hopes of effective resistance—as that wretch's "Constitutionnel" said. Their resistance was only a protest against the atrocity of the act. Even the "blouses" [workers] felt this—a few poor boys began to sing the Marseillaise—but they stopped them, saying they wanted no such banner to be raised. They stood three attacks of troops on the barricades.

Source: From a letter to Georgina Tollet, Claydon House Bundle 369

Embley

17 November [1852]

Dearest, I have been meaning to write every day. I am sure you will not think it was want of interest which prevented me. The fact is we have been shovelling our dear ones before us into eternity so fast lately that my time has been shared between the dying and the dead.<sup>123</sup> The very same expression "what a world this is" reached me from another bereaved one lately. I do not agree. Not considering death a misfortune I cannot pretend to talk of it as such. One less to suffer is that a thing [illeg] to speak of as if it shook our faith in the love of God? There are things so *much* worse to bear—things which do so shake our faith, which affect the condition of our dear ones beyond the grave that I can only call these *blessed* whom the course of life is carrying nearer to their lost ones and to God. But I don't know anyone who believes in a future state, do you? I have lately come from the nursing of my dear old people of ninety-three and eighty-eight. I know so exactly the fall of the voice every time the latter speaks of the sister she lost fifty-eight years ago. Could she but bring home to her feeling that she will see her again in a much less space!

Harry Hallam was like Parthe's younger brother. I think this and her visit to the poor Nicholsons have quite broken her down. The Hallams

123 No year was given in the date, which is probably 1852, when Nightingale's great-aunt Elizabeth Evans died. Both Nightingale's cousin, George Henry Nicholson, and Henry Fitzmaurice Hallam, son of a family friend, died in 1850.

arrived in England yesterday. He is able to talk of his dead son, a great comfort; he is seventy-four. You are so good as to ask after the poor Nicholsons. They are well and their great patience is worthy of the beautiful spirit which has taken its flight. His death is one of those, like many which I have known lately, which transform the whole of life for the survivors—for he was the axis on which the whole family turned. May their new life grow out of their grief, not like Balaam's ass, turn aside *out of* the way of the angel.<sup>124</sup>

Dearest, I am writing in such a hurry—for I am going to them this week and am only just come home. The poor mother cannot quite keep “if *this*,” and “if *that* had not been so” out of her mind's eye—otherwise there is scarcely any even human cause for it—the accident remains and will always probably remain a mystery—the brother who went to the spot to gather all remains of him can find nothing from the accounts of the people there to account for the fact of a diligence [carriage], with seventeen souls on board being washed a distance of 500 yards with only a gradual fall of 70 ft into the sea. Dearest, I do so agree with you *not to regret*—to look at the thing as a whole as God's will—surely that is the way He intends—there is no *truth* in those regrets.

I hope, dearest, that you are now pretty well.

Some got away to England in an English collier. The captain who did not know a word of French but “manger et dormir” [eat and sleep] heaped both these articles and innumerable great coats upon them in his rough Newfoundland-dog kindness.

My son [Shore] has just left me and is very satisfactory and very anxious to me, thank you. Dear love to Ellen. I do so look forward to meeting again *here* I mean, as well as *there*.

thine ever

F.N.

## Other Contemporary Women Friends

### Anne Dutton, Lady Dunsany

**Editor:** Anne Constance Dutton (1816-58), daughter of Lord Sherborne, married Edward Plunkett, MP, later Lord Dunsany, so that there were numerous connections with the Nightingales as both families knew and visited each other's homes. “Miss Dutton” was a good friend

---

124 An allusion to Num 22:33.

when she and Nightingale were single young women in the 1840s. They made social calls together, sometimes with Louisa Stewart-Mackenzie. Anne Dutton's (undated) letters to Mrs Nightingale begging another visit tell of the constrained social life unmarried daughters lived. They are delightfully, mockingly obsequious. For example: "Florence taught me so much morality during my week at Embley where pleasure and instruction were most palatably combined in *many* ways (witness our farming expedition) that I . . . "125

Another letter asks:

Whether Florence made me a speech all of her own head, or whether it really came from yours, to the speech that I might both come to tea in your house, and spend the rest of the night under your wing at Mr Babbage's Saturday I know not, especially being accustomed sometimes to deliver discourses for *my* mother and tell her of them afterwards, a usual part I believe of a well brought up daughter's business. But in any case I am going to make you one of my own, and not entrust it even to *Florence* (and I wish it may convey my sincere appreciation of your kindness to me in my protracted state of orphanisms and) most particularly must it express my gratitude for the generosity which has lent me so many hours of an *unmarried daughter's London life*, a circumstance which has very considerably undrearified my solitary existence with a chaperon in bed and often not even a cat to speak to. Never did a more obliged spirit subscribe itself very sincerely yours.

Yet another in the same bundle lays it on even thicker:

If ever stiff iron pen went down on both its knees for pardon of the past and, like a pope's indulgence *for licence to sin in the future*, mine must try and perform that feat before you! Do you wonder what I want *now*? (I'm afraid to say it's *Florence*!) Mrs Bracebridge comes *early*—and early *I* must go to Kensington, for royalty respects nobody—I therefore do so want Florence early too! *May* I fetch her at ¼ 4 to entertain Mrs Bracebridge in my absence and *MAY* I keep her to tea afterwards to entertain me?

We will talk "laws of motion" in the carriage, "duty to our neighbour" when we get back to Mrs Bracebridge, "housewifery" at tea and "family claims" all the way home at night (for Flo shall have a chaperon, though Cato and Lamplighter are both advanced in years and unblemished in reputation). Will you then add to my long list of obligations by sending a yes to this petition—and, if so,

---

125 Letter, Claydon House Bundle 28.

will you tell Florence to be sure and have her *face washed* and her bonnet on at the time appointed, and to be strictly in the mood to say “where thou goest,” etc.<sup>126</sup>

There are no letters by Nightingale to Anne Dutton—perhaps they, too, were sent for and destroyed for fear of the “female ink bottles.” The first letter below relates a visit by Dutton to Nightingale at Lea Hurst. The second, by the then “A.C. Dunsany” to Nightingale, presumably was a response to one asking for her “blessing” on Nightingale taking on the superintendent’s position at Harley St. It shows that her friend knew something about institutions and shared her critical view of maternity wards.

A letter to her sister (probably in 1853) states that “Lord and Lady Dunsany came here last night and spent the evening. I know *nobody* so agreeable as he is, nobody with such large views *and feelings*.” She urged her to drive over to where they were going next to try to bring Lady Dunsany back for a visit.<sup>127</sup>

Source: From a letter to William Shore Smith, Add Mss 46176 ff18-20

Lea Hurst

Monday night [24 August 1846]

Miss Dutton is just gone, with one sore throat and two colds in her head, which will not delight her intended husband when she arrives in London. After great deliberation, what my wedding present should be (which, as she is to live with Lord Dunsany, her husband’s father, so does not want furniture, was to be a book) what do you think she has pitched upon? the Apocrypha. I must have a stupendous A.P. which will do either for *her* initials, or those of the *book*, on the binding—thus *Æ* with curly wurlys.

You will hardly be sorry to hear that Janet Shore is dead, the daughter of Offley Shore,<sup>128</sup> you know. I cannot pretend to talk of death as a misfortune, for I do not feel it so; looking upon it as the gateway to the garden, where we shall no longer hunger and thirst after righteousness,<sup>129</sup> but shall have it—the archway, under which we pass, struggling with our own weakness, and come out, born again and gifted with strength. I was thinking, last night, as I was watching Miss

126 Claydon House Bundle 249; an allusion to Ruth 1:16.

127 Letter c1853, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9023/16.

128 Offley Shore (1797-1870).

129 An allusion to Matt 5:6.

Dutton asleep, who was ill in bed, that this time last year I was sitting by the same bed with Gale in it, the one going to death, and the other to marriage, which of them to the better part God only knows—the common prejudice gives it in favour of marriage, and the very lawyer, who draws up the settlements, would become maudlin if her marriage had been intercepted by death. God knows which of them will qualify best for happiness in the next world, by marriage or by death, I am sure I can't say.

Source: Letter from Anne (Dutton), Lady Dunsany, Wellcome 9050/3

Sherborne  
2 May [1853]

You dear and excellent old Flo!

How in the world can you doubt having my “blessing” to follow you (like Mr Toodle’s recognition of his wife) “anyhows and anywheres”!<sup>130</sup> I only wish you had taken an *insane*-torium for a fear that I might put two or three of my friends and relations into it! If however yours is a concern for “sick ladies” as Σ told me, I think you ought to offer me a birth [berth] for September and commit “a *real* charity” by doing our old friend gratis, but I’m afraid you don’t write over your door, as they do in Paris, “*Içi on accouche* [Babies delivered here]” (and I believe this *implies* “*et on tue l’enfant, ou même la mère si l’on veut* [and they kill the baby and even the mother if they wish]”). Well go and try it, Flo, and my blessing go with you *cordially* in *all* your doings. I should much like to hear from you when you are established. Do your committee think you “too young”—heaven help the people! I wish they’d ask *me*. I should tell them that I *do* know you are 1000 (especially since your trip to Egypt). All I *don’t* know is how *many* thousands you have metempsychosis’d through, and that if they will only wait till you are dead *again*, and will institute what my old nurse called “a post-morbid exhibition” they may satisfy themselves that your bones are all fossils.

I suspect the “good old housekeeper” who “goes in without any salary” will soon come out again; if you had given your first saint a handsome “wage” I should have applied.

I suppose you see a good deal of Σ (I wish I did, of you both). She is dancing at Lizzy Herbert’s balls and drums looking after maids for *me*, amongst other innumerable avocations. My husband has been away

130 In Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* chap 2.



*nearly two months* and he's almost mad. However he *hopes* to get back in about ten days, and I expect to see him arrive on the top of a boiler, poor fellow! Our affairs come very near Job's, and Job's wife a *joke* to our stepmother, whose temper, jealousy, etc. is MORE than infernal!!

...

Now, dear old Flo, DO write to me again this side the millennium (that's spelt wrong) and believe that I *am* and always *shall* be

very lovingly yours

A.C. Dunsany

### **Helen Richardson**

**Editor:** In 1843 Nightingale stayed for some weeks in London at the Richardson home to keep Helen Richardson company on the death of her sister, Hope Reeve, in childbirth.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/43

Monday

6 [February 1843]

Dearest Mother, I am going to do something which I fear you will think very unreasonable, but indeed when you are here with your mind's eye, I do not think you will. Poor Helen is so desolate—she is in such an unnatural position and state of mind for such a young soul. Now that business has set in, she does not see Mr Richardson<sup>131</sup> more than two hours out of the twenty-four. Harry must positively go away on *Friday*. She had such an unnatural impatience for death when I first came up. Though I do not think I do her much good, for really sometimes when I look at the loss of the young mother, taken away just when she was so entirely blessed and blessing in all her relations, it does strike me as something quite new, and so inconsolable to Helen that I feel I can say nothing to her. Yet still I make some noise in the house; I read the solar system to her by way of a raiser to the spirits and we do German together. She would leave off these things. I have done my very best to persuade her, reading her all your invites, to come to Embley, but cannot so much wonder, when Mr Richardson's worn face and his subdued mild manner, which is really quite apostolic now, says to her, Dear Helen, you are necessary to me, you do me good, if it were not for my daughters I should hang myself. No,

---

131 John Richardson (c1780-1864), Parliamentary solicitor.

I feel she cannot leave him, for the two hours she is so necessary to him. I do not wonder now at any degree of veneration which he inspires. But, dear Mama, can I leave *her*! It is such desolation of solitude for her to bear on through to the end.

To return to No. 1, sorry as I should be to lose *any* of Miss Johnson, yet I feel this is doing my heart good which comes after all before the mind and hope it may make me a little less cloddy and worldly for life. She will have such a heavy, unbroken solitude for her to stand submissive with her finger on her mouth, in silence before the All-Wise. (It seems it would be superhuman to be cheerful then.)

She is writing to you, I know; I cannot help pressing, dear Mother, more than perhaps is right, when she tells me that she will lose her eyes with crying when she is alone again, and that so I shall not have done her any good; she has such wonderful courage and endurance, particularly before her father, that she deserves the little help I can give her. For a long time I did not know what she suffered. If Harry were going to stay to make *my* noise in the staircase, I should not mind, but she will be quite alone just when she is awakening most to a feeling of her want.

I can come down with Papa on Friday week, you know he always does come to his time, or with Uncle Nicholson on Wednesday, to come on with M.N. and Laura to Embley or to be met by Mariette at Farnborough. I would pay her fare both ways out of my money with gratitude as you would like, or as Lizzy should come up, but they have heard of no opportunity yet to bring her up. Helen might be still a long time alone. Dear Mama, I may never have such another opportunity as this of doing the office of love on earth; we shall both be the better of it. I shall not miss much of Miss J. as she says, in her letter to me, that she means to pay us a good long visit. I know that is what you will think of more than your own small party now, but Helen is so good that she thinks of that too a great deal. *I* had reckoned much on this time at home, but I dreamt last night (and I *was* so glad) that you had written to me to tell me I might stop, *without* my asking you. Let my dream come true.

We went yesterday to Temple Church, and our Sunday walk with Mr Richardson too in the afternoon and saw the bab, who is to be vaccinated today. My cold is quite well. I send you all the bills which good Harry boy did for me. We did your job at Stocken's today, out *before* ten o'clock. Mr Madge is going to be married, his poor daughter is at Madeira. I think you will make my dream come true. It was such a

relief to me when I dreamt it! another week—one more week—you cannot think how Providence wishes, I am sure, to give Mr Richardson my help, which he might have in Helen's increased cheerfulness. He must be a loved of Heaven for he is so like St John. Goodbye, dear Mama, forgive me if I am not doing right; I will take all the responsibility to Miss J.; I wish you could see poor Helen. When Wednesday morning comes, but I think it will come right, for you wrote to Helen that it was a pleasure to you to think of me here, which was very good of you, and we have been so quiet and happy in that sort of way.

ever your child

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/47

[11 February 1843]

My dearest, Yesterday we had rather a busy day: after our usual 10 o'clock walk to see the glorious bab came Mrs Strutt and Miss Otter, most affectionate and she looking so pretty. She has just weaned her bab. She asked me to dinner today, but I thought it better not to go. Then came Lady J. Russell, a quiet gentle soul, with low-spirited manners, and most beautiful eyes, a little bundle of a thing, delicate looking, a good deal more overcome than I thought at all necessary or kind, and altogether not extremely prepossessing, in my eyes. She stayed a very little while however, said she was very glad to have the christening over, which was on Monday, with duke of Sussex as godfather, in church, talked of the children and pushed off. It really seemed as if she was the one to be sympathized with, and Helen the brave one. She was as composed and unmoved as possible. Then we had to pack off poor Harry to Rugby, greatly to our sorrow—the house seems so dull without him.

Today, my dear, I am so intensely glad that Helen is not left alone, for Mr R., after we had breakfasted at 8 o'clock, posted off heaven knows where to some business for all day, and only think of Helen in this dull house and utter solitude all day alone. I am so thankful to Mama for having left me here, for it really is a trial which the good God could not have meant to put human *nerves* to, of twenty-two, quite independently of *mind*, this solitude in winter in London. After seeing Harry off, we sat with our hind legs in our eyes a little bit, and then went to dine at Dr Lushington's, Laura Carr,<sup>132</sup> the two brother

---

132 Laura Carr (1807-68), later Lady Cranworth, a member of the ladies' committee at Harley St.

Lushingtons and ourselves. I thought them a little pedantic and *maniérés* and it very dull, but believe I have no business to do so, having always had the greatest respect for Dr L. inculcated into me, and having all manner of cassava roots, and uneatable slave things to eat, sent him as love tokens by the slaves.<sup>133</sup> Laura Carr was very *empresée*; we are to call on her today to see her drawings, but we have better company at home in Mr Richardson than we can ever get in general abroad. His manners make fastidious people more so and thought we were therefore better off at home.

Poor Helen was a good deal overcome at night, as usual after any excitement. Now that she has no Hopie to tell, everything, she says, does seem so uninteresting. She wished the Last Day would come, that we might all go together, without leaving anyone behind to mourn one, or any duty behind to do. She said she does feel so very exposed now to blows and cuffs of fortune, because it is such a trouble to Mr Richardson to have to make up his mind, and Hopie used to watch over her so. I will tell you the rest when we can do it *viva voce*. It is rather too sad for a letter. We do not hear anything of Lizzy's coming up yet, alas!

The open letters are the oddest thing. I have paid the Horners two shillings one penny and am afraid I shall not be likely to see them again to deliver your messages. I should have liked to have seen J.P. very much, if he is to be at the Strutts tonight. On Monday we are to go there, after Mr R. is gone to his work, at 8, just to tea with Mrs St. and Miss Otter. Best love to Aunt Maria and thank her for amusing your bab.

Source: From a letter to Frances and Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/39

[1 May 1843]

Dearest Mother, I have had all the banknotes now, and hope to be able to live on the interest of the twenty pounds till *au revoir* by dint of great economy and careful-mindedness, till we see each other again. You are very good to leave me the option about this, so I propounded the Friday plan to Helen, who said it was impossible, and as decency forbids my repeating what she said, I must leave you to guess that I could not press it. They seems quite inclined to Gale's niece.

---

133 Dr Lushington was a member of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade and attended the great anti-slavery convention of 1840.

I send various bills; I bought a pair of mock ermine cuffs for myself at Merington's, five shillings sixpence, because the real were all above twelve shillings sixpence, and ordered a muff for you at fifteen shillings, real of course, because those they had were so horridly dirty. I hope it will turn out good. I did not buy a victoria for the neck, because the heat is really too delightful. I have not been so hot since Padua. I think my constitution must be quite changed, for I wear shoes like other people,<sup>134</sup> not more than three silk handkerchiefs at once; we positively sometimes sit with an open window at tea. So I wisely conclude on never being cold again, which conclusion is really too smiling.

I hope to see Papa the day after tomorrow. I suppose he knows that Lamartine has entirely changed sides, and gone over to the gauche opposition, in a long and solemn speech on the address which I have read, as we get the *débats* sometimes, and very interesting it is, only just like the man's speech to Mme Récamier—if unconsciousness *is* the test of genius, donc M de Lamartine must have none at all. One of the Gasparins too has come out, like a flash, with a stupendous *maiden* speech on the slave trade,<sup>135</sup> which would delight you.

We go to see Aunt Patty today. Yesterday we cabbied it to the little Hope, glorious little soul, but very sensitive and excitable, I am afraid, and premature, for it had such a fit of crying when we first saw it, and then it cleared up and talked and laughed like a sensible person, not a baby. Tomorrow it is vaccinated and then it will come here. Helen astonishes me—she keeps up such uniform cheerfulness all day that she might quite deceive one, but she almost fainted before she had to dine at Chester Square; she looks wretchedly, is weary at night. She makes such efforts to hide her tears, but then she pays for it. She says nothing fills the want to her, and her spirit sinks so sometimes at night. Then she accuses herself, so I just take the Testament and read to her, when we go upstairs. I am becoming quite a field parson in it, for I do feel so uncommonly stupid at consoling, myself. I never felt quite so much before with what a judgment heaven had cursed me; however when Helen thanks God for having given her a companion, my poor old hard heart melts within me; I thank Him too, and you too, for being here.

I am sorry to say that the silk body was such a shipwreck, that Mme M. was obliged to get two yards more and make it up almost afresh,

---

134 Nightingale had been wearing "steel boots," probably boots with braces.

135 Frances Nightingale's MP father, William Smith, was a leading member of the movement to abolish the slave trade.

for no mortal means could make it come, humanly speaking, halfway down my back. I did not know she was going to such an expense in such a hurry, for I had told her to wait till I heard from you. I have got the velvet gown and send you the bills, shocking they are, though I do not think it at all dear in the whole, no more does Helen; they wear forever and he looks so warm, but he has such a sweet-smelling fragrance, that is the worst of him. Helen thinks Mme M.'s *façons* very cheap. Wasn't it a brilliant idea of me to take off the four shillings sixpence? What glorious warm weather!

Mrs W. Greig called here yesterday. I never saw her before, a nice little simple body, but she did not know who I was. We are asked to the Horners on Friday, but Helen does not go anywhere yet. I am sure she had better not while she makes such exertions. Today she is quite exhausted. She thinks it good for Mr R. to forget it, and that he does forget while she talks of other things. I like him so very, very much.

Dear Pop, Just come back from Aunt Patty's, a prodigious walk and such a beautiful morning. Came back in a cab. Called at Colnaghi's on our way, the Parris one g[uinea]. atrocious I thought, the old Ross miniature very shabby, one half g., the *new* Ross not to be out for a few days. Told him to inquire if it could be had in time. If not, I think we must have the American one again, one g., the only decent one, we thought for a present, or the Chalon in robes, but the American one much the best. What say you? We saw nothing decent under one g[uinea].; the old Ross I am sure I shall send back if it comes.

Jack could not go to the ball because of going abroad, and Henry, though I fancied he was going, I think was quite right not to lose his chance of getting on. Now I hear he didn't but I am sorry about M.N. We have read *Consuelo* in *Foreign Quarterly*, think it will do very well, but it is not concluded. I have seen the book (three volumes out, I think), G. Sand's<sup>136</sup> usual story of a devoted woman and unworthy man, but did not dare to get it, though the Review PERFECTLY [illeg]. The drawing book is *gone*, my dear, to Whitehall long ago and all the other things, but Mme Dante's print—I will write to Jack to put the names on the presents.

Hooper told me this morning that your order, just received, was doing. I hope you will send me V. Hugo.<sup>137</sup> You need not send "The

136 George Sand (1804-76), French novelist; the novel *Consuelo*; references to her novels also appear in *Society and Politics* (5:603 and 774).

137 Victor Hugo (1802-85), French poet and novelist.

Two Voices”<sup>138</sup> now, thank you, if not done. Aunt Patty looked *exceedingly* well, and had been to dine at the Coapes for Uncle Harry’s birthday yesterday. I send dear Miss J.’s most original letter, send it back, please, lest I may have to refer to it. M.N. had mentioned their coming to Embley to me before, as anxious for it.

Poor Helen is more down today than I have seen her at all; we had too long a cry last night. I thought it did her good, but it reacts on her all next day. I suppose it is quite natural that she should feel a want more now than she ever did before, and *quite* to be expected. But it is very sad to hear her say that now has come the blank and the sinking, and to see her so exhausted. Goodbye. We are going to read Nichols.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/42

[1843]

Dearest Mother, How good you are to let me go on staying in this way. Your note this morning, as it was totally unexpected, for I really had so little idea of your approbation, that I had not told Helen I was expecting another leave, so much was it the more delightful, for I opened it with fear and trembling, especially as there is no news of an escort for Lizzy yet. Mr Richardson has begun his half past five getting up again. Helen is, if possible, still more alone. . . .

Yesterday we went to St Paul’s and heard a singularly bad sermon, but were agreeably surprised by the magnificent inside, though those monuments, they are worse than pagan, they are hideous. We did not like the service. I cannot sing in my prayers, any more than say them in French, as they chant forth the Litany. I believe they have an apparatus for letting in cool air into the church (I am sure there was a flue-hole just by us) in those draughty summer days. However the dome is certainly worth the seeing and we got no harm, for we rushed off to Chester Square afterwards and saw the bab twice.

It came to me and looked like an angel. I am afraid it is very forward; it will not lie down a bit, but sits bolt upright, staring into your eyes, like the supernatural bab in *Zanoni*.<sup>139</sup> I never saw anything like its waking looks, when it first opens its eyes in the cradle after its sleep, and says, How came I here? It has changed its nurse within these few

---

138 A poem by Felicia Dorothea Browne Hemans.

139 Nightingale’s favourite novel by the prolific Edward George Earle Bulwer Lytton.

days and is *not yet* vaccinated, I am sorry to say, so that it may not yet come here, which is a great privation to these people, though I do think the baby takes à tâche [undertakes a duty] to console Mr Richardson, who only sees her on Sundays now, by giving him quite a peculiar reception, as if she knew all his story. What a price he has set upon her head. When she comes to Kirkland, he means to carry her out in the pocket of his plaid, with her head out. He is just like a mother to her now. Poor little soul! One cannot think that any harm can happen to her with such a stronghold and prop in heaven. She is showing signs of teeth already; one just lives on from day to day enjoying her, without looking forward to all possible contingencies, though Helen sometimes thinks, “she should like to be able to foresee, because there must be something bright coming, and it looks rather dull at present.”

We shall go and call on Miss Hallam today without doubt, I believe. Mrs Strutt, good soul! sends her carriage for us at night, when Mr Richardson is gone. She is a dear little soul. Mr R. has been more than commonly busy with Lady Northesk’s marriage settlements, which rushed off this morning by a special express, as the marriage *comes off* tomorrow. Not but that he seems to have just as much to do *today*. Lord Minto<sup>140</sup> is gone down to the marriage. I have not seen J.P. except through a telescope but hear he is gone down to Edge Grove, which I am very glad of. I think I have collected a wonderful ruck of news for you. I could tell you that Lady Northesk has £2000 a year settled upon her, and how handsome the provision for her younger children is, etc.

We have bought a handsome little coat for Louisa’s baby, price three guineas, by Marianne’s commission and sent it down to Waverley by Henry on Saturday, a present, proprio stupendo [really gorgeous]. We went on Saturday to see the Carrs’ drawings of Jersey and Guernsey. Pencil they are, but really Anna’s are quite genial, both in climate and talent, and give one such a southern idea of the islands. She sent you a very ardent message about her regret at not seeing you when she was in Derbyshire last June before we came. I liked Laura very much. I am glad poor old Elsey is at rest and dear Jervises doing such a world of good. I shall be coming to my gratitude again very soon, if I do not leave off, which is just overflowing, and so good-bye,

your ever affectionate child

F.N., or Wurzel, a root, I think you will call me soon but only till Lizzy comes.

---

140 The 2nd earl Minto (1782-1859), whom she met later in Rome.



Source: From a letter to Parthenope Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8992/52

[1843]

My dearest, This morn appeared Lizzy at five o'clock in a snowstorm to our sleepy eyes, most unexpectedly, as she did not come yesterday, and a most welcome appearance to poor Helen. I have heard from M.N. that they can go on *Tuesday* or *Thursday* to Embley, and will write to her, unless you alter it, to join Papa and me then on Thursday, as there seems small use in my going down with Uncle Nic on Wednesday to Farnborough, as there will be no regular conveyance to Waverley, as you will see by her note. They cannot come on to Embley that day.

I have heard from Miss Martineau, who thanks you much about General Vincent, but I will send her letter. Messrs Dundas, Rutherford and Dr Lushington dined here yesterday. I liked them all, but particularly the king of Israel. They went to the House however almost directly after dinner. Lizzy *does* not seem the worse for her snowy journey, but today wind and snow are enough to daunt a Titan travelling. Au revoir.

We could not go and lunch with Mrs Strutt, as she asked us, so we have not seen her again. Mr Richardson has made me such a beautiful present of a Campbell. I was so ashamed, but really my feelings for him are so reverential, they are quite overpowering.

Source: Letter to Helen Richardson, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C.79

[printed address] 27 Norfolk Street  
Park Lane, W.  
24 January 1865

Dearest Helen

I am sure that your goodness not only prompted you to send me that review of your dear father,<sup>141</sup> but that it will tell you how much I felt your remembrance, and with what deep interest I read the memorial of him whom I was so proud and glad to call my friend. You must not judge of my interest in it by my delay in telling you so. I often feel like the poor washerwoman who said that heaven would be to have one hour a day to sit still and do nothing. I hope that the southern

---

141 The flattering obituary in the *Times* 13 October 1864:10 paid tribute to his personal qualities, professional work and friendships with eminent literary men.

winter has done you and Joanna some good. In London I never remember so dark and foggy, so long and trying a winter. Dearest Helen,

ever yours, in heart and in spirit  
though we never meet  
F. Nightingale

### Miss Strutt

**Editor:** It is not clear which of the four Strutt daughters was Nightingale's correspondent. The father, Edward Strutt (1801-80), the first Lord Belper, was MP for Derby; a brother, Henry Strutt, was also an MP. Various Strutts are referred to in family correspondence.

Source: Letter to Miss Strutt, Radcliffe Guild of Nurses RGN 64a, typed copy Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/3/1

Embley  
Tuesday [28 October 1845]

It seems rather curious my writing to you, my dear Miss Strutt, but we have so long trusted to your sympathy that I am afraid that I have begun to think it impossible to trouble it and I think you will not be sorry to hear that our dear old friend [Gale] is at rest. She was downstairs on Sunday. Yesterday she suffered a good deal, and very early this morning sank to rest so quietly that, though I held her hand, I could not tell, except by its coldness, the moment when the spirit left her. Her last words were, "Don't wake the cook."

I try not to regret her having been moved, as she herself was so glad to come home, as she called it. She had a gallant spirit and was out of bed and speaking as strongly as ever ten minutes before her death. But she was always a hero and died upright in her chair, as she wished.

You know the feeling when the hand, which never before failed to answer to yours with a warm hug, lies still for the first time in it, but excepting this we cannot have one regret that she has ceased to suffer. She always said when you came to our house, "Now I know that Miss Strutt and Mr Strutt will inquire after me," and always remembered you gratefully, and your brother *Henry* especially. But I think I have talked enough about our own concerns and, believe me, ever my dear Miss Strutt's

affectionate and truly grateful  
Florence

## Maria Otter

**Editor:** Maria Otter (d. 1891) was the daughter of William Otter, bishop of Chichester, and later the wife of Lord Justice William Milbourn James. The one letter to her is undated but some of the material appears also in a letter to Selma Benedicks, 5 February 1845, in *European Travels* (7:648). The letter was sent to the Strutt home, where Maria Otter was a visitor. Nightingale again misspelled the name of the home of the “old duke” Queen Victoria was visiting, as she had in recounting the tale to her sister (see p 713 above).

Source: History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine MS C1-NI 2

My dear Maria [Otter]

[c1845]

The prisoner at the bar was asked whether she had anything to say for herself, but she could only recommend herself to mercy. I completely acknowledge my sins, but I do not mean to reform just yet. Now, however, that conscience in my absence has taken up the pen, it occurs to her that she has nothing to say. The thought comes too late however. She never sees her faults till after she has made them, which is certainly the way to see them, but not for your advantage nor for mine. You see I am writing Sentiments on Fancy Dress at home, but whether in the character of Ecclesiastes the Preacher, or of my Recollections as a Chaperon, I am not quite clear. The reason of this is that all my young people are at Waverley, bless their merry hearts! and have been there this last month and have had two fancy balls. I could not go. Well, well. The mind is its own gown, and fancy dress can make of flannel shirt or flannel skirt of fancy dress—and as Rosalind says, 'Tis but one cast away and so come death.<sup>142</sup> At all events, if Milton wrote his Morning Hymn in Paradise by the light of long sixes,<sup>143</sup> I can as well write an account of my lost garden of Eden (of Waverley, I mean) by the side of my little black teapot on the hob.

Marianne as Mary Q. of Scots and Parthe as Lady Jane Grey, I hear, were “quite the thing.” When I think upon my pink gown, then stirs even within my old breast still the pride of life, which St John says he had, and of black lace flounces which he doesn't, but which he would have had, if he had seen mine, but otherwise nobody ever will be so old as I am, don't expect it, for you will never will. And I shed a few

---

142 From William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 4.

143 Long wax candles.

tears on the fashion of this world which passes away,<sup>144</sup> or you will think on some sentiment, not quite so well defined, of the fashion of fancy flounces which passes away as quickly.

I expect my young people back with Miss Johnson, whose reputation may perhaps have reached your ears, as Guide and Counsel in Ordinary and Legal Adviser in Education to our family to the tenth generation. I expect them back, with her to keep them in order, some time in the course of the year. My youngest hope, W.E. Nightingale, has returned to me, but leaves me tomorrow for Derbyshire. The immediate cause however for my trembling hand's again assuming the pen is to ask after Mrs Romilly,<sup>145</sup> whose confinement I saw in the paper about forty days after date, during which time I rejoice to think she has *not* been making Lent in consequence of my not knowing of the event.

And now, beloved, do I speak to a lady of *ton* and fashion? immersed in new polkas and the Derby dancing circles, or shall you and I sit down and we two will rail at our mistress the world and all our misery? If *you* will, *I* will, but I know you never rail, so no more will I, and instead of that, I will tell you about your mistress the queen at Strathfieldsaye,<sup>146</sup> which was a most entire failure. The only people of *her* society asked were the Ashburtons, it was the most unaccountable thing his not asking the Palmerstons, quite like a personal offence, but they say the old duke<sup>147</sup> cares now for nothing but flattery and asks nobody but masters of hounds.

On this occasion the duchess was deadly, regnava il terror nella città [terror reigned in the city]! Not a sound was heard, not a funeral note, as the queen's corse was carried into dinner. In the evening it was still worse—everybody stood at ease about the drawing room and demeaned themselves like soldiers on parade. The queen did her very best and died like a hero, but she was overpowered by numbers, gagged and her hands tied. The only amusement of the evening was seeing Albert taught to miss at billiards, but not a man who disturbed the silence deep of the grave where our queen we were burying.

---

144 A paraphrase of 1 Cor 7:31.

145 Her sister, Caroline Otter (d. 1856), wife of the distinguished lawyer John Romilly, knighted 1848 and later 1st Baron Romilly.

146 The visit in fact took place to the duke of Wellington at Stratfieldsaye.

147 The author identification of the "old duke" as the duke of Newcastle (only sixty!) cannot be correct, the owner of Strathfieldsaye; it was the (really old) duke of Wellington (in his late seventies) at Stratfieldsaye.

My dear, if I did know where this would find you, I would tell you some very very curious and valuable state secrets about the discoveries of the Opening-of-Letters Committee, reaching back as far as Cardinal Wolsey, to me communicated by one of the committee, but as it may find you in the house of Edward Strutt, Esq. MP, I think it more prudent not.

Helen Richardson, I am happy to inform you, was at the Waverley ball.

An' you love me, my friend, do tell me what are we to do on the Martineau faith, I have fought the case straight through upon Paley's *Evidences*,<sup>148</sup> against all her enemies, but I have just had a communication which beats all faith. Oh Jane, Jane, would that thou wert at the ultimissima Thule.<sup>149</sup> Perhaps, beloved, the magnanimity of your disposition, deriving strength from the circumstance, that my conduct toward you is what lambs could not forgive nor worms forget, now prompts you to inquire after my precious health. All extraordinary particulars, not furnished you by the public prints, about the last (not annus, but) *mensis mirabilis* [not year but *amazing month*] of my life I am ready to give you, and are as follow: I have gone to bed early and got up late, eaten my six meals a day regular and reduced the amount of intellectual food supposed to be required by a reasonable creature to a magnitude less than the least assignable quantity, that is, the quantity assigned by Solomon's mother to a virtuous woman. Ah, *mein Kind*, I wish it was *quo stupidior es melior* [*what is stupider is better*], I should be in a fair way then, but as it is, don't you often feel as if you were in a dream? I am sure I did the night of the Waverley ball.

It was such a night, the night of the full moon. I have not seen such a one since the moonlight on the hills of Florence and the lighted lawn shone in its hushed brightness like a child asleep and there was no life stirring but I and three hares, who were running after one another all night, and at the same time, I could see myself in the dining room at Waverley, and was not quite sure, do you know, which was which. What *is* time and distance? It is so curious what *is* the effect they have upon us, it is so difficult to find out which is the real life and which the imaginary. Perhaps I really was not there. My dear, you will think I am Mrs Hominy,<sup>150</sup> but I am still your industrious Flea.

---

148 William Paley, *Evidence of Christianity*.

149 A paraphrase from "ultima Thule" in Virgil, *Gorgics* 1.1.30; Thule was an unknown land six days' sailing north of Britain.

150 A "literary celebrity" character in Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

How much that old moon must have seen in her day and what a waste of opportunity it is for her not to publish her *Recollections. Reminiscences of a Full Moon* would write so well. But how tired she must be of all the confidences that have been made to her and how long she must think it since man has lived and thought and felt, and always the old bores, the same things, in spite of all the different revolutions and religions and civilizations in the world. I never see a full moon without thinking what she looked down upon 1813 years ago, and all the sufferings and thoughts and feelings she has seen since, which no one else has seen.

How amused she must be to see all the souls pouring out and thronging up to her (and their bodies sitting somewhere quite quietly) all meeting there together unconscious of one another's presence, and a whole division of them telling her the same thing, *unknownst* to one another, each as if nobody had ever felt it before. I could not help laughing to think of the strange tale she must have to tell that single star that's at her side. Well, my dear, don't shoot me. I'm coming down. These Reflections were suggested to me by the second question I have to ask you which is, we have a nightcap of yours which I will either send you by the post, *free of expense*, or bring up to town with my own jewellery, when we come, *which* you please.

Perhaps you are already in that dear native village of ours, gone to open Parliament. If so, pray give my love to Mrs Strutt and all who may remember me, though that now belongs to the Geology of the Primary Strata. My internal structure is nearly defunct, and therefore my third question is, can you send me any Considerations on Lady Jocelyn, envisagée sous le point de vue of Mental Philosophy. I have lately had an opportunity of studying that phenomenon during a visit at Broadlands, and you and I must work out that question together. As she sat and worked and worked and worked, and did not speak, she always reminded me of a saint. She does not interest herself for anything that all the world is pursuing after and always seems enough for herself. I could see a white lily in her hand and a St Bertha crown upon her passionless forehead. And yet I suppose no one ever lived four and twenty years of such excitement—half the young peerage has proposed to her—and it is *not* that now she has other interests.

She never spoke to Lord Palmerston, and though she is very fond of her baby, she told me herself she did not care to play with it—her manner is just the same to Lord Jocelyn and to the shoemaker. What is the secret of this woman's content? She is so unlike this restless and

uneasy generation. She is more like the idyllic ladies, or like Helena walking [?] in the contemplation of her own beauty. What a lovely creature she is, or (my dear, forgive me the profanity, but sometimes I fancied she was thinking of her confinement, which she is within a few days of), like the Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.<sup>151</sup> One could almost call it great, this sublime placidity of hers, if greatness is to be one with oneself, without change, without restlessness, after the life she has had. Monotonous as she is, I never saw anyone who more excited my curiosity to know her secret.

Perhaps you will say it is want of earnestness, but bless my heart! if earnestness breaks one's heart who is fulfilling best the creation's end, one who is breaking her heart or this woman who "of herself is king," who has kept her serenity in the midst of excitement and her simplicity in the midst of admiration? The signoria di me [re?] is such a blessing. It might have been one of the Beatitudes, Blessed is the man who is a king complete within himself and he need have added no other blessing. On second thoughts however, my dear, I incline to think that our Saviour probably knew best and was right after all in not substituting strong in heart for poor in spirit.<sup>152</sup> So I shall let it stand. Weakness is perhaps a greater blessing than strength, and all one's uncertainties tend to make one less dreadfully "bange" about the dear self, and to kill out one's intense interest about the events which are to occupy one's dear life.

Are you asleep, my love, or in the mesmeric state (according to H.M.),<sup>153</sup> the most intelligent of all states, in which I ask, are you asleep? You can answer in capital letters Y.E.S. Horror seizes me at what I have done, but conscience when it takes up the pen, is always prosy, you know, and I hereby faithfully promise never again to write more than three lines, and I will take care to count them.

Do you know Lady Ashburton?<sup>154</sup> She is at this moment the lady of my affections. I allow the diamond raspberry tart on her forehead is not inviting but I have a weakness for Americans and I had so much curious information to give *her* upon that country and its inhabitants! Then we came upon Mesmerism and from Mesmerism to Vestiges and we had just got up so high into the "Law of Development in Organic

---

151 Luke 1:38.

152 An allusion to Matt 5:3.

153 Five articles, "Miss Martineau on Mesmerism," appeared in *The Athenaeum* November-December 1844.

154 The American wife of the 1st baron.

Nature” that I could not get down again to say good night, but was obliged to go off as an angel. Oh do not put me down as one of the contrary species. A Dieu, my beloved, I hope you will not say Au Diable, if you do I deserve it, but am still, your contrite, affectionate, repentant more now for having written than for not,

overflowing

F.N.

Embley x x. Dates are always better avoided but we will suppose that it is a week since I saw your dear face.

### Susan and Joanna Horner

**Editor:** The Horners were family friends who exchanged visits with the Nightingales. There are two letters to Joanna Horner, the earlier one with poetry, the later about Florence, Italy, Nightingale’s birthplace and where Joanna Horner had gone to live. There is one (early) letter only to Susan Horner.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Susan Horner, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C.255

Embley

Tuesday [ca. October 1843]

My dear Susan [Horner]

I ought to have answered you before, but we have been wandering over the face of the earth paying visits and have only just niché’d ourselves at home before this wicked rain set in. What a summer, what an autumn we have had! No extent of frightful cloud can blot out the recollection of the blue skies we have enjoyed from my grateful and admiring mind! I suppose you are thinking of a reunion of your scattered members and mean to rejoice together in November. We saw a stray sheep or two as we passed through London, Alf to give an account of Lausanne, Uncle Oc ditto of Hossowl [?], Henry to tell of Norway—in the process of all which we nearly died, “the caverns vast, and hills whose tops touched heaven” abounded so strangely in their divers histories, so that we were obliged to go to *Semiramide*<sup>155</sup> to regain our scattered spirits.

If you have any spirit or any time, my love, let me strongly recommend the Adelaide to your notice in that character, it is decidedly a very amiable and creditable one, a great one, one that will not dis-

---

155 Opera by Christoph Gluck, *Semiramide riconosciuta*; from an annotated libretto (at Wayne State University); Nightingale saw it at the Haymarket in London 29 April 1843.



grace that taste for which you are so pre-eminent among women. Seriously, she is very magnificent in it and the whole thing is got up in the most gorgeous fashion. She is almost Siddonian<sup>156</sup> in some parts I should think, and a touch of Pasta to boot. Aunt Mai was delighted, so was Papa. I mention these sober-minded individuals to show it is not merely the “*minuta gente*” [little people] who value her.

How does your drawing get on this dark weather? Mine stands still, in consequence of the principles of perpetual motion which I am exemplifying in my own person—does Leonora know that camel’s-hair-tip brushes which ruin one in England to the chanson of 6 or 7 shillings are to be had in Paris for 2 or 3 francs? Pray tell her to lay in a large stock to retail in London to her admiring friends: if she would bring a fine fat one rather effilé [tapered] though I like them for me I would go on my knees to her, with gratitude, having long contemplated my stump with effroi [fright], thinking how he is to be replaced without a volcano in our finances—when do they come home?

Pray thank Joanna very much for her letter and her most nicely accomplished commission; I will not trouble her with anything else concerning it. Have you read Dickens? He looked empty, so we sent him home again, but the newspaper extracts are so amusing that we think of recalling our imperial veto.

What do Parisian authorities say as to garnitures? *Are* all their sleeves coat sleeves? and *are* no more “pointes” worn in the morning? I speak feelingly for Mariette [her maid] is just about to make my new gown. Goodbye, dear Susan, what a [breaks off]

Source: From an undated letter to Joanna Horner, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C.254

[1844 or later]

My dear Joanna, I have only this morning received these lines of Sir John Herschel’s, which I must ask you not to give away, please, or to copy. They were written for Mrs Kater and sung to her and Captain Kater as a duet to the tune of Cherry Ripe, which, in their way of singing, slow and with an accompaniment of chords, was the most pathetic thing imaginable.

I believe the marriage with Miss Stewart was no love marriage, though they are very happy together and I suppose he does not expect in her

---

156 In the tradition of Sarah Siddons, née Kemble (1755-1831), English tragic actress painted by Reynolds.

that she should be that complement of himself which makes of two people one being, almost divine, which every true pair must be.

Many, many thanks for your letter, your news and your poetry—which I could ill return unless I were strong in the confidence in my poetry—our news principally consisting of the number of trees cut down by the Empsons—on which subject I think I may confidently affirm that their penultimate tree will come down by the 21st Sunday after Trinity, and their last bush on the 1st Sunday in Advent.

I had a most kind note from Mr Horner the other day, which I answered in a discourse in four sheets, of which he will justly observe to himself that the devil has taken her and she proses like a Presbyterian. If he comes to nineteenthly and to conclude, which I suspect:

Whither, whither shall I flee  
Far from look or thought of thee?  
By what spell compel my heart  
From its baffled love to part?  
Like the Dove, that round the ark  
O'er those waters lone and dark

Urging far her weary race  
Flew and found no resting place,  
So to thee my thoughts, in vain  
Driven abroad, return again.  
Spite of scorn, of broken vow,  
All without is cheerless now,

Yet, perchance, as worldlings say,  
Time may bring a calmer day,  
Years may blight love's sweetest breath,  
Absence do the work of death.  
Whither, whither shall I flee

Far from look or thought of thee?  
Say, can adverse winds assail  
Him, who courts no favouring gale?  
Fate hold scourges yet in store  
For him who loves and hopes no more?  
Vain, tis vain, the heart bereaved  
Of all its highest dreams conceived,  
Where a stamp like this is set,  
Pines or breaks, can ne'er forget.

Source: From a letter to Joanna Horner, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C.154

18 July 1883

My dear Joanna and old friend

Thank you for your most kind letter and wish to know where I was born. It was at the Villa Colombaja near Florence. Do you live near there? It would give me such very great pleasure to see you again—but especially at this time of year when press of work compels one to abandon some things—and those often which one cares for most. Another straw splits the back already broken. I never see more than one person a day if it can be helped. And this is almost always on the most exhausting business talk. My love to Susan.

I give you joy on your nephew's marriage and believe me, ever with best wishes for your Florence life—dear noble old Florence—her *renewed* life.

yours and Susan's  
for auld lang syne  
loving old friend  
F. Nightingale

### **Elise von Tunzelmann**

**Editor:** Elise von Tunzelmann came from a family of the minor German nobility which had settled in Hampshire. She in fact successfully emigrated to New Zealand, married and established a family there.

Source: Letter, Private Collection of Colin Baas

19 November [1852]

My dearest [Elise von Tunzelmann]

If (as you seem to expect and as I fear now is very probable), we do not meet again, let me say how very much I approve of and rejoice in your prospects—I think New Zealand such a good field.

I am very sorry that you have been ill again, but I hope N. Zealand will quite restore you by the entire change and I am so glad that you do not go alone.

If, dearest, you continue to find difficulty in raising the passage money, allow me to lend you £5 toward it—I wish I could send you the whole (you do not tell me how much it is) but it is impossible to me. All my money goes to an object which I cannot but maintain. Perhaps some day I may tell you all about it.

My poor sister is no better and my cup has been full of family afflictions. Believe me, dearest,

ever your attached friend  
Florence Nightingale

I suppose you go in February—tell me where I am to send the £5.

Source: From a letter to Elise von Tunzelmann, Private Collection of Colin Baas

Lea Hurst

30 December [1852]

Dearest, If I come to London, which I may possibly do in the course of next month, I shall *most certainly* make you out. I am VERY glad you are going and hope the voyage will quite cure you.

I am trying to get you an introduction to the bishop of N. Zealand—but my Christmas was spent by the deathbed of a very dear aunt, whom I had been nursing and whose death was a most painful one. Yesterday I went to her funeral and today I am going to carry the news to her sister, who will not be long after her, and whom I shall probably stay with till her death. So you see I have not much time for Christ-massings or for letter writing.

I will bring up some clothes with me when I come and believe me, dearest friend,

ever yours

F. Nightingale

There was nobody here to do anything but me. I have had to do everything—all the painful preliminaries to settle. So you will guess, dearest, that I write in great haste.

Source: From a letter to Elise von Tunzelmann, Private Collection of Colin Baas

[25 March 1853]

Dearest, My grandmother died this morning. The last week was one of such suffering, her cries never ceasing day nor night, and no drop, even of water, having passed her lips for that time, that I have no feeling but of joy in her rest. I had sat up with her for seven nights and days and now she is at peace.

I shall not be in London till the week after next—as I must remain here for the funeral—and am besides quite worn out, I fear I shall scarcely be in town therefore before the 7th April. There are still affairs to be arranged. I hope therefore that you will write to me after the funeral—I *may* come up to London on Tuesday the 5th, if so, I will write to you.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I hope you are better.

Easter Sunday

## Annabella Milnes and Family

**Editor:** Née Annabella Hungerford Crewe (1809-74), Annabella Milnes was the wife of Nightingale's favourite rejected suitor, Richard Monckton Milnes,<sup>157</sup> with whom she remained friends (their second daughter was named Florence Ellen). Annabella Milnes and Nightingale must have met early on for she is referred to favourably in a letter to a mutual friend, Georgina Tollet (see p 745 above). In 1857, when Nightingale was back in London after the Crimean War, and before she was too ill to go out, she made a social call on Mrs Milnes. She, however, was not then in London,<sup>158</sup> but the two evidently established cordial relations. Richard Monckton Milnes, an MP, had been prominent in the fundraising to honour Nightingale after the Crimean War and both Milneses were supportive of Nightingale in this period of organizing the royal commission. Two short letters below show that the Milnes home served as a meeting place with Alexander William Kinglake, author of a major history of that war.

In 1859 Nightingale sent Annabella Milnes a copy of *Notes on Nursing*. She wrote her in 1864, when she had then become Lady Houghton on Richard Monckton Milnes's acceptance of a peerage, enclosing a letter from the governor of Ceylon she thought would be of interest (in *Public Health Care* 6:199).

Annabella Milnes's death in 1874 occurred at the time David Livingstone's death in Central Africa became known (he had died months earlier). After expressing sympathy to her friend on his loss, Nightingale went on to discuss Livingstone. Her enormous respect for the missionary explorer has appeared already in this volume (see p 585 above) and there is yet another reference in the letter below; a letter to his daughter on his death is in *Society and Politics* (5:538-39).

Nightingale kept in touch with the Milneses' children. Letters about them appear with other letters to him in *Society and Politics* (5:477-90). When Florence Milnes was about to be married she wrote Nightingale's sister about it; she passed the letter on to Nightingale,

---

157 See Gillian Gill, *The Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale*, for a description of the man Annabella Milnes had to put up with and what Nightingale missed by not marrying him (229-32); she gives sources on his homosexuality and his hard-core and sadomasochistic pornography collection. His country house, Fryston Manor, which housed it, he jokingly called "Aphrodisiopolis."

158 Letter to Richard Monckton Milnes 17 February 1857, Trinity College, Cambridge Houghton uncatalogued.

who found it unclear and wrote back: I return F. Milnes's letter with thanks. I have not the ghost of an idea who "Arthur" is, nor whether he is a "sposo," nor whether "sposo" *at all* there is. God bless her if she is going to be married and God bless her if she is not going to be married, dear P."<sup>159</sup> In fact she married the Hon Arthur Honniker.

In 1882 Nightingale reported to her sister that "Mrs FitzGerald (Amicia Milnes) is safe from Cairo on board the *Invincible*."<sup>160</sup> Two other letters to Richard Monckton Milnes in the 1880s (excerpted below) include inquiries about the daughters. The Milneses' very distinguished son and heir (Lord Crewe) became a member of the Nightingale Fund Council in 1899.

Source: From two uncatalogued letters, Trinity College, Cambridge University, Houghton Collection uncatalogued, draft or copy Add Mss 45796 ff190-91

30 Burlington St., W.  
3 May 1857

My dear Mrs Milnes

The enclosed "blue book" extracts I said to Mr Kinglake<sup>161</sup> at your house on Friday that I would send him—I am sure you will excuse me for giving you the trouble of forwarding them.

Nineteen thousand of my children or "comrades," call them which you will, are lying in their already forgotten graves in the Crimea and at Scutari, whose blood is crying to us from the ground, not for vengeance but for mercy on their successors.

Believe me,

ever sincerely yours

Florence Nightingale

The Hon Mrs Milnes

16 Upper Brook St.

Tuesday 23 [June 1857]

It is really very, very kind of you to think so much of our army troubles. I have not the least clue now as to what our commander-in-chief's ideas are. Still the opportunity of meeting him, thanks to your kindness, is not one to be easily rejected—and therefore I will come, if you will allow me, as you so kindly propose, on 7 July to dinner.

<sup>159</sup> Letter 13 November 1881, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/181.

<sup>160</sup> Letter to Parthenope Verney 19 February 1882, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/12.

<sup>161</sup> Alexander William Kinglake (1809-91), author of a multi-volume history of the Crimean War.

My father is in Derbyshire, and therefore I cannot answer for him and conceive I ought to decline for him, because of the inconvenience to you of having a place at the dinner table uncertain. Believe me, dear Mrs Milnes,  
most sincerely yours  
F. Nightingale

Source: From a note and a letter to Annabella Milnes, Trinity College, Cambridge University, Houghton Collection uncatalogued and 18/135

24 July 1860

I should be very glad to see your “daughters” and you tomorrow (Wednesday) at 4 o’clock, if that hour will suit you. But, pray say, if it does not—3, 5 might suit you better.

yours ever

F. Nightingale

18 August 1860

In my young days Plutarch’s *Lives* used to be our “Lives of the Saints” and much better fellows there are among the former than among the latter saints. Some of the best of them are in this little volume, which I venture to enclose to you for my little namesake (whom I had the pleasure of seeing) at some future day. I don’t know her various names and titles.<sup>162</sup>

Would you tell Mr Milnes that I misinformed him about Bunsen? I have since heard a very accurate account of him to this effect: that his memory and intelligence are unimpaired—that he can still work for two or three hours a day—that difficulty of breathing is his great suffering—that he has “fatty degeneration of the heart,” with a tendency to collection of water in the bag of the heart, and also to dropsy—that he is often unable to lie down for weeks or to occupy himself for hours—that sudden death, which may occur at a day’s, a week’s, a year’s time from this, is the best wish one can form for him—otherwise he may have a most painful prolonged death from dropsy. My experience generally leads me to know that this is the correct account, a thing that every old nurse knows is *very* difficult to get. Also it is in some respects the “prognosis” which has been made of me.

Matilda Bunsen has returned home from Cannes after her severe accident (which has made one leg shorter than the other) and Frances with her. Nearly all his family is now with Bunsen at Bonn.

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

---

162 Hon Florence Ellen Hungerford Milnes.

Source: Letter to Richard Monckton Milnes, Trinity College, Cambridge University, Houghton Collection uncatalogued

Embley

Romsey

16 April 1874

Dear friend

I have shrunk from writing to you so soon after your loss, though well I know that the real loss only makes itself felt more and more to the last “syllable” of time.<sup>163</sup> But if her death was a shock to me—I had not the least idea that, though ailing, alas!, she was near her end—what must it have been to you?

I write now only because somehow I think I understood her. And to you who understood her *so well* it may give a moment's pleasure to know that others did. I always thought her the most magnanimous woman I ever knew, a rare quality in man or woman in civilized days, the most disinterested of the stuff of which heroes are made. It is comparatively easy to be a hero when one feels that one can do and dare anything for a great cause, but when one is a hero among the base perplexities which enter so largely into English life and which drag down one who has no wings—that is to be a hero indeed.

Livingstone has lately been my wings: the true heroic soul whom to reverence lends one's baser body wings. I had others, but they all died, or rather they are continuing their heroic course elsewhere. To one, who, like me, am the last of a council hall deserted, the “conversation” is truly more with them “elsewhere” than on this earth. *She* has joined the band of the heroes elsewhere. O let *us* be not victims but sacrifices: offered to heaven, not conquered by evil. Forgive the thoughts of one sorely tried by life,  
F.N.

### Selima Harris

**Editor:** Selima Harris was the adopted Abyssinian daughter of Anthony Charles Harris, a merchant based in Alexandria and collector of Egyptian antiquities. Nightingale met them on her Nile trip in 1850, where she is described as “charming” and “a great friend of mine” (4:431) and, with her father, as “capital people” (4:302). There is one surviving letter from Nightingale to her (below). Selima Harris inherited her father's collection and offered it to the British Museum in 1871, but there was no agreement about price. Nightingale was involved in the negotiations.<sup>164</sup>

163 An allusion to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Act 5, scene 5.

164 See letters to Emily Verney 9 November 1871 and to Harry Verney 16 November 1871, Wellcome (Claydon copies) Ms 9005/103 and 106.



Source: From a copy of a letter presumably to Selima Harris, Wellcome Ms 9084/18

London

30 November 1862

Dearest friend

I am so very glad to hear that Mr Harris's health gives you less uneasiness. I trust that another visit to Abano<sup>165</sup> may still farther restore him. I go on at my War Office and Army work, and God still vouchsafes to me the power to work—though my body is so infirm that I scarcely now leave my bed, never my room—and it is very near the grave, I hope—I have lost all my fellow workers by death.

I send you my photograph, as you are so good as to ask it, though it is the very first time I ever did such a thing. And I did not even know that any photograph of me existed, except one which the poor queen ordered. You cannot think what a loss to us Albert was. It is that which makes me call “her poor.”

Shall you go up the Nile this year? I remember seeing you working at Philae so well. How I enjoyed that Philae.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

### Leonora Pertz

**Editor:** Leonora (née Horner) Pertz (b. 1818) was an Englishwoman known to the Nightingale family, second wife of the chief librarian at the Royal Library in Berlin (Nightingale had met Dr Pertz with his first wife in 1850). The two letters below concern the surviving child of a patient at Harley St., Mathilde von Raven, whose unhappy life and death are related in *Life and Family* (1:810-11). Nightingale's frank comments about her friend's marrying someone she could not possibly have known well, only two months after the first wife's death, are also in that volume (1:137-38).

Source: Letter to Leonora Pertz, Boston University 2/22/4

1 Upper Harley St.

19 September 1854

Thank you a thousand times, my dear Leonora, for so kindly visiting my poor little boy. I am now going to trespass further on your goodness on his behalf. It is very necessary to keep an eye over him on this account; the Hagemans, with whom he is, never write, apparently in order that they may be able to say that they receive nothing with him,

---

165 A spa near Venice.

although they have been repeatedly asked whether they would like the child's money paid in advance. They boast to others of their generosity toward the child. But no letter has ever been obtained about him by his friends. The [illeg] has been asked to call upon the child.

But the present difficulty is this: the unfortunate mother left 100 g in the hands of a Mme Schartow (which sum was given the mother by *her* mother) for the use of the child. Mme Schartow wishes this small sum to be left in the bank for the child's future wants. But Mr Hageman writes to her to ask her to deliver it to *him*, saying that the poor mother, Miss v. Raven, had sent *him* the receipt and desired that *he* should have it. Mrs Schartow writes to know what she is to do, give him the money or not. If it is given to him, the father of the child will hear of it and stop paying his modicum for the boy himself, and take possession of the money, as he has done previously of all poor Miss v. Raven saved for the boy. The Hagemans are quite sure of the child's little "pension" being paid by its grandmother and, if the good of the child were at heart to them, they would be glad of his poor little 100 guineas being in safekeeping.

Do you think you could kindly call on the Hagemans and see whether it is necessary that the sum should be given up? If they have a written order for it, I suppose that the demand cannot be refused. Otherwise, they have no right to anything but the child's little "pension." I think it would be desirable to show them that the child has protectors and will be taken away and placed elsewhere, if they make exorbitant demands. If they show a written document, for the money, there is no help for us.

Am I troubling you too much? This can only be done by those who are on the spot. I should be sorry to wrong the Hagemans, although their conduct has been so suspicious lately, for they have been on the whole kind to the child. I have troubled you with all these details, in order that you might not be taken at a disadvantage by Mr Hageman. I shall be indeed truly obliged if you can do anything.

The cholera is very much diminishing here; the rain is very much increasing. The harvest has been splendid. Your son is now at Combe Hurst. Believe me, with kindest regards to Dr Pertz.

gratefully yours  
F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Leonora Pertz, Harvard University, Houghton Library

My dear Mme Pertz

26 February 1858

I am very glad that you wrote to me about the poor child, whose mother, poor soul! I remember perfectly well. She died at Harley St. while I was superintendent there, and I fished her out of one of the public hospitals. I never told her story to anyone else. I am very much obliged to you for having cared so well for the poor child, and enclose £10, of which £2 from my uncle, Mr Sam Smith, for the purposes you so kindly propose of putting the child to Director Ranke's Realschule for two years.

Pray remember me to Dr Pertz, if he has not forgotten me and believe me ever,

sincerely yours

Florence Nightingale

### **Mrs Henry Colyar**

**Editor:** Nightingale met the Colyars in Rome, where Henry Colyar, an expert on archeology and an ardent Roman Catholic, took her and the Bracebridges on many expeditions. The letters to him are all short and mainly concern practical arrangements. The two to her several years later show an ongoing relationship, but no other letters are available. The comments on French politics cover much similar ground with those in a letter to Georgina Tollet (see p 743 above) but these go even further in their denunciation of Louis-Napoléon, now “the Thing.” Interestingly, Nightingale tells her friend that she passed on her “bits” of her letter, presumably on the situation in Rome, to Lady Palmerston, who read them to her husband.

Source: From two letters to Mrs Colyar, Boston University 2/1/1 and /2

Lea Hurst

Matlock

31 January [1852]

With joy I saw your hand—I am in great fears about the world but I will tell you first what we hear from Paris. A reasonable official writes (by the Ambassador's bag—nobody writes by post for all letters are opened) that the President is ruining himself as fast as he can. The proscriptions were a crime, but the confiscations are a “faute” and have alienated the bourgeoisie, who were for him, so the defender of the Rights of Property. The provinces are still for him, in their absurd panic about socialism. However there will be no disturbance from any-

body just yet—for, as soon as the Thing's iniquitous cabinet is formed (Casabianca was a common spy), he will make a grab at the Rhine, Belgium, Savoy or even England (the last the least likely) and once engaged in war, the country will quietly await the glaive [sword].

They say poor Piedmont is in a terrible fright—no wonder—*French* people keep away from the president's balls—the only sign of (moral) life they give. I am ashamed to say my countrymen don't give even this. He is quarrelling with all his family and leading a quite disgraceful private life. Since Lord Palmerston went out, I am weak and weary of the world, "which is now altogether the devil's." It was a comfort to me however to send parts of your letter to Lady Palmerston, who read it to him—and I wish I had kept the pretty note she wrote in returning it. They were evidently quite pleased.

I think the Kalmucks will overrun us, because they have digestions and we have not and I am convinced it is dyspepsia which overthrows empires. There will be three emperors, emperor of France, emperor of Austria, emperor of Russia, and they will eat up [word cut out] dear little Piedmontese and my poor little Greeks. As for poor old Germany, she's gone. Many people expect to see L.-Napoléon returning thanks in St Paul's. But I think Q. Victoria's light cream-coloured horses will long land her safe in St. Stephen's without any other danger but kicking her against the curbstone. But those Whigs—they have turned out the only man of any power among them—a feeble and accomplished folk. However everybody says that Lord John means to resign as soon as he possibly can, would have done so before this, if he could—and a dissolution is expected very soon after the meeting of Parliament. Some say Palmerston and Cobden will make a ministry—some that Sir James Graham will come in. Anyhow, the present men won't stay. I should like to see Lord Palmerston heading a revolution in Italy. The only good thing the *Times* has done is abusing that Advocate del Diavolo, that Thing, L.-Napoléon I am half afraid he will bring back the Orleans, by this persecution of them.

You will be glad to hear that there is a little Milnes already on the stocks. You know whom he married—your Miss Crewe's sister, a most bewitching person. There are tuiles of my Parisian friends in London, who would otherwise be at Cayenne—but my friends are always the riffraff, you know. Guizot sticks to Paris you see—did you read his and Montalambert's<sup>166</sup> speeches at the Institute?

---

166 Charles René Forbes de Montalembert (1810-70), historian, liberal Catholic spokesperson in the second empire.

28 February [1852]

How ungrateful I must have seemed to you. I only enclose the preceding, in order to show you that I did intend to answer your kind letter, but events have come so quickly lately that it seemed vain to write till they had settled into some kind of form. You see how Lord Palmerston has turned out the ministry. They would however have gone out the Tuesday after on the question of the Caffre [1850-1853] War and they preferred making their own bed and falling quietly on a point of their own choice. Lord Derby's ministry is the subject of one universal peal of laughter—I can't laugh—even Lord Derby laughs himself. The three secretaries of state are men whom nobody ever heard of before: Walpole a barrister<sup>167</sup> out of practice, Sir John Pakington a good active country gentleman<sup>168</sup> who, they say, has spent his time since he kissed hands in Wyld's globe in Leicester Sq. studying geography, but he can't make anything of it, he says. Macaulay says that Lord Malmesbury<sup>169</sup> has been mistaken for his grandfather, the great diplomatist, and that people have forgotten he's dead. How an ill-tempered inexperienced man can manage the affairs of Europe at this crisis remains to be seen.

There is to be no dissolution at present, probably not till autumn. The worst of it is that Lord Derby laughs at his own Cabinet. Macaulay says the three secretaries of state will go about like the Roman augurs, smiling at each other when they meet. What is to become of poor Switzerland? with France and Austria acting in concert against her, Geneva likely to be occupied by the one, and the [illeg] by the other, of the absolute powers, what a prospect. This country is crammed with French refugees. But, of all the iniquitous things that animal [Louis-Napoléon] has done, I think his attack upon poor little Switzerland, who prepared, in '38, to defend him at his need, is the worst.<sup>170</sup>

---

167 Horace Walpole (1807-98) had been a clerk at the War Office before becoming home secretary.

168 Sir John Pakington (1799-1880), Conservative MP, became secretary for war in 1852.

169 The 3rd earl of Malmesbury (1807-89), formerly Conservative MP for Wilton, then briefly foreign secretary; his grandfather, the 1st earl (1746-1820), was a distinguished diplomat, variously ambassador to Russia, France and Prussia.

170 Louis-Napoléon was living in Switzerland in exile in 1838 when the king, Louis-Philippe, pressed the country to expel him and sent troops to the border when it refused. The Nightingales, there on visit, promptly left for France. See *European Travels* (7:43).

Belgium has been forced, you see, to give up her Polish officers at the demand of Russia. It seems as if, during a few years, absolutism was to have absolute sway, but great will be the fall thereof and terrible its retribution. Compared to those things, our little politics seem nothing. Lord Palmerston and Sir James Graham mean to do opposition against present ministers and join with the Whigs. The queen's dislike of Disraeli is immense.

I am going to ask Mr Colyar to be so very kind as to manage for me my last payment of twenty scudi for Felicetta Sensi<sup>171</sup> at the Trinità at Rome, which is due this month. This is her fifth and *last* year there. If he would be so very kind as to do this and tell me where and how to pay him, I should be truly obliged to him. I have never heard from my madre since I sent her the parcel, which he was kind enough to put me in the way of doing. The last time she wrote she complained of having never heard from me, at which I was surprised. I know she is no longer at Rome but at Sant' Elpidio. *Where* is that? If Mr Colyar could send me any news of her, I should be truly glad. Lord Feilding<sup>172</sup> is at Rome, who would be glad to do anything for Mr Colyar, I am sure.

The Bracebridges are at home at Atherstone. I took the liberty of sending them your letter. I was sure they would be so glad to hear from you. I believe they are likely to remain at home at present?

The weather here has been and is most severe. Much as you complain of Florence, I wish I were there. Mr Colyar kindly inquires after Miss Boyle, who is quite recovered. Civitea also is well, and we are looking forward to the days when we may be allowed to see you at Embley, dear Mrs Colyar, as well as the beloved visitor whom we had this time last year—alas for too short a time.

In England people are quite “daft” on the subject of Louis-Napoléon.<sup>173</sup> It is quite true that Lord Malmesbury was chosen because he was the private friend of that animal, to superintend our foreign affairs; a friend of ours, an enlightened and liberal woman of mature age, who has just married an enlightened and liberal peer, these people are positively gone to Paris to spend their honeymoon with the wretch (fact)!

---

171 The orphan child Nightingale paid to board at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Rome.

172 Lord Feilding (1823-92), 8th earl of Denbigh, a Roman Catholic convert.

173 Lord Derby, the 14th earl, as prime minister recognized Louis-Napoléon as emperor of the French, Napoléon III.

The Sidney Herberts are going on very well, Mr Colyar will be glad to hear, and have three children. I hope you will write to me again, my dear Mrs Colyar. It is a comfort to exhale one's feelings to a right judging person, and a still greater to hear such sentiment as yours. The bourgeoisie is becoming still more alienated, I am happy to hear from L.-N., whose policy is now openly avowed, the frontier of the Rhine, and the crushing of the middle class. Pray give my best and most grateful love to Mr Colyar. We are now all in London and shall be, I suppose, till Easter. My people are all pretty well again and I am,  
ever my dear Mrs Colyar's  
till doomsday i' the afternoon  
F.N.

### Anne Jemima Clough

**Editor:** Anne Jemima Clough (1820-92) was the sister of Nightingale's great friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, who was married to her cousin Blanche Smith.<sup>174</sup> She directed a girls' school in Liverpool at which a Nightingale cousin, Elinor Bonham Carter, studied. Clough became head of a residence for women students at Cambridge, which became Newnham College, where she served as the first principal.

She presumably shared Nightingale's faith for Nightingale asked her to join in a communion service.<sup>175</sup> Clough was in touch with Nightingale in 1869, forwarding a request from Josephine Butler to signing a petition to the House of Lords for the Married Women's Property Act (Nightingale had already signed the petition to the Commons, for which Butler thanked her<sup>176</sup>). Clough stressed joint work with Butler on lectures and examinations for women at Cambridge.<sup>177</sup> The first note here seems to be from a discussion with her. The second item, a brief note to Dr Sutherland, shows that Nightingale was asked in 1874 to criticize plans for the college building. She evidently made copious notes on its defects, but whether or not her advice was followed, and what advice Dr Sutherland might have added, is not known.<sup>178</sup>

---

174 On her see Blanche Athena Clough, *A Memoir of Anne Jemima Clough*, and Gillian Sutherland, "Anne Jemima Clough and Blanche Athena Clough: Creating Educational Institutions for Women."

175 Letter to Hilary Bonham Carter 25 June 1863, Add Mss 45794 211.

176 Letter of Butler 6 July [1869], Add Mss 45802 f47.

177 Letter of Anne Jemima Clough 8 July 1869, Add Mss 45802 f45.

178 Thanks to the archivist and Dr Gillian Sutherland for their (unsuccessful) searches for the material.

There are scattered references to Clough in correspondence indicating that the two must have met from time to time, but there are no surviving letters from Nightingale. The third item gives Nightingale's appreciation of her friend on her death.

Source: Note, ADD Mss 45802 f48

[ca. July 1869]

Miss Clough: Mr Chadwick says very truly: teaching is an art, but it is not treated as such. Just what I feel in my business: nursing is an art and till it is considered as such, little or no progress will be made in it.

Professor Pillans<sup>179</sup> came up to London to offer to found a professorship of pedagogy, provided the government would take it up. Mr Lowe's answer was that teaching was not an art and could not be taught as such and Mr Pillans was an ass and so the thing fell through.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45757 f227

21 February 1874

The enclosed plans are plans for the Ladies' College at Cambridge, under the "principal," Miss Clough. They earnestly ask for your advice. The plans seem to me nearly as bad as they possibly can be made, in almost every respect. Please send these *my eight pages and the plans* back today, without fail, *with your criticisms*. They *must* have them tonight.

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68887 f53

4 March 1892

The death of Miss Clough, the principal of Newnham (containing Clough Hall, Sidgwick Hall and Old Hall) at Cambridge, is a severe loss. The influence she exercised and the consternation (I can call it nothing less) at her loss are immense.

I have often thought of her in relation to Oriental countries, like Siam. She was not a woman of commanding abilities; she was the very reverse of a learned woman; her manners were not attractive. But her intense sympathy with all young women—not only those under her charge—her absorbing interest in education *for its own sake*, like Lord Lawrence's (who took the London School Board after saving India), made her a power. Like him, life was nothing compared with her work. She had an insight as to what every woman who had been under her charge was fit for.

---

179 Probably James Pillans (1778-1864), Scottish educator, inventor of the blackboard.



Her last word, a few minutes before her death, was to go on about some building she was doing for the girl students, and the day before about a ring she was ordering in London for the lady she has recommended to Mr Morant for Siam. (I have seen both the ladies, the first and the second for Siam.)

### **Jane Elizabeth Senior**

**Editor:** Mrs Nassau Senior (1828-77), as she was known, born Jane Elizabeth Hughes, corresponded with Nightingale on relief issues during the Franco-Prussian War 1870-71. Senior was awarded the Red Cross medal for her work during that war. Fifteen letters by Nightingale to Emily Verney in this period (Claydon House copies in Wellcome Mss 9005 and 9006) refer to this correspondence. They make clear Nightingale's confidence in her good judgment on the merits of different nursing and relief organizations, and the complex issues of dealing with France during the Commune.

Senior in 1873 became the first woman assistant inspector of pauper schools, appointed by the president of the Local Government Board, James Stansfeld, an MP already known for his support on repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. Senior promptly asked for help and much advice indeed appears in the next letters. Nightingale said she would "most gladly serve as your handmaid."<sup>180</sup> In passing along the request to her colleague Dr Sutherland, Nightingale described Senior as the "sister of Tom Hughes (Tom Brown), most efficient worker at St Martin's Place with Emily Verney, also with Octavia Hill and Emily Verney at lodging houses, also at boarding out workhouse orphans. Can we help her? I am very glad she has this to do."<sup>181</sup>

When Senior was next made inspector of workhouses and workhouse and district pauper schools Nightingale was delighted, hailing her as "General of Infantry."<sup>182</sup> She greatly regretted her having to leave early on account of illness. On Senior's death in 1877 she told Margaret Verney: "Her premature death was a national and irreparable loss. If she could but have held on a few years longer, she would have had successors and the Poor Law Board would as soon have been without *lady*

---

180 Letter 28 January 1873, Clendening History of Medicine Library, Kansas University Medical Center (correspondence in a nursing volume).

181 Senior letter to Nightingale 24 January 1873; note to Dr Sutherland 25 January 1873, Add Mss 45757 f62.

182 Letter 5 January 1874, Clendening History of Medicine Library, Kansas University Medical Center.

*inspectors* for girls' institutions as we should have had male matrons." Nightingale gave her name for a memorial fund for Senior.<sup>183</sup> See the questionnaire Nightingale drafted for her in the illustration section.

### Julie Schwabe

**Editor:** Julie Schwabe (1818-96) was born in Bremen of a German Jewish family, married an older businessman cousin, Salis Schwabe. They settled in Manchester and were prominent in the Unitarian community there.<sup>184</sup> Nightingale was first in touch with her in 1861 over Italian matters; see *European Travels* (7:325-26). Worse than Adeline Irby (above), Mme Schwabe tried Nightingale not only with inattention to detail but sometimes wildly preposterous, if not wrong, schemes. To Thomas Longmore Nightingale described Mme Schwabe as "a German and a frantic Garibaldian and Prussian, the best heart and the worst head I know."<sup>185</sup> After the Franco-Prussian War she tried to talk (the Francophile) Nightingale into a "proposal!!" (of hers!) "TO PAY THE WAR INDEMNITY for FRANCE TO Germany!!!!"<sup>186</sup>

There is correspondence with Julie Schwabe in the second war volume regarding aid for the wounded in the 1866 Austro-Prussian War and then much more in the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War. One letter only is given here, on her Italian work, which Nightingale supported. Schwabe died in Naples.

Source: From an incomplete letter/draft/copy to Samuel Smith, ADD Mss 45792 ff186-88

[22 June 1861]

This is not what Mme Schwabe said to me yesterday. She came to me with one of the most preposterous plans I think which ever occurred to woman, viz., that I should help *her* to set up a whole system of education at Naples (she to be neither at Naples nor even in London). And she has made Garibaldi actually write a letter to the women of England, which will appear in a few days in all the papers.

She preached me a sermon, apparently learned by heart, into which I could not interpolate one word, she went so fast and so loud. All that I

183 Letter to Margaret Verney 3 May 1879, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/222.

184 James C. Albisetti, "The 'Inevitable Schwabes': An Introduction," *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 98 (2002):91-112.

185 Letter 14 February 1867, Ms 7204 RAMC/1139/LP/54/12/18.

186 Letter to Emily Verney 7 April [1871], Wellcome Ms 7204/39.

could cram in (and *that* writing it down and thrusting it into her hand) were the names of Italian women in Italy, who had done something for education there. She wanted me to write to half the people in London.

What I want *you*, please, to do is to write to Mme Schwabe, Manchester, in your own name, and to ask her to put on paper what she wants, to you. I told her that the only practical thing, instead of all her wild notions (she actually told me that the Italians wanted to persuade me to come over and to do it myself), would be to invite the Sisters of Charity (Italians) from Turin, who *are* for education, to send a staff to Naples. And that in England we could perhaps raise a subscription toward the expenses.

But she is so utterly ignorant of her own subject (she thinks that Sisters of Charity are only for hospitals!!) and that they set up on their own hook where they like!) that I wish I had never seen her.

### Other Women Friends

**Editor:** Nightingale knew Mrs Edward Truelove, a contemporary or a slightly older friend, from her twenties. Mrs Truelove was the wife of a dissenting minister, a small publisher in Holborn. Nightingale sent her copies of her books.<sup>187</sup> When Nightingale withdrew to Hampstead to mourn the loss of Sidney Herbert, Mrs Truelove was someone she wanted to visit (see the first letter below). Evidently the visit took place for another book, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley's two-volume *Arnold's Life and Correspondence*, is inscribed, from Hampstead, 1861:

Mrs Truelove: this record of a truly great man who left his impress for good upon so many, many young minds and consciences, and who is an old admiration of hers, is affectionately offered by Florence Nightingale.<sup>188</sup>

Her friend gave her presents, too, it seems, for a letter (5 September 1867) thanks Mrs Truelove for the "smart" cap she worked for her, which Nightingale put on when her mother visited. There are twenty-one surviving letters or notes, dated from 1860 to 1885 (some are undated). Most consist only of brief Christmas or New Year's greetings and gifts. One letter each concerns Mrs Truelove's son and husband and four are substantial letters about Nightingale's social and public health reform work. The one on Poor Law reform included Nightingale's paper on cubic space in workhouse infirmaries.

---

187 She gave her *Notes on Nursing* in 1860 (ADD Mss 45797 f147); *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions* in 1871 (ADD Mss 45802 f270).

188 Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Association.

In 1870 Nightingale asked Harry Verney to help Mrs Truelove's son with a job. In that letter she described Mrs Truelove as having "a sort of genius . . . she is one of the most interesting women I ever knew."<sup>189</sup> One letter is included in handscript in the Illustrations section.

Source: Letter to Mrs Truelove, International Museum of Surgical Science, Chicago IL M1957.385

Hampstead, N.W.  
13 September 1861

Dear Mrs Truelove

Since my return from the Crimea I have been occupied five years (this last month) without a day's cessation, in working for the army with Sidney Herbert the late minister of war. His death has put an end to my work.

I am now completely an invalid, almost entirely confined to four walls and I cannot talk well for more than an hour at a time, or to more than one person in a day. But I should like to renew an old acquaintance—now that unfortunately my time is so much more my own.

Could you spend a day here? If you will fix the day, I will faithfully tell you whether any engagement prevents me from seeing you on that day. Should it be more convenient to you to bring your daughter with you pray do so, although I am afraid I should scarcely be able to see her. But it will be a little country air for her. I am only here for a short time.

yours faithfully

Florence Nightingale

Inquire for Miss Mayo's Oak Hill Park, first house to the right as you come into the private road to Oak Hill Park houses (with a lodge on the left).

Source: From a letter to Mrs Truelove, International Museum of Surgical Science, Chicago IL M1957.372

5 August 1867

I can't tell you the pleasure it gave me to think of your kind remembrance of me. Yes, surely, I will "accept" your beautiful work from such a kind friend as you are.

You must excuse my delay in answering your good and sweet sign of kindness. I am quite a prisoner to my room and so overwhelmed with business that I never know what it is to stop unless I can do no more.

---

189 In *Life and Family* (1:809-10).

And yet I would not let any hand answer you but my own. I have no time or strength to choose my words. I am very thankful that, amid much grief and sorrow and disappointment, I am still able to work incessantly.

Indian matters are what chiefly occupy me now. If I find anything that I think may interest you among my more recent papers, I shall venture to send it you—I don't know whether you have seen what I now take the liberty of asking you to accept—nor, if you have not, whether it will interest you. Pray believe me, dear Mrs. Truelove,

ever most truly

and I may say gratefully yours

Florence Nightingale

P.S. I feel inclined also to send you, because you are so kindly interested in my occupations—not, I am afraid, that it will interest you much, a copy of a paper of mine which was drawn up by desire of the Poor Law Board and presented to the House of Commons—as I have been much employed lately about this terrible question of the workhouses. And also a little book on “Social Duties” by a Mr Rathbone of Liverpool. I can fancy that you will not agree with it all. But Mr Rathbone is not a theorizer—he is also a doer. No one has done more than he in civilizing his own town of Liverpool. He has enabled us to do for the workhouse at Liverpool (1272 sick beds) what ought to be done in London and everywhere. But I should never have done, were I to tell you of his capital organizations at Liverpool. He gives his money—his heart—his work.

F.N.

**Editor:** With her letter of 25 September 1867 Nightingale sent three partridges. For Christmas the next year went one hare, one pheasant, two rabbits, one duck, evergreens, one jar mincemeat and one of jam, with her “kindest Christmas love and greetings.” For 21 December 1869 the gift was two brace partridges and one hare. On 23 December 1869 went evergreens, one leg mutton (Hampshire), mince pies and buns, one pheasant and one brace partridges. On 21 December 1870 the box had evergreens, one pheasant, one rabbit, mincemeat and pie, cranberries, apples, pears and beetroot, “with Florence Nightingale’s truest Christmas love and best Christmas greetings.” On 22 December 1871 the parcel had Christmas greenery, one loin mutton, one teal, mince pies and the admonition: Do not smile at my Hampshire mutton. The parcel for 1872 went on Christmas day: ever-

greens, two pheasants, one hare and a dozen mince pies. Again on Christmas day for 1877 there was holly, six Christmas mince pies and a book by Nightingale's sister. In 1878 the gift went at New Year's: a book, six mince pies and a brace of snipe. For Christmas eve in 1881 there was a card, *To enquire*, with *Christmas evergreens and four mince pies*. All the items here are part of the collection at the International Museum of Surgical Science, Chicago.

The deliveries follow the Trueloves' changes of address, from 240 Strand or "Strand, 4 doors from Temple Bar, N. side," in 1869 to 256 Holborn; in 1885 with "Please Forward" added. This last, Christmas Eve, sends hare, holly and six mince pies, "with Florence Nightingale's best Christmas greetings and affectionate remembrances."

Finally, there are a few letters to and about Wellow friends.

Source: From a letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/164

21 June 1867

I send you poor Mrs Dawes's letter, which I think a very touching one indeed. You know that *he* made it a principle to spend all his revenue on the schools and places—he did not even insure his life—and she is left with only £100 a year, supported by that rich Miss Guthrie, her mother's stepdaughter, to whom Dean Dawes<sup>190</sup> gave a home for many years. It is evident that all poor Mrs Dawes's thought is to avert any shade at all from his memory and to show that it was done with her *freest* will.

Please return me her note. Perhaps his friends at Embley, Kneller and co., may like to hear of her. I said in my letter to her how much I felt that my ten years' illness and business had entirely cut me off from the last ten years of his life. And it is to this she alludes in the last part. I did not even write to him when he was ill. I believe it is quite true what she says that *no one* knew half the good he did was doing.

Source: From a letter and a postcard to Louisa Dinah Petty, Girton College Archives

30 January 1883

Indeed, dear Madam, I do and ever shall feel almost too tender an interest in Embley and Wellow, although it is now so many years since I have been there.

Good speed to your new altar cloth. I wish I could do more toward it than this small coin, but you will readily believe that, since my

---

190 Richard Dawes (1793-1867), dean of Hereford and educational reformer.

father's death, the claims upon me have been so much heavier that it is hard to me to make both ends meet.

I am still constantly overworked and for long years have been almost a prisoner to my room from illness (you kindly ask). As strength decreases, business seems to increase.

Lady Verney has been and is most seriously ill and only just now has she been able to be moved back to Claydon. Today is Sir Harry Verney's jubilee, when he has completed fifty years of Parliamentary life. The town of Buckingham celebrates it and one or two Cabinet ministers come down to speak.

Mrs Coltman is better, thank God. How long has been the strain upon her bodily and mental, how deep the sorrow of parting with that bright pure, unselfish spirit [the death of a son].

Send me a few early primroses and a tuft of fresh moss (from dear old Wellow millstream, which I see before me as I write) if you wish to be very kind. And you will give the greatest possible pleasure to

yours ever faithfully

Florence Nightingale

3 March 1890

Your lovely primroses and moss I cannot thank you enough for. We have arranged the primroses round a large dish with the dark green moss inside. And three sweet "crimson tippel" daisies are growing out of the moss. . . . And there are ivy leaves, white violets and a red anemone in this beautiful garden, where the moss is always kept wet.

May God bless you and give you as much joy as you have given

yours ever faithfully

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** A letter to Miss Allsop 7 March 1901 (at Wayne State University) thanks her "for the beautiful moss, ivy and snowdrops. . . . It made my room look fresh and beautiful like Embley."

Nightingale was grieved that the Allsops would have to leave Wellow. She sent regards to Mrs Humby, whom she could remember since a child.

The Boer War was "not near its end," so that it was

an anxious time for everyone, but especially for those who have friends in it. But I have seen enough of war to see how it brings out the good in everyone on the right side and makes gallant men of them. I pray God that they may come back safe.

## NOTABLE AND ROYAL WOMEN ACQUAINTANCES

---

### Julia Ward Howe

When Nightingale met Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) and her husband, Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-76), in 1844 the couple were on their wedding trip. Julia Ward Howe was Nightingale's nearly exact contemporary, Dr Howe a distinguished physician and veteran of the Greek Wars of Independence, twenty years their senior. It is not surprising that Nightingale's friendship should have been stronger with Dr Howe than his wife. He encouraged Nightingale to pursue her vocation; she read his books; they discussed his work with the visually and hearing impaired, and various mental handicaps, "idiocy and cretinism." Howe would later become a popular writer, abolitionist, suffragist and peace advocate, but that was later. She is famous for writing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "John Brown's Body." It was Dr Howe who wanted their second daughter to be named after Nightingale (the first was given her mother's name, Julia).<sup>1</sup> Nightingale duly became godmother of Florence Howe.

Nightingale was evidently a model for Julia Ward Howe in her activism. In 1894 at a meeting of the Boston Armenian Relief Committee she described (with considerable licence) Nightingale's action in getting nursing started in the Crimean War: "The men are suffering. Break in the doors, open the boxes, give me the blankets and medicines. I must have them!" Howe said that the United States was now being called on to play the part of Florence Nightingale: "to take our stand and insist upon it that the slaughter shall cease."<sup>2</sup> A Howe daughter,

---

1 Laura E. Richards and Maud Howe Elliott, assisted by Florence Howe Hall, *Julia Ward Howe 1819-1910* 1:112.

2 In Laura E. Richards and Maud Howe Elliott, assisted by Florence Howe Hall, *Julia Ward Howe 1819-1910* 1:113.



Laura E. Richards, who published some of the correspondence, also wrote a sycophantic book on Nightingale's Crimean work, *Florence Nightingale: The Angel of the Crimea*, 1909.

Julia Ward Howe visited England in 1877, the year after the death of her husband. She contacted Nightingale, who was not only busy with work (as usual) but very involved in looking after her mother at Lea Hurst. Nightingale wrote her a letter about Dr Howe (the last item here) but did not invite her to visit.

Correspondence with Julia Ward Howe regarding the godchild has already appeared in *Life and Family* (1:720-21); in *Theology* on the high church movement and sisterhoods (3:335-36 and 445-46); in *Society and Politics* on politics and literature (5:333 and 774); and in *Public Health Care* on medical interests (6:513). Here we give selections from published letters that focus on the friendship and women's interests. The original letters could not be located.

Source: From a letter to Julia Ward Howe, in Laura E. Richards, ed., "Letters of Florence Nightingale," *Yale Review* 24 (December 1934):327-30 (ellipses in published letter)

Tapton, near Sheffield  
23 July 1845

And now may I tell you where I am? When we reached Lea Hurst we found a letter to say that Grandmama had had a threatening of paralysis, so Papa and I came on here, and he left me to stay on, and most thankful am I that she will let me stay, as I had a sort of terror of her being left alone. The solitude of this place, where we only send for our letters once a week, where we seldom see a newspaper, and ministries might go in and out without our being the wiser, is something I suspect you Boston people have *no* idea of—indeed I might be heard to answer, if asked what king at present sits the British throne, "Suppose, Sir, we say George the III." That is the reason, you see, why all my news is a quarter of a century old. I have more time for thinking than for writing here—there is very little to be done—to sit with her hand in mine and to tell her stories about her grandchildren is all I can do for her, and I take the first moments I have to write to you. I like walking in the valley of the shadow of death,<sup>3</sup> as I do here sometimes; there is something in the silence and solitude of it which levels all earthly troubles—*on retrempe ses ailes* [one dips one's wings] in the

---

3 An allusion to Ps 23:4.

waters of that valley. A person who always lived in it, it seems to me, would be like a white swan on its cool, fresh blue lake, rocked to rest by its waves, instead of being dragged down into our busy chicken-yard of struggling, *scratting* [scratching] life.

As life hurries along in its wild, headlong course (how it does hurry!) it is as much as I can do to run with it—my mind is out of breath with its dawdling perceptions—and cannot connect anything but that its days are past and its purposes broken off. . . .

I and my three books which I brought with me are settled down here so very like a very old spinster with her three cats, that you will not wonder if I can give you nothing but the heavy and the humdrum. A very turbulent dog completes the picture, who has always his hand on my arm—my only grievance that he is not a dark dog, which does not show the dirt—white dogs ought to wear a black surtout, like our *Teazer*, who always grew a long black greatcoat over his white flannel petticoat.

On Sundays I entertain very old ladies to dinner, for as one is deaf and the other has no teeth to speak distinctly, they need an interpreter. We talk about robberies and the negligence of the police. “Ah,” says one, “Where I lived about York, the police were very attentive, very indeed, in taking up *everybody that was round*, very attentive indeed, and they would take *anybody* to the station and examine him.” “And here they have not taken even me,” say I. Grandmama is very anxious they (the old ladies, I mean, not the police) should like me, so I hope they do. I open the front door for them on my knees and walk round the garden with them on my face. Oh why did Providence invent old age? If we are to go up the hill again, why do we go downhill at all in order to climb up the other side? I could have engineered it better. . . .

I do not know how to thank Dr Howe for his most interesting and welcome letter and illustrations of mesmerism [hypnotism]. Thanks and thanks a thousand that in the midst of his many occupations, and of the delights of his successes over that same dead and unpromising body in his pupils, a little time should have remained to him to think of me. I shall never forget so kind a thought. Could the excess of human charity and philanthropy induce him to write to me again, it would be giving me intense pleasure, when he has a little time, but you see I have nothing interesting to send him in return.

You do not know how pleased I should be to see anything that you have written, dearest friend, nor how gratefully I should receive those

poems of yours<sup>4</sup> you promised me, when your friends come to England. Any friends of yours will be welcome at our house ever, but as a prognostic and foreshower of the happy time which shall see *your* faces there again—coming events cast their shadows before them—I shall think whenever we may receive friends of yours. Ah, would that I could accept your invitation and come to America—but that is too good to be true. If I *had* gone too I could not have come here, so everything is for the best, and so we *shall* be able to say some day, I suppose, to everything, even to our own false steps.

But I am afraid to look at the clock, for I *do* think it must be half past nine (we drink tea before 6) and the dog must have been chained to the foot of the stairs and every other soul and Christian dog asleep this hour—and you, my dear friend, I am sure must be asleep, too, so only two words more to say what I could not say in many, many more, how truly and earnestly I am,

ever your gratefully overflowing and affectionate

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Julia Ward and Samuel Gridley Howe, in Laura E. Richards, ed., “Letters of Florence Nightingale,” *Yale Review* 24 (December 1934):330-36 (except where otherwise indicated, ellipses in published letters)

Embley Park

26 December 1845

That the queen is going to add a *babby*, and Miss Martineau a *book*, to the already too numerous swarm, will not interest you. . . .

Shall I inform you that the old year is almost at an end, a curious piece of information, usually conveyed in letters at this time. Poor old year! has a '46 already his heel upon your head? I am not sorry, it brings at least this advantage, that one is less of a young lady every year, though it is but a negative one. I am glad to be growing old and, after '46's first month is over, shall be very well able to welcome him, but that flight of starlings going to settle, of alarms and embarrassments, called Christmas “rows,” they are coming on with fearful haste. We are going to dance out the old year—surely we might with as much reason dance out a death—for with how much more security we can look forward, in many cases, to a happy fate for that dear lost

---

4 Julia Ward Howe's first (anonymous) publication was of poetry, *Passion Flowers*, 1854.

one than we can to the happiness of the danced-in year for most of the dancers? Is it not almost as solemn a moment?

All the English world are becoming Catholics—perhaps I am writing to one now—if America has the same fever. If so, would you had been with us the other day to see Sidney Herbert's new church near Salisbury,<sup>5</sup> with plenty of room on the stage for the actors and very little for the spectators, so it seemed to me. When we mounted the stage, resplendent in mosaic and painting, we took our galoshes from off our feet, not because the place whereon we stood was *holy* ground, but because it was *gorgeous* ground.

The reviews, and those reviews of the reviews (all that we ever read now), the newspapers, spend a great deal of good anxiety lest the German religious, or irreligious, movement and eclectic philosophy should spread here. There is no danger—Catholicism suits us better. . . .

My young people (meaning father, mother and sister) are just come back from a very pleasant visit, where they heard the widow lioness (the lion roaring in her own right besides) Mrs Caroline Bowles Southey,<sup>6</sup> with great satisfaction. . . .

The noise of mirth and jollity made meanwhile, at home, by my old great-aunt and me was inconceivable, over the pleasures of the devil and the world—that is, she the world, and I the devil, with the pleasing little cream pot set up between us as the flesh. Nature's "last best gift" after all is one's own fender and one's own room.<sup>7</sup>

I have just been attending the deathbed of our dear old nurse, one of that genus, now nearly extinct, of the Catherine Douglasses, who would hold their arm in the latch of the door till it was broken, if thieves were getting in. She was our housekeeper and insisted on keeping the keys until the very moment of her death. She died a hero as she had lived, upright in her chair, her last words being, "Don't call the cook, Hannah, go to your work."

Though I held her hand I could not tell the exact moment when her gallant spirit sped its way on its noiseless journey, except that the hand for the first time failed to press mine. She fought the fight out, till overpowered by the material world, like a good *man* and true, and I have no doubt her soul is gone to animate the body of a moral Napoleon. She had lived with Mama twenty-seven years, and never

5 An Italianate church in Wilton, St Mary and St Nicholas, built by Sidney Herbert and his mother, consecrated in 1845.

6 Caroline Anne Bowles Southey, a poet Nightingale quoted.

7 *Charlotte Temple*, by American novelist Susanna Haswell Rowson.

been seen with an uncheerful face. She was deformed and a dwarf, but her great soul made her like a Prometheus and she did bring down fire from heaven, which warmed and lighted our house. I cannot pretend to talk of death as a misfortune because one cannot feel it so, but we miss her every moment of our lives.

Since her death I have spent half my days on the physiology of blue curtains and bad preserves, which have been my care and study as housekeeper. The hours I have spent in that cupboard! I can't think how people can eat preserves, now I see the time and trouble they give! If ever one finds its way into my mouth again—however my reign is now over—angels and ministers of grace<sup>8</sup> defend me from another! though I cannot but view my fifty-six pots with the proud satisfaction of an artist. . . .

I have not thought of anything to tell you yet and it would be out of place if I had, for this letter is to be a mere letter of business, penned to convey to you the necessary information how much I want to see you and the little Florence and hear all about Dr Howe's plans, who seems full of activity and lunatic asylums. Ah! What a blessing to live, as he does, every day of his life! with others. *Young* people want experience and *old* people want energy, and so nothing is done, and when we see the exception to this law we cannot but call it genius, that unattainable gift of God.

I have failed in three beautiful plans this autumn and generally believe that man counts his years by their failures and not by their months, and that it is of his early miscarriages that are made up his own experience and his neighbour's amusement. Girls seem to me to be the least happy class of the community, and the misery is greatly increased by the feeling that it is a very wicked thing, in such a position, not to be very happy. Their friends always tell them that when they have a vocation, a family dependent upon them, they will find all come right. But I cannot believe that God has created a whole class merely to wait till they are something else. Oh the wasted energies that I see and the field there is for them—why cannot the two be brought together? Who would fear being an old maid if she had such a prospect before her as to be the creature behind whom Providence hides Himself?—I do not mean only in broth or a load of coals or 2s. 6d.<sup>9</sup>

---

8 From William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act 1, scene 4.

9 These sentiments are a major theme in *Suggestions for Thought*.

I saw a poor woman die before my eyes this summer, whom her well-intentioned nurses had poisoned, as certainly as if they had given her Prussic acid. She died of ignorant nursing—and such things happen constantly—as well as all sorts (some from pure ignorance) of misery and profligacy, which good healthful intimacies among the poor people, made by the better educated, under the shelter of a rhubarb powder or a dressed leg, might go far to avert. People talk so much of the “perfection of English female education in the higher orders,” how early they rise, how late they marry, how well they beat their children. Would you not as soon thrust your girls into the convent or the made-up marriage as into the shining-in-conversation life in England? not that it is a viciously frivolous shining at all, not coquetteries or such like. It is only that conversation, good, clear, sensible as it is, seems what young Englishwomen live for, and why are they so restless and uncomfortable nowadays but because this is the universal effort? A few of them succeed and the rest, who fail, are obliged to wait till chance supplies them with an object. How many excellent girls we know who would sacrifice a friend for a good story, and not a malicious story either, only a witty one. One would almost rather the conversation were less good. . . .

You will think I am going to propose a “society” for ameliorating the condition of young ladies of fortune and education, with a secretaryship for myself of £500 a year. But I’m not, though one thinks all this activity without an aim very frightful, and one does not like the poets and the doctrines and remedies for uneasiness of the day. The spirit they breathe is sweet, but it is the spirit of the evening, of the long shadows on the grass, and of the repose which has been earned and may be given way to. It is not the spirit of the morning. I cannot understand resignation, i.e., walking on under the burden of your grief. To seize upon it, make it the footstool of the overcomer and mount it, is not that the real task of the sorrowful?

All that weight of bitterness which must have accumulated in our Saviour’s heart during those thirty private years did not teach him resignation; he stood upon it and it lifted him up till he rose upon that last highest cross, and so ascended, not into his rest, but into his victory. For should we ever call death a rest, is it not rather an overcoming, the last and greatest? . . .

I wish the philosophers would once for all define peace. What is peace? According to all the definitions of all the poets, the essence, the *nec plus ultra* of peace, would be lying in bed, where is certainly

the greatest meditation. Yet, methinks, the peace spoken of by one Matthew is more like *struggling* in every capacity of one's being, living with all one's might, in short, such peace as I have seen in Dr Howe. (How much truth there is in the superstition that you must dig for hidden treasure *in silence*, or you will not succeed. Your description of his benevolence coming out directly in deeds reminded me of it.) . . .

[Editor's ellipses] Goodbye, my dearest friend, which word I am sure I never say to you without its good old meaning. God be with you. You never can tell me enough about yourself, or about Dr Howe's reforms.

Source: From a letter to Julia Ward Howe, in Laura E. Richards, ed., "Letters of Florence Nightingale," *Yale Review* 24 (December 1934):342-43 (ellipses in published letter)

Lea Hurst, Matlock  
Derbyshire  
28 July 1848

The books that people have discussed most have been Miss Martineau's *Eastern Life*,<sup>10</sup> which Murray would not publish because he said he never published anything against Christianity—dunce! [Charlotte Brönte's] *Jane Eyre*, which I hope you have read, and Newman's *Loss and Gain*,<sup>11</sup> detailing the steps by which he reached Roman Catholicism. It is a clever cutting away of all other religions till by a sort of "reductio ad absurdum" he leaves nothing but the Roman. People say it's dangerous—I can't see it. . . .

I have been living a good deal among the high Tories and high church lately. I like to live among so different a set from mine own and hear all that I most venerate laughed at, and all that I most admire abused; it is the best sieve there is, sifting, that is, what one venerates for *itself* from what one venerates because other men do. . . . [editor's ellipses]

But I must stop, for if I am not weary, you are—and I am too. I was very poorly when I first came home, or I should have written before—and without this length—punish me by writing one equally long. . . . My own peculiar people are much in statu quo. . . . I have just returned from bridesmaiding.

10 Martineau's three-volume *Eastern Life: Present and Past*, which Nightingale read on her Nile trip; see *Mysticism and Eastern Religions* (4:336, 454).

11 John Henry Newman, *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert*, 1848.

Pray give my love to my little namesake and to all whom you love.  
My people desire their kindest regards, and believe me, ever, dearest  
friend,

yours till death us do *unite*

Florence Nightingale

Source: Typed copy of a letter to Julia Ward Howe, Add Mss 45804 f205, published in Laura E. Richards, *Samuel Gridley Howe* 146-47

London

7 June 1877

Dear Mrs Howe

It is like a breath from heaven to one's overworked and well nigh overwhelmed mind, your *Memoir*<sup>12</sup> of one of the best and greatest men of our age, and your remembrance. You have shown his many-sided life as known to few. You have shown in him a rarer and more fruitful man than even we who had known and loved him for so long knew.

What has been a revealing to us of him will be even more so for the crowd of your readers who knew him but by the dramatic Greek life, and by his work among the blind, deaf mutes and idiots. No one will know him quite till after you have been read. That is the privilege of your community with him—with his unconsciously heroic life.

A great duty has been fulfilled in making known his sympathy for every kind of misfortune, his love of helping humanity, so to speak, ancient and modern—his generous and persevering devotion to right, his noble horror of helpless pity, his indomitable faith in progress, thanks to you. And how little he thought of reputation! That was the noblest thing of all.

The pressure of ever-increasing illness and business—how little I thought to survive him—makes it difficult to me to write one unnecessary line. Our common friends, Mr and Mrs Bracebridge, Dr Fowler and how many others, are all gone before us. In their names and in his name I bid with all my heart,

fare you very well

Florence Nightingale

---

<sup>12</sup> Julia W. Howe, *Reminiscences* 1819-99.



## Harriet Beecher Stowe

**Editor:** In 1872 Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-96), famous for the publication of the anti-slavery bestseller, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in 1852, wrote Nightingale what must have been a most troubling, if not vexing, letter. In describing how moved she had been by reading her article "Una and the Lion," on the death of Agnes Jones at the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, Stowe reported that the book on Jones had been reissued by her brother, the well-known minister and abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher. There was then no protection for authors in the United States and copyright "piracy" was common. (Nightingale's own *Notes on Nursing* were published numerous times in the United States without her permission and with no payment of royalties.)

The first problem lies in the fact that the book, put out by Jones's sister, included Nightingale's Una article without her permission.<sup>13</sup> Her many objections to this book are related in *Public Health Care*, where also "Una and the Lion" is reprinted. Here in her response to Beecher Stowe, Nightingale explained that the book about Jones was "not *her*" (see p 807 below).

Worse, Stowe seemed about to engage on some similar project as the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary reform, alluded to in her request for information on "any particulars which you think might be of use for us to know." Worse yet she referred, positively, to the arousal of the "female element" in America, such that "almost any good thing that has been demonstrated as possible would be sure to be laid hold of and repeated." But Nightingale knew how hard it was to institute professional nursing with the paltry resources and hostile environment of a workhouse infirmary; Jones's own death, of typhus, on the job, was evidence of the difficulties.

Stowe must have (unwittingly) troubled Nightingale also by referring to a letter she had seen of hers in an American church magazine, "addressed to some young girls in Dr Stowe's church, which made me feel of one heart with you." It is hardly likely that Nightingale ever sent such a letter (there is no correspondence to indicate she had). That Stowe would have "a drawing of your residence in which the very mirror of your room is marked" must also have startled. The source of the drawing was at least a mutual friend, author Elizabeth Gaskell, who had stayed at Lea Hurst with the Nightingale family. This

---

13 Published as *Memorials of Agnes Elizabeth Jones by Her Sister*, 1871.

drawing made Stowe feel that she knew Nightingale, so that she proceeded to chat about the sun, birds, blossoms and oranges of Florida as if they were old friends!

Nightingale consulted Henry Bonham Carter on how to reply to this remarkable letter (the second item below), but any advice he might have given is not available. After considerable delay she sent a lengthy, carefully worded letter outlining the requirements for organizing hospital nursing and training for it, notably the difficulty of getting suitable candidates. The word “difficulty” appears repeatedly. There are interesting comparisons between American and British ladies and women.

Nightingale summoned up her own religious references in her reply, citing the Puritan Richard Baxter and St Michael fighting the devil. She, too, chatted on as if to a friend. She kept the door open to further contact, offering to do what she could, “my poor little possible” (see p 808 below). There is nothing to suggest that any further communication occurred. Yet even before she worked out her response she had used excerpts from Stowe’s letter in her next open letter to nurses, May 1872:

She has so fallen in love with the character of our Agnes Jones (“Una”) which she had just read that she asks about the progress of our work—supposing that we have many more Unas—saying that that *is* “making virtue attractive” and asking me to tell for them in America about our “Una”s.

Shall we ask her to write for us? She says that her brother, the Rev Henry Ward Beecher, of whom you may have heard as a preacher, has reissued our “Una” with a notice by himself, which she will send us. They wish to “organize a similar movement” in America—a “movement” of “Una”s. What a great thing that would be! Shall we try all to be “Una”s?

She ends as I wish to end: “yours in the dear name that is above every other.”<sup>14</sup>

---

14 Letter, “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,” given 8 May 1872 by Sir Harry Verney, 8.

Source: Letter by Harriet Beecher Stowe, ADD Mss 45803 ff3-6, typed copy  
Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions

Mandarin, Fla.

20 March 1872

Dear Miss Nightingale

I have been deeply touched and affected by reading your *Una*. The book is reissued in America with an introduction by my brother Henry<sup>15</sup> and we are anxious to give it a wide circulation.

In these days the providence of God seems to be opening a wider field for women. The very first announcement of primitive Christianity has twice repeated the words “on my sons and on my *daughters*, I will pour my spirit and they shall prophesy.”<sup>16</sup> In this time when all womanhood seems to be arousing to a new life there are many false dangerous and even fatal appeals, and it is a matter of satisfaction when anyone presents to the rising aspiration and enthusiasm of women—“a more excellent way.”<sup>17</sup> Your *Una* has what I should call *moral* genius, a genius of the spiritual faculties, and why should we not recognize this gift—the most Godlike perhaps that can be given to a mortal. My brother speaks of your book as one of the few which render piety attractive—I shall try and send you his notice entire.

I was surprised in the end when you described the opportunities and openings you are preparing to teach women in this field, that you seemed to speak as if there were a deficiency of applicants for these advantages. I had the idea that so many women in England were pinning for some opening that I can’t not imagine how you should not once be flooded and overwhelmed with applications.

If the state of your health will permit you to reply to this, will you tell me just how the enterprise now stands. Any particulars which you think might be of use for us to know, for there is just at present such a universal arousing of the female element in America that almost any good thing that has been demonstrated as possible would be sure to be laid hold of and repeated.

I should like to be able to give some particulars in the *Christian Union*, my brother’s paper. It is our object in this paper to unite all Christian believers of every name on the simple ground of love and

---

15 “*Una and her Paupers*,” *Memorials of Agnes Elizabeth Jones, by Her Sister*, with an introduction by Florence Nightingale and introductory preface by the Rev Henry Ward Beecher, 1872.

16 Paraphrases of Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17.

17 1 Cor 12:31.

work, to oppose nobody that means well and to furnish in the medium that which all that Christ's own are doing shall be brought to the knowledge of others of like mind. We should be most happy to record the progress of this movement in England in hopes that it may be of use to us here in organizing similar ones.

A little circumstance gives me a pleasant feeling of acquaintance with you. I have a drawing of your residence in which the very mirror of your room is marked. I think it is through Mrs Gaskell that this came into my possession, in a rather extraordinary way, but it is a great pleasure to me and makes me feel as if I know you. I saw, too, I think either in the *Christian Union* or the *Independent*, a letter you addressed to some young girls in Dr Stowe's church which made me feel of one heart with you.

I am spending the winter in our place in Florida,<sup>18</sup> a lovely land of flowers and sunshine, so fair, so sunny, so blossomy, that it seems in its best days as if it might be an image of the land of pure delight to which we trust to come hereafter. It is the only place in the world that I know of where the month of March is charming.

The orange trees about our house are blossoming and filling the air with fragrance, the redbirds and mockingbirds and a thousand other kind are making the air ring and there is that blissful sunny calm over their blue waters of the St Johns [River], which here is five miles wide and seems like a lake. There is no winter here or at least scarce a day when open-air life is not delightful.

Yesterday my sister came and saw in a gentleman's grounds what is called a bittersweet orange of wonderful beauty. It had white buds, open blossoms and every size and variety of fruit from the little green vale to the clusters of perfect golden fruit. I can't but think "Hispanic fables true." The exuberance of the blossoms and of the fruit in its different strengths all growing together was wonderful. I have s[t]umbled into a long note which I trust you will excuse and believe me,

yours in the dear name that is above every other  
H.B. Stowe

---

18 In Mandarin, Florida, on the St Johns River, near Jacksonville; Harriet Beecher Stowe published numerous articles on Florida in the *Christian Union* and "Our Florida Plantation" in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1872.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter with his response, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/11

18 May 1872

*Mrs B. Stowe.* You have not told me what to answer to Mrs Beecher Stowe. I should *write*.

**HBC:** I hardly know what to say—unless she really understands the real wants and practical difficulties, her writing may be harmful. To give some account of what has been done for nursing training generally would be useful in directing attention to it in America.

Source: Letter, Radcliffe College Schlesinger Library, Beecher Stowe Family Collection folder 253

London

14 August 1872

*Private and Confidential*

Dear Madam (Mrs Beecher Stowe)

I have to acknowledge your most kind and gracious letter of -- I dare not say how long ago—and at the same time to ask your pardon for my apparent delay in replying. I beseech you to believe that this has not been from negligence on my part, and to believe this as it were by “faith” and not by knowledge. For I will not weary you, nor take up your busy time and my own by explaining how it arose: (1) by my being always overwhelmed with anxious business, from which in nineteen years I have had but twice one week’s holiday, and with ever-increasing illness which keeps me entirely a prisoner to my rooms; (2) by the circumstance that the particular subject on which you desire information, viz., our training school for hospital nurses, has been this year in a state of transition, owing to our being transferred to the new buildings of St Thomas’ Hospital, where the enormous increase of our numbers of all kinds from beds (trebled) to officers and space, has obliged me to increase and reorganize our training staff and arrangements. We are not yet complete.

I had thought of merely writing you a word of thanks and of begging your mercy till next year, when, if I live (a matter of great doubt) I might give what you so kindly ask, viz., some account of what has been done for nurse training generally, which would be useful, you say, in “directing attention” to it in America, and which in your hands would acquire a value it would not have in mine, provided I had time and strength to show the *real wants* and practical difficulties. Without this all my information would but be hurtful, as you so well and wisely know.

As you suppose, we are “overwhelmed” with “applications” from candidates wishing to be admitted for training, but whether of the right sort is quite another thing. We have, however, had far more of the “right sort” recently than ever in former years. We have always twice as many probationers waiting to come in than our whole number.

We are also “overwhelmed with applications” from authorities, foreign and home, from foreign princesses (yea from our own committee, which is very trying) asking us to admit persons for a few months’ training, for a few weeks’, nay even for a *few days*!!! This would entirely upset the hospital without being in our opinion of any real use to the candidates. And, if we admitted, which we are more and more confirmed by experience in never doing, for *under a year’s* training, the hospital would be inundated with amateur young London ladies coming in merely for a “lark” or fancy. To prevent this, we are also obliged to be very rigorous in requiring an engagement that the person does mean to serve for at least three or four years after training.

(As you will readily suppose, the *other* London hospitals take *our* rejected candidates “for a few months,” a few weeks’, *a few days*’ training. And this serves very much to lower the standard of training.) We have even applications from the United States.

Also we have always far more applications from institutions to furnish them with nursing staffs than we have persons of our own training to recommend. Institutions have such a strange, but rooted, delusion that we keep matrons and nurses like bottles on a shelf, always ready at a moment’s notice, that they appear almost incapable of being convinced that it can only be by accident that we have an accomplished “lady superintendent” and staff ready to send by return of post. These are some of our practical difficulties.

The last is so great and incessant that I am obliged to be perpetually and personally on the watch to see that *we* do not recommend persons whom we do not *know* to be fully *recommendable* and trained. It is a specious and very enticing argument, and one often used to us, that if *we* will not recommend one for the appointment, *so and so* (whom we know to be worse than any of ours) will be appointed. (As in the Geneva Arbitration, a newspaper correspondent told the arbitrators that if they would not give news, he must “*invent*” some. So I often feel myself in the position of the arbitrators: a nursing staff, a “false” staff, will be “invented,” if I will not give one. But I am too old a bird to give in to this.)

Have we many Unas? No. Not many are born. We have one,<sup>19</sup> for whom I thank God every day of her life, of whom I think that, with all Una's high moral and spiritual genius, she has more of the power of multiplying herself, more system and faculty of organization. After having done for a large new London workhouse infirmary what "Una" did for the Liverpool, she has now of her own accord sacrificed herself in offering herself for the comparatively unsatisfactory and far more drudging post of our mistress of probationers, the work of the new St Thomas' being quite too much for our matron now, under whom she will act. It is about as pure a piece of (obscure) self-sacrifice that I know. And we accept it because there are so few Unas.

We have however undertaken for some institutions—and hope to do so for more—their whole nursing. I should perhaps explain that, in order at once to strike at the root of the fatal error (which Agnes Jones was the very first pupil I ever had who really was in her own person the St Michael to fight), viz., that "ladies" can't teach what they don't know themselves, that is, that "lady superintendents" of hospitals, or other institutions, can superintend or train nurses unless they are *at least* as well grounded in, as thoroughly acquainted with, the practical and theoretical details and doctrine of nursing, not only *how* it is to be done, but *why* it is to be done *that* way and not another way, as those under their charge, in order to oppose the error fatal to all progress in work, I was obliged at the very outset to insist that the "ladies" who were of a calibre to be trained as superintendents should receive as full a training in nursing as the others.

This does not include *scrubbing* and the like, which we do not require of *any* of our nurses, and do not consider desirable for them to do. It includes what is on the list which I enclose (sixth last page of accompanying printed document). But, as there is scarcely any truth without its lining of error, we found ourselves here liable to "fall over the horse" on the other side, to wit, Englishwomen, *not* Scotch women, of the class which becomes domestic servants or hospital nurses, are very much less well educated than the similar class in the United States. These women mixed up in the same work with educated women ("ladies") and not feeling their own inferiority become conceited, which is fatal to progress. It is therefore necessary to have all sorts of *general improvement* classes for these, and also devotional but familiar meetings. I mean conducted by a woman and not by a minis-

---

19 A reference to Mary S. Crossland.

ter, Bible classes, interesting, not formal, prayer and religious conversation with their mistress, singing classes and also, e.g., a weekly “tea,” not expressly for religious purposes, etc.

For hospital nurses require more, and receive less, of these helps than if they were, as servants, in good domestic families, or if they were at home. There is some difficulty in arranging all this, and a matron who only sees her after hospital, however well, will find a grievous deficiency in her nurses and probationers if she has no organization, no one with a special facility, for doing this. But good teachers of children are rare. Good matrons of *patients* in hospitals are rarer, but the rarest of all are good teachers of *grown-up* women, not specially in nursing (that is less rare) but in all moral and spiritual things. And this I am obliged to explain, in order to show that, though we are, as you suppose, “overwhelmed with applications,” we do not always get *the right sort*, though more than heretofore, thank God.

It is difficult for me, especially in an old country, where “public life” for women is less developed, to give anecdotes about the living which *may* find their way into print. The best don’t like it; the worst (or least best) are made more conceited by it. For example, had Agnes Jones been living, I never could have told anything about her in print, and I had the greatest difficulty in preventing her most private letters, many to myself, from getting into the *Life* of her. I do not see Agnes Jones in that *Life*. It is not *her*.

“And now what more shall I write?” (as the poor ranee of Kolhapur wrote to us after her son’s death, the young rajah’s. He had travelled in Europe for the improvement of his states and had stayed at my brother-in-law’s. So she wrote in a sort of despair, a letter done up in a brilliant silk, red “étui [cover]” embroidered with gold and great seals hanging down.) “What more shall I write?” I say too in a sort of despair. I seem to have written a long letter to say *why I cannot* write, because I would not have you think other than the truth: how very much we value your interest in our work.

I think that perhaps I could best show you some of our difficulties and some of our aspirations if I ventured to send you a copy of a little address I made to this little flock, which God seems to have put into my hands this year. I see them one by one, as much as I am able, to tea and talk. But I am not able to be present in their midst. I therefore wrote my words to them and my committee had them lithographed. You see, I promised our flock that you would send them Mr Henry



Ward Beecher's "notice entire" as you kindly promised, which we should value so much. But it has not come.

I can write no more. But, dear Madam, I must not conclude without begging you to put your own spirit into this melancholy scribble, written amid countless interruptions, begun at 5 o'clock in the morning, that I might take time "by the forelock," written in pain and weakness. Like old Richard Baxter, I complain that my "weakness takes up so much of my time" and that "all the pains" of all my "infirmities" are not "half so grievous" to me as the "unavoidable loss of my time which they occasion," which is quite true.

But the bribe you hold out that we "may be of use" to you "in organizing similar movements" makes me wish to do my poor little possible. Your hand must clothe the skeleton, and your heart must believe how much I am, dear Madam,

ever your faithful servant  
though unworthy  
Florence Nightingale

### Angela Burdett-Coutts

**Editor:** Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts (1814-1906), the richest woman philanthropist in England, made generous donations to a wide range of social reform causes, war relief, emigration and refugee assistance; she financed churches in the colonies and poor areas of England and built model housing. Nightingale remarked to Douglas Galton that "people always think me a Lady Bountiful like Lady Burdett-Coutts, when I really have very few pounds."<sup>20</sup> Burdett-Coutts was the first woman to be named a baroness in her own right and the first to be given the Freedom of the City of London (Nightingale was the second).

The two women met pre-Crimea at the Campden Hill observatory of Sir James South.<sup>21</sup> Burdett-Coutts and Charles Dickens sent Nightingale a drying closet for use in the Barrack Hospital at Scutari, for which Nightingale later described her as "a very kind friend."<sup>22</sup> Just before leaving for the Crimean War, Nightingale asked Elizabeth Herbert if she thought it would be of any use to apply to Burdett-Coutts

---

20 Letter 25 January 1895, ADD Mss 45767 f128.

21 Edna Healey, *Lady Unknown: The Life of Angela Burdett-Coutts* 63.

22 Letter to Harry Verney 28 April 1860, Buckinghamshire County Record Office.

for money.<sup>23</sup> Nightingale presumably was at Burdett-Coutts's house in the period after the war for she asked Harry Verney to tell her "how much I liked her plants at Highgate."<sup>24</sup>

Nightingale occasionally asked Burdett-Coutts for a contribution to her causes, for example, for the Fliedners of Kaiserswerth; she gave £20 (in 1:332). But apparently she did not always oblige, for a letter Nightingale wrote Harry Verney says that she wished Burdett-Coutts "would have helped us with money" for a hospital.<sup>25</sup> In 1870 Nightingale asked Harry Verney if Burdett-Coutts had been asked for a contribution for war relief in the Franco-Prussian War: "I dare say she has and subscribed to."<sup>26</sup>

In 1879 the two women were involved in different relief efforts for the Anglo-Zulu War. Burdett-Coutts sent Lady Brownlow to call on Nightingale, without an appointment but with a letter of introduction from her. Nightingale wrote Henry Bonham Carter:

Yesterday came this queer letter from Lady Burdett-Coutts. I answered it by saying that I *would see Lady Brownlow today at 5* (I could not see *two*) and I have put off everything for the purpose. *Could you give me some hint as to how to proceed with her? or with the War Office?*

There was obviously much confusion around wealthy individuals sending out relief squads (badly organized in Nightingale's view). The note continued: "I do hope that all these contrary winds may blow to some good for our poor men."<sup>27</sup>

As the following correspondence shows, in 1892 Nightingale asked Burdett-Coutts for assistance in the establishment of a high school for girls in Pune, India. She agreed. The next year Burdett-Coutts sought and got a paper from Nightingale for the Women's Section at the Chicago Exhibition, which she was organizing and from which she edited the papers for publication as *Woman's Mission*. Nightingale's contribution, "Sick-Nursing and Health-Nursing," appears in *Public Health Care* (6:203-19).

---

23 Letter 14 October 1854, ADD Mss 43396 f12.

24 Letter 28 April 1860, Buckinghamshire Record Office.

25 Letter 13 May 1861, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8999/17.

26 Letter 23 August 1870, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/87.

27 Letter 12 June 1879, ADD Mss 47720 ff36-37.

Source: From a draft letter, ADD Mss 45811 ff99-101

June 1892

Pune Native Girls' High School

Dear Lady Burdett-Coutts

Shall I be intrusive if I act upon Lady Ashburton's suggestion who, I know, has written to you for me. May I bother you yourself in regard to higher female education in India with a request that you will be so very kind as to read yourself the two printed papers I enclose: one, a memorial for which we hope for signatures, one a statement of the case. The substance is short. The education for native girls in India had hardly begun when an Indian Ladies' Association, a number of students, the mothers, chiefs, native rajahs and their ladies, aided by a number of Englishmen and women, a large and important meeting was held at Pune, the old Maratha capital in Bombay presidency, and adopted a detailed scheme, subscribed above a lakh of [one hundred thousand] rupees for a high school for native girls at Pune.

It was made a government institution and they had the good fortune to secure a mistress in Miss Hurford, whose genius for native girls and good sense and devotion has done a wonderful work and given her a wonderful influence over the girls and the parents.

The Bombay government had adopted this pioneer school and made it a government institution, paying the salaries. But the society did a great deal for them in return. As you are well aware, in India the government name is everything. *We* British have made it so, and cannot complain that it should be so. The Bombay government now wishes to make the school a *state-aided* school. This to the Indian ear will sound as if the school had somehow forfeited the government's unqualified approval and will seriously damage if not destroy a school for which native gentlemen have done so much that subscriptions had actually diminished and for which they had been so assailed. Prince Damrong, brother of the king of Siam and minister of public instruction, said that it was the most practical school he had ever seen.

It is difficult to describe the admirable results of this school, which might be shaken by such a step. Little toddlers cling round Miss Hurford's skirts while she is transacting business or seeing visitors who are men of weight. And she bestows a pat on the head which satisfies the children without interrupting herself. Girls of eighteen or nineteen, who would be mothers, nay, grandmothers but for her remain with Miss Hurford at their own and their parents' request. She does more perhaps to make the British raj popular and firm with the go-ahead Bombay people than a legion of [illeg] or an army of troops. All the

legislation in the world would not suppress infant marriages or reinstate oppressed widows as would such schools as this.

It may truly be said that neither sanitary reform nor any other social reform will make much progress till the women/ladies, the mothers and mothers-in-law of India, are thus educated who, in their turn, will educate, leaven the poorer women.

We venture to hope that, if the cause of Indian female education and Miss Hurford's Pune High School for girls which embodies it in this way meets with your approval, you would head the petition which we purpose making to the India Office with the weight of your honoured name.

your faithful servant  
F.N.

The minimum stratum of women who are never reached at all by the British nevertheless govern the men, the more reason for educating the women.

Source: From two letters to Lady Burdett-Coutts, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C.211 and C.212

3 July 1892

You were so kind as to call here on Wednesday and I was, unhappily for me, unable to receive you. You kindly said that you were staying in London for a week.

If I should be so fortunate as that you wish to see me, and could make an appointment any hour tomorrow (Monday) afternoon or Tuesday afternoon, I would keep it, if only possible. But I bear in mind how occupied you must be.

We cannot thank you enough for your signature to the memorial to the secretary of state for India for the Pune Native Girls' High School. Believe me to be,

your faithful servant  
Florence Nightingale

5 July 1892

A verbal answer, please. Your kindness said that I might let you know this morning if you could be so good as to come this afternoon. I should be only too glad to see you. Would 5:30 or 6 suit you? If neither, would you kindly send a verbal message what hour would suit you better this afternoon to,

your faithful servant  
Florence Nightingale

Source: From an incomplete letter, Hampshire Record Office F582/37

[1892-93]

I don't think there are to be "addresses"—Lady B.-Couatts was quite modest in what she said to me. "I want," she said, "*short* accounts of any successful woman's work by the woman herself—just to show the American women how to avoid mistakes—not to give them a cut-and-dried lecture, address or plan." I have got her, e.g., a very remarkable short paper by a friend of mine, Miss B. Hunt of Gloucester, on a young man's club she created and carries on without money.

She, Lady B.-C. asked me for a "short" paper on our work—*not* a history or report or statistics.

### Other Notable Women

**Editor:** Caroline Chisholm (1808-77) was probably the first model for Nightingale of a woman initiating and managing social reform-charitable work, notably emigration schemes for the poor. "The emigrants' friend," as she was known, was married to an army officer. In Madras she had opened an orphan school; back in England she encouraged emigration for friendless young women. There is no surviving correspondence between Nightingale and Chisholm but they must have known each other for, in a letter to Henry Manning in 1852, Nightingale described going into the country "to organize something for Mrs Chisholm" and later gave information about her address, times of group meetings and availability for visitors (3:246). Nightingale even described Chisholm, when disagreeing with Charles Dickens's satirical treatment of her as Mrs Jelliby in *Bleak House*, as "a great friend of mine."<sup>28</sup> A book by Chisholm was on the list for the institution at Harley St.<sup>29</sup> In a draft for *Suggestions for Thought* Chisholm is described, with Elizabeth Fry, as an example for women, who should have "a pursuit of her own, with her family, if any of them like it, without them if they don't."<sup>30</sup>

When Caroline Chisholm was in financial need from all her work (her husband had only a small pension), Nightingale contributed money, encouraged her mother to, and also asked her mother to seek other donors "for the woman is starving" (see 1:256 and 1:749). Nightingale explained the arrangements for a fundraiser:

---

28 Undated note, British Library RP 1877(i).

29 List, Add Mss 43402 f155.

30 Draft novel, Add Mss 45839 f108.

The public meeting was organized *with* Mr Chisholm's consent—indeed it was the only way that money could be presented to a public character like her—she has made herself public by her good deeds. Let the acknowledgment of them be public. You cannot give *her* private charity—they got £900 and hope to present her with a purse (not plate) of £2000—before her departure in a fortnight. I am very glad. It is a good and fine public farewell. People subscribed their thousands to Hudson.<sup>31</sup> Let them show they can appreciate Mrs Chisholm.<sup>32</sup>

A later letter to her sister states: I think Mrs Chisholm quite able to bear publicity, as her group “meetings” have been advertised for years in the *Times*.<sup>33</sup>

Nightingale regretted Caroline Chisholm's death in 1877, and, mindful of the needs of her unmarried daughter, asked Harry Verney to write to Disraeli for a pension for her (1:813).

Mary Carpenter (1807-77) was most known for her work in prison reform and criminology. She visited and corresponded with Nightingale about India and the introduction of nursing and prison reform there. Nightingale obviously respected her, but they did not share priorities. Carpenter frequently asked for meetings with Nightingale, who sometimes, but not always, obliged. Correspondence with her appears in the India volumes. Nightingale provided a letter of introduction for her to Sir John Lawrence.<sup>34</sup>

Nightingale evidently had a poor view of Carpenter's religious choice (she was Unitarian): “Miss Carpenter in India (a terrible woman but much to be respected); has done real work, unintelligent religion.”<sup>35</sup>

Lady Elizabeth Eastlake (1809-93), an art historian and author, was a family friend who wrote to Nightingale as “Dear Florence.” There is correspondence with her on the death of Agnes Jones and the need for more nurses in workhouse infirmaries (in *Public Health Care* 6:287-88 and 302-03). Nightingale even credited her with the idea and some of the imagery she used in her article, “Una and the Lion.” Eastlake did a portrait of Nightingale. However, as noted in the section on “ladies,” Nightingale regretted her “want of earnestness” for

31 George Hudson (1800-71), the corrupt “railway king.”

32 Letter to Frances Nightingale [1853], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8994/76.

33 Letter [c1853], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 8994/86.

34 Letter to Mary Carpenter 3 August 1866, British Library, Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, Mss Eur A.110.

35 Note, Add Mss 45845 f46.

doing her charitable work as the lady philanthropists in the country do (see p 91 above).

Neé Elizabeth Cleghorn, “Mrs Gaskell” (1810-65) was a well-known author, a family friend and visitor. Two letters by her on Nightingale and one by Hilary Bonham Carter to Gaskell on Nightingale’s behalf have already appeared in *Society and Politics* (5:781-85). Nightingale was pleased to have been sent a copy of *Sylvia Lovers*.<sup>36</sup> Gaskell and Nightingale shared a concern about improving the daily lives of soldiers, correspondence which appears later in the series on War Office reforms.

Nightingale and Augusta Ada, Lady Lovelace (1815-52), daughter of Lord Byron and a mathematician, were at least acquaintances, but there is no surviving correspondence. The Lovelaces were family friends; Nightingale and her father visited in 1847. Lady Lovelace wrote a poem about Nightingale, from which one stanza will have to serve here to give an impression. The fascination with Nightingale dates obviously from before the Crimean War and her fame.

Her grave, but large and lucid eye  
Unites a boundless dept of feeling  
With Truth’s own bright transparency,  
Her singleness of heart revealing;  
But still her spirit’s history  
From light and curious gaze concealing.  
(Cook *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 1:39)

Several letters to home missionary Catherine Marsh (1818-1912) appeared in *Theology* (3:484-95). Here there is one further letter. Marsh was the author of religious books, many of which Nightingale bought for herself and often sent copies of to reading rooms and nurses. Their practical interests overlapped: Marsh ran a convalescent home and did mission work with navy men. She supplied Bibles to troops in wars from the Crimean to the Boer.

Source: From a letter to Catherine Marsh, Boston University 1/4/1975

27 July 1869

I have delayed answering your most kind note because Sister Olga von Billerbeck, the (Kaiserswerth) deaconess of the Alexandria Hospital, was away at Liverpool, “collecting.” She will be glad and thankful to accept your goodness in giving “some of” your “books” to her poor

---

36 Letter of acknowledgment 17 August 1863, Manchester University, John Rylands Library ENG MS 731.

English sailors—if you will be so good as to send them to her address, as you kindly propose, viz., to the P. and O. Co.’s office, Leadenhall Street, addressed “For the Deaconesses’ Hospital Alexandria,” care of Henry Calvert, Esq., British Vice-Consul, Alexandria.

She gratefully thanks you for your kind contribution for which I enclose ye receipt. I trust that you are better. In some haste for, as you quote from Wesley in your charming book: “Leisure and I have taken leave of each other”<sup>37</sup>—excellent, noble, inspiring old Wesley!

ever yours

F. Nightingale

**Editor:** Nightingale met Lady Augusta Bruce (1822-76), a friend of the Mohls, in Paris in 1853, when she described her as “a very nice woman.”<sup>38</sup> Their paths crossed again in 1856 at Balmoral Castle, where Lady Augusta was lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria’s mother, the duchess of Kent. Her diaries serve to follow the connection Nightingale made on that visit with Dr Norman McLeod, who later published Nightingale’s article, “Una and the Lion.” Lady Augusta in 1863 married Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the dean of Westminster and a good, liberal, clergyman friend of her friend, Benjamin Jowett. There is little correspondence between the two women, but what there is shows cordiality, the one item following and a letter by Lady Augusta to Nightingale in 1868 on the memorial to Agnes Jones.<sup>39</sup>

Source: From a letter to Lady Augusta Stanley, Wayne State University (10)

7 June 1873

It seems to myself quite impertinent of me to suggest (what I am sure will have occurred to you, *if* desirable) that M Mohl would be of use here with his Persian on the shah’s visitation.<sup>40</sup> I have not had the least communication with M or Mme Mohl on the subject and have not the least idea whether he would come if asked.

Don’t trouble yourself to answer on *this* point.

your impertinent

but ever faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

<sup>37</sup> In a letter to his mother from college.

<sup>38</sup> *European Travels* (7:725).

<sup>39</sup> Letter 30 December 1868, Add Mss 45801 f167.

<sup>40</sup> The shah of Persia made an extensive tour of Britain, beginning 18 June 1873; Queen Victoria sent representatives to Brussels to accompany him.



**Editor:** Nightingale was acquainted with Maria Susan Rye (1829-1903), a philanthropist and promoter of emigration for the poor. A letter to her in 1879 explains that she had no time to write, but

You and your work are ever before me, though I have no time to write. God bless you and it. Do not wear yourself too much with this blessed work—I look forward to your holiday.

Do you sometimes read an entertaining book?

God speed you and your poor girls. And He *will*—is the unceasing prayer of,  
yours ever . . . <sup>41</sup>

Octavia Hill (1838-1912) was a famous philanthropist, founder of the Charity Organization Society, and later a co-founder of the National Trust. There is nothing to indicate that she and Nightingale ever met in person but Nightingale clearly admired her. She would be recognized in a published article of Nightingale's as the person who "brought sympathy and education . . . from individual to individual . . . and thus initiated a process of depauperization." Even that "were there one such woman . . . in every street of London's east End" it might be persuaded "to become Christian" (in "Note of Interrogation" in *Theology* 3:13).

There is a favourable mention of a Nightingale cousin, Edith Bonham Carter, for working under Hill in 1885, in *Life and Family* (1:454). In 1886 Nightingale returned a letter of Hill's to her cousin, saying that she had had a charming Ms letter from Hill herself (1:376). There are several surviving letters each way and several notes about her. To Benjamin Jowett Nightingale remarked:

*Miss Octavia Hill.* Why does she raise these people while other lady visitors only pauperize them? She does not remove them out of their surroundings. She requires their rents to be paid regularly, goes round and collects them herself, helps them to work through other ladies, gives tea meetings. . . . She never, I believe, gives a penny. She herself has to work for her own bread. They see she does not come among them as a lazy lady bountiful giving odd moments from her own luxuries.<sup>42</sup>

Another note states: "One Octavia Hill to every street would regenerate London" (in *Society and Politics* 5:775).

---

41 Letter 7 August 1879, University of Liverpool Archives D630/4/2.

42 Note, 7 March [c1873], ADD Mss 45784 f52.

Nightingale evidently supported Octavia Hill's charitable work in various ways. A letter of Hill's to Nightingale thanked her for her donation to a fund for orphans. The letter refers to a mutual friend they both esteemed, someone of "utter unselfishness . . . sweetness that never failed and generosity that knew no bound. . . . One can only hope to be bettered by all memories and to know that all that is eternal—all that is that is good is safe for us somewhere when we shall have past through the waves of this troubled life. I had not known you knew her so well."<sup>43</sup>

In 1878 Nightingale wrote Octavia Hill to introduce a nurse to her who wanted to do similar work (immediately below). In a letter to Edmund Verney 1878 she described the nurse as "a most sterling woman" who had trained at St Thomas', and was now working in Liverpool, "appalled at the drunkenness and worse of her patients."<sup>44</sup> Later that year Nightingale referred to Hill as an example, praising her work in improving dwellings for the poor, in a published article, "Who is The Savage?"<sup>45</sup>

The final item in this exchange is another letter of Octavia Hill's thanking Nightingale for her "generous gift."<sup>46</sup> Nightingale wrote her sister about the exchange (perhaps she had also sent a gift?). Nightingale returned "Miss Octavia Hill's letter to her sister, so full of sense and conviction." She had had a "charming letter (Ms) from her. I did not know she was so genial."<sup>47</sup>

Source: Letter, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University  
GEN MSS 237 Box 5 folder 224

35 South St.  
Park Lane, W.  
1 March 1878

Dear Miss Octavia Hill

I hope you have not quite forgotten poor old Florence Nightingale, for I am going to ask you a great favour on behalf of my friend Miss Kate Perssè, the best of workers and district nurses among the poor,

43 Letter 29 November 1877, Woodward Biomedical Library B.34. The name of the person remembered is not given, probably Caroline Chisholm.

44 In *Society and Politics* (5:206).

45 In *Society and Politics* (5:159-63).

46 Letter 5 July 1886 from Octavia Hill, Add MSS 45786 f84.

47 Letter to Parthenope Verney 9 July 1886, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9011/37.

first in London under Miss Lees where she knew your houses, and now with district nurses under herself in Liverpool.

In every great town, but in Liverpool especially, it seems almost hopeless to do anything unless the dwellings can be improved and so some decency and morality made possible—somewhat under your system.

There is a friend of Miss Perssè's in Liverpool now, anxious to make a beginning there. And Miss Perssè (who is in London for a few days) would so gladly hear from your own self some information as to how this is best to be done. Pray, if it be possible, see her. I am sure she will need no other introduction. And pray believe me,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** The historian and radical supporter of Irish independence, Alice Stopford Green (1847-1929), became a friend in Nightingale's old age. Nightingale strongly supported her candidacy for the post of mistress of Girton College (there are six letters to her and one about her in *Society and Politics* 5:683-90). Nightingale read her histories and bought them for libraries and reading rooms.

The entry on Green in the *Dictionary of National Biography* intriguingly states that her home in Kensington Sq. "became the centre of a brilliant group of friends, including Florence Nightingale."<sup>48</sup> Since Nightingale almost never went out this seems unlikely, but it is just barely possible. Nightingale did enjoy reprieves in her illness, notably in the 1880s when she attended a couple of public functions; she occasionally borrowed the Verneys' carriage for a drive; conceivably she made visits.

The first meeting of the two women probably took place in 1883, for a letter from Nightingale thanks Green for her interesting letter and offer to visit and suggests a time.<sup>49</sup> A letter the next year states: "You and the subject of your letter are matters of such intense interest that—must we not have some more talk about these vital things?" Nightingale was at Claydon House with the Verneys at the time, so she added: "Would you come here—my sister would be so glad to see you on your way south, if it is before the House of Commons meets? or may I see you in London? We never cease to think of you." The letter

---

48 *Dictionary of National Biography* 1922-1940:360.

49 Letter to Mrs Green 19 December 1883, Boston University 1/7/83.

is signed, presumably referring to the death of Green's husband: "ever yours in deepest sympathy."<sup>50</sup>

Clearly Nightingale encouraged Green's academic career, but what quite aroused the "intense interest" is not clear, nor how Green came to be writing her in the first place. A letter from 1884 not available to scholars has Nightingale telling her friend: "At Girton, your enemies will be the title-tattle, tea-table criticism of a bevy of well-meaning severe females, your weapons your pluck and wit, laughing when others would cry."<sup>51</sup>

Mrs Green on her husband's death not only updated and republished some of his work but produced a great deal of her own. She completed his *Conquest of England* and revised his *Short History of the English People*, which Nightingale gave to nurses at the Marylebone Workhouse Infirmary.<sup>52</sup> Green published a two-volume *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century* in 1894, presumably the "new book" Nightingale was reading the following year.<sup>53</sup> Nightingale gave Green's *Illustrated History of England* as a prize for a slow bicycling race, won by Ruth Verney.<sup>54</sup> Green's most radical work came out after Nightingale was no longer able to read: *The Making of Ireland and Its Undoing*, 1908. Green settled in Ireland and was honoured by being placed on the first list of Irish senators in 1922.

Nightingale was associated with Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1847-1929), author and a leading women's suffrage advocate, largely through her role as the wife of the blind political economy professor and MP, Henry Fawcett (1833-84). He was known as the "Member of Parliament for India" and was a correspondent of Nightingale on those issues. Mrs Fawcett handled correspondence for her husband so that she and Nightingale were presumably in touch. Millicent Fawcett cited Nightingale gratefully as one of the "distinguished" women who supported the vote.<sup>55</sup> The only correspondence between the two concerned Nightingale's support for a memorial to Henry Fawcett in the form of an urban park in Vauxhall; see *Society and Politics* (5:209).

Mary Augusta (Mrs Humphry or Humphrey) Ward (1851-1920), a writer and activist on various causes (including opposition to women's

50 Letter 7 September 1884, Boston University 1/7/87.

51 R.B. McDowell, *Alice Stopford Green: A Passionate Historian* 46.

52 List, Add Mss 45812 f191.

53 Letter to Rosalind Nash 3 January 1895, Add Mss 45795 f210.

54 Letter of Margaret Verney 8 August 1895, Claydon House Bundle 334.

55 See *Society and Politics* (5:409-10).

suffrage), was a friend and correspondent of Jowett's. A Nightingale note refers to her as: "Mrs Humphry Ward—uneasy pillow, has done all she wanted."<sup>56</sup> Mrs Ward has also appeared as a co-signatory with Nightingale of the "Women's Memorial" on the Contagious Diseases Acts in India.

The Countess Grosvenor, Sibella Mary Grosvenor, to whom there is one letter, was the wife of the earl of Grosvenor and daughter-in-law of the duke of Westminster. The issue revisits Nightingale's experience with the Sisters of Charity in Paris.

Source: From a letter to the Countess Grosvenor,<sup>57</sup> Chiddingstone Castle, typed copy, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC5/3/31

*Private*

6 May 1882

Madam

In reply to your note, it is some years since I have had any direct information respecting the Sisters of Charity in Westminster and I can only speak of my experience of this particular society (St-Vincent-de-Paul) in France and of its general regulation here.

Their method of "doing" their charity, so to speak, is considerably opposed to the principles which the duke of Westminster<sup>58</sup> and their enlightened leaders apply to charitable effort in the present day—whether with regard to nursing or teaching—and may sometimes be called eminently successful in promoting improvident habits. They are proselytizers. The death rate of infants under their charge is always very high from their want of ordinary sanitary precaution. And the duke may possibly recollect an instance a few years ago where this became public, in Westminster. Pardon my delay in answering and pray believe me,

ever your faithful servant

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** The duchess of Albany, Helen of Waldeck (1861-1922), was the wife of Prince Leopold, duke of Albany, son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. There is one letter concerning her, none to her.

---

56 Undated (late) note, ADD Mss 45845 f197.

57 Sibella Mary Grosvenor, wife of the earl of Grosvenor.

58 Her father-in-law, Hugh Lupus Grosvenor (1825-99), 1st duke of Westminster, Liberal MP and supporter of progressive causes, also Nightingale's landlord and later a member of the Nightingale Fund Council.

Source: From a draft letter to Douglas Galton, ADD Mss 45766 ff65-66

[6 May 1888]

A platform card of invitation for the distribution of certificates to ladies who have passed the examination on domestic hygiene by H.R.H. today has been kindly sent me and I regret more than I can say that, owing to my being now entirely prisoner to my own room from serious illness, I am quite unable to be present. You know how deep is my sympathy with the objects of the Parkes Museum<sup>59</sup> and more especially with that of today.

Without women there can be no domestic hygiene. The finest principles and works of house sewerage and ventilation without her almost must remain a dead letter. But let the woman be practically incensed with how to keep air, earth and water pure and light and sunlight in her house and the work is done.

We are truly grateful to H.R.H. of Albany for giving us this proof of her invaluable support and because she shows in this her desire to continue the interest, the help, the patronage so graciously given by our own duke of Albany it is invaluable.

## Royal Women

**Editor:** That Nightingale was by philosophy a republican is abundantly clear in her ardent support of the republican cause in Italy reported in *European Travels* (7:85, 210 and 316). Yet her work put her in touch with a large number of royal women. She put political philosophy aside and used the opportunities as best she could to advance her causes. A letter to her mother described her “acquaintance with queens and princesses” as “not large, but at least it is as large as with the wives of Cabinet ministers” (in *Life and Family* 1:185-86). Here we report material on significant relationships with royal women, beginning with the most important (also the most positive) and ending with some disapproving comments about two other queens, one of whom was forced to abdicate, the other whose husband was forced to.

### Empress Frederick, Crown Princess of Prussia

**Editor:** The crown princess of Prussia was Victoria (1840-1901), “Princess Vicky,” eldest daughter of Queen Victoria and hence princess royal. On the accession to the throne of her husband, Friedrich III

---

59 Named after Dr E.A. Parkes, Nightingale’s close colleague.

(Emperor Frederick) she became the Empress Frederick. To Nightingale she was the crown princess or the Empress Frederick.

Nightingale met her at Balmoral Castle in 1856 but the relationship did not begin in earnest until 1866. The two were in occasional contact for the rest of their lives, at the crown princess's instigation, as she sought advice on nursing matters, midwifery, general hospitals and war hospitals. She visited Nightingale at her South St. home a number of times. According to biographer Cook, she was served luncheon after a meeting with Nightingale and declared it "a work of art" (Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:303).

In 1866 Nightingale reported to her mother that she had "heard from the crown princess."<sup>60</sup> A draft letter of that same year discussed the suffering of the Austro-Prussian War and efforts at relief, but also the implications for Venice of the Prussian victory. That war not only led to a great increase in the size of the Prussian state, which gained Schleswig-Holstein in the north and much territory in central Germany, but it also forced Austria to cede Venice to the newly independent Italy.<sup>61</sup>

In 1868 Nightingale told her father that she had the crown princess visiting, who had given her work to do.<sup>62</sup> When her book on lying-in institutions was published, in 1871, Nightingale wanted a copy sent to the crown princess, who, she said, had greatly instigated its writing.<sup>63</sup> There were complications about getting a copy off to her, so that Nightingale wrote again regarding sending the parcel via Sir Harry Verney, who was at Berlin: "So I think I shall send mine direct to the C.P. by Queen's Bag, as she desired."<sup>64</sup> The crown princess visited Nightingale also 26 July 1874.<sup>65</sup> The crown princess's correspondence

---

60 Letter to Frances Nightingale 25 July 1866, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/40.

61 In the second war volume. See *European Travels* for Nightingale's support of Italian independence and condemnation of the cruelty of the Austrian occupation (7:318-22).

62 Letter to W.E. Nightingale 15 December 1868, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/59.

63 Letter to Emily Verney 11 October 1871, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/97.

64 Letter 12 October 1871, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/98.

65 Letter to Harry and Parthenope Verney 26 July 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/112.

was destroyed after her death on her instructions so that drafts or copies only are available. Letters by her to Nightingale have survived in other collections.<sup>66</sup>

There is extensive correspondence with the crown princess in the course of the Franco-Prussian War reported in that volume, and some in the nursing volumes and *Hospital Reform*. There are references to her in *Society and Politics* (5:542-44), and letters on midwifery concerns have already appeared (see pp 204 and 209 above) and more follows. Clearly there was a long and effective collaboration, with mutual respect and affection. Nightingale said to her mother, comparing the two elder daughters of Queen Victoria, that the “princess royal has genius and Princess Alice has not, but both are interested and really versed in things of administration,” in *Life and Family* (1:185).

Source: Note for Dr Sutherland from an interview with the crown princess, ADD Mss 45753 ff119-23

[2 December 1868]

The crown princess was here all yesterday morning and she is coming again. She is a great deal more intelligent than Sir James C. I can tell you and she took everything as quick as lightning. She has left the plans and our paper in case we should wish to add anything.

But her main object is to found a training school for *nurses* on the best sanitary principles of teaching, which she said are not at all understood in Germany, least of all by the deaconesses of Bethanien and Kaiserswerth, because these are all under the influence of pastors. (Of course I did not choose to “give up” my deaconesses to *her*. But I *know* what she says is too true.) She told me a hideous story about their having had a typhus epidemic at Bethanien because they *would* obey Pastor Schulz, the chaplain, and not use the preventive measures urged. . . .

She wanted me:

1. to draw up a hierarchy of nurses as needed for that hospital, ages, etc.;
2. whether we would train for them one matron, one head surgical, one head medical, one monthly nurse;
3. *whether we would give her the conditions* under which lying-in women could be without puerperal fever.

---

66 Apart from those mentioned here there are letters by her to Nightingale in 1874 in the Woodward Biomedical Library (items B.15 and B.16). The second specifically thanks her for writing to Chadwick.



She says that Germany is worse than India about nursing lying-in women, that their midwives are very good, much better than in England, and she herself was delivered by a midwife, but that the nursing afterward and the deaths from it, from the highest to the lowest woman, are awful; the dirt, she says, beyond belief and that she herself has been obliged to tell her own midwife to “wash her hands” before she delivered her.

Well, she asked me whether we could train. She asked me whether we would see the daughter of the matron of Queen Charlotte’s, who, she says, is a trained midwife and a nice woman, and see whether she would do. But Miss Osburn was the only one we trained there who was a woman of purpose and courage.

4. She wants me to give her an account of what we require in the way of clothing, of *clean under* linen changes from our nurses, and of change of sheets for patients, and whether we use *white* sheets. Also patterns of their gowns and caps. *Well*, what she wants to know are *the conditions* under which we have been *successful*. Where was that hospital hut where they had 800 cases without a one [death] at Colchester?

I told her so. And, if information could be written down as to the *working* of it, she wants to imitate that there. Could you not get Massey to write down for *me*? She asked me some questions it was impossible for me to know anything about. She means to raise subscriptions for this hospital in order to obtain a grant from government. She said very humbly that she was only a private individual and asked me whether I thought she could get subscriptions from America.

I could not even think of anyone to refer her to for counsel. (She said—of course in confidence—that the present king “and the two queens” are entirely in the hands of the high church, Tory, pietistic ecclesiastics and of the military counts. She said if they want to build a hospital they ask a pastor and a count. Such a man as Virchow is absolutely in disgrace, because he is neither Tory nor high church. She told me some really horrible things as to how the Knights of St John and other ecclesiastics had interfered in the military hospitals and killed the patients.

She instantly wrote down about the windows and beds. She says she thinks the architect means to have twenty-four beds, raised to thirty-two when full. She *MEANS* to alter the construction. She only added that she thought the ward was to be constructed to admit thirty-two with safety, but twenty-four to be the usual number. Now you must help me to write down the number of wards in brown plan for one to calculate with Mrs Wardroper the nursing hierarchy.

She is very anxious to have a school for men nurses. That is truly German. Both Agnes Jones and I thought the men nurses at Kaiserswerth and elsewhere *very* objectionable. If that College for Convalescents be for men too there must be a man sleeping on the men's side, and there must also be W.C. and lavatory arrangement complete and separate on each side.

Look, things in Germany are always action and reaction. Because Kaiserswerth and Bethanien have been entirely in the hands of pastors and women, to the exclusion of doctors, therefore the princess seems now inclined to put her matron entirely *under* the doctor. That is why I wrote that last page.

But she also said, ought not the nurses to pass an examination like students? Now my opinion is that such examinations for women are almost useless. I did not say so however. But ought I not to tell her what I think the only useful examination, viz., our monthly record under the heads there specified? Would it do to send my printed paper with a little written explanation? . . .

Not one word from the War Office about the princess's requirements. The princess royal told me *in confidence* that the agency provided by the Knights of St John at Sadowa was the most dirty, the most useless, the most untrained and unsanitary possible. She said the Prussian Army medical officers were sanitary angels in comparison. She said that it was impossible to conceive the worse than uselessness, the dirty, feckless creatures, male and female, accommodation, civil doctors, everything provided by the voluntary agency at Sadowa. And (which I have never told anyone) she said the deaconesses were just as bad.

**Editor:** A similar letter to Harry Verney describes "in the strongest manner" her opinion of the "helpless, dirty, useless set of nurses, male and female, doctors, 'knights,' accommodation" provided by the voluntary agencies in the Sadowa campaign.<sup>67</sup>

Source: From an incomplete draft letter to the crown princess of Prussia, ADD Mss 45750 ff33-34

[ca. July 1870]

I am certain that I am only humbly echoing the mind of your royal highness and the crown prince, clement in victory, with that quality of

---

67 Letter 18 January 1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/77.

mercy which “then shows likest God’s,”<sup>68</sup> when used in a victorious course of which the world’s history has never seen the like, toward a fallen nation in its humiliation of which neither has the world’s history ever seen the like. If I venture to say, Prussia can now avenge on France after sixty-four years her deeds of 1806.<sup>69</sup>

[trans. from French] The lesson which France is going to receive is without doubt the most painful the world has ever seen. It is the fruit of twenty years of reign, that is, of lies, waste, deterioration, theft and demoralization. Shall we be able to learn from this horrible punishment? Madame and greatly honoured colleague, your devoted Barthélemy-St-Hilaire.

But we! I have not expression to express my pain, present and future. It is a fair return for things here on earth. But, if Prussia is a little wise, it will learn from our example and not go to the extremes of vengeance. That would be great prudence.

[English resumes] Prussia is too great to follow the example of France and will set the world a higher lesson.

The future wars always to be dreaded by trampling too violently on a fallen foe, the deaths and misery always brought about by too great exactions, sooner or later these will be borne in mind. And Germany will show to astonished Europe that moderation of which victorious nations have hitherto shown themselves incapable in a career of victory to which history affords no parallel.

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9005/84

12 July 1871

The crown princess will go to St Thomas’ tomorrow and begs your attendance. Lord Charles Fitzroy is to fix the hour and the c. princess will desire Countess Bernstorff to let you know the hour. I hope that she *will* do so, for the crown princess begs you to go with her.

---

68 An allusion to Portia’s speech in Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*, Act 4, scene 1.

69 In 1806, after much provocation, Prussia declared war on France but was badly defeated at the Battle of Jena, lost territory and the royal family fled to Russia.

Source: From a letter of the crown princess of Prussia to Nightingale, in E.T. Cook, *The Life of Florence Nightingale* 2:204

Osborne

28 July [1871]

I return the deeply interesting and important papers which the crown prince and myself have read *most* attentively and word for word.

The crown prince wishes me to thank you particularly for your having let him see these papers. Much was not new to him. You *know* how much interest he takes in sanitary matters, how anxious he is for reforms wherever needed. Every remark offered is therefore always gratefully received by us.

Let me repeat, dear Miss Nightingale, how great a happiness it was to me to see you again.

ever yours

with sincerest admiration and respect

Victoria

crown princess of Germany

**Editor:** A letter to Parthenope and Harry Verney in 1874 reported that the crown princess had visited that day, that they and the crown prince “wished very much to go to Claydon but that it was impossible for him to do so. I telegraphed to you what she said.”<sup>70</sup>

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9021/5

Thursday morning 6 A.M.

November 1877

The empress (O inconvenient-est of empresses) has appointed herself *here*, at 11 TODAY. She will come straight up to me and then see Miss Lees (whom I have appointed here by her, the empress's desire) in the dining room. There is not the slightest occasion for you to take any notice of this (I have not told *anybody* she is coming) and I did not even know you would be in London. *Ottmar von Mohl* is at Buckingham Palace with her as her secretary.

---

<sup>70</sup> Letter 26 July 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/112.

Source: From an incomplete draft letter to the crown princess of Prussia, ADD Mss 45750 ff54-61

18 May 1886

*Private.* First of all, may I express what is uppermost in all our hearts, our deepest sympathy with the heavy trial, our thankfulness, our warmest joy for the happy recovery—I will not multiply my poor words. Our Almighty Father’s blessings are only limited by His own infinite power and love to bless.

My brother-in-law, Sir Harry Verney, has told me of your royal and imperial highness’s letter about the arrival of Professor Weinbrenner in England to study the “specialties of hospital buildings” and also of those of other “institutions, schools, etc.” The man who undoubtedly understands best the principles and practice of sanitary and administrative hospital architecture, as regards administration, health, distribution of wards and offices, etc., for the good of patients, is Captain Douglas Galton R.E. Both at home and from abroad he is constantly referred to; he was for many years in the War Office; he built the Herbert Hospital. I will immediately write to him on behalf of Professor Weinbrenner and your royal highness’s wishes.

But, if I might venture to suggest—should Professor Weinbrenner wish, when he has decided on the *sketch* plans for the clinique, to lay them before Captain Galton, I am sure that he would give them the most careful attention and, should it be your royal highness’s desire, I need hardly say that I would also do my poor possible to examine and suggest upon them. Professor Weinbrenner should also see in London the new St Marylebone Infirmary. And I would give him a letter to Mr Saxon Snell,<sup>71</sup> the architect. I would also consider, according to your royal highness’s command, so joyfully obeyed by me, what other hospitals in London or England he should specially see (would he go to Edinburgh and see the great Edinburgh Royal Infirmary—recently finished?). If I knew where to send to Professor Weinbrenner when he arrives in London, I would send a list of hospitals and letters of introduction, if any are necessary, or if he would call at my house?

For the time being, those who are most in earnest seem to turn their interest in God into interest in man. See the promising young university graduates who go to work in the East End of London. And this too is good. But the highest, the most persevering motive is want-

---

71 Henry Saxon Snell (c1831-1904), architect notably of the Highgate Workhouse Infirmary.

ing—the greatest grace. What would St Paul have been without the divine “constraining” love?<sup>72</sup>

May I take this opportunity of sending to your royal highness my heartfelt thanks for the beautiful report so kindly sent me last year. Alas! would that I could answer satisfactorily the gracious letter which accompanied it—the difficulties stated as to the selecting and finding of good and suitable candidates for training as nurses and above all as superintendents of nurses are ours.

The causes are hard to find and harder to remedy. While the number of applications increases immensely every year, the calibre diminishes. We have not such women as we used to have ten and fifteen years ago, by a great deal, from among whom to promote our heads of wards and our heads of hospitals. I do not mean so much intellectually—women who can pass examinations and prepare others to pass examinations—of these probably we have more, as might be expected from the singular uprising of female education; nor am I thinking so much of physical strength, though it is true that some years more probationers fail to complete their year’s training from lack of physical fitness.

(Unhappily doctors tell us that the standard of robust female health is everywhere lower, among young married women also.) But what I would speak of is the apparent deterioration in high personal character, in the moral disinterested qualities of high Christian citizenship, of women to whom one would confide the government of 50-100 nurses and their training.

If we would hazard the reasons should we not say for one reason, as far as England goes, the want perhaps of religion in education. In the best of the women we used to have, God was everything. Their earthly duties were scrupulously well performed but, or rather because, still God was all. It was truly as Christ washed the disciples’ feet, “knowing that he came out from God and was returning to God.”<sup>73</sup> And so the interval, the pathway to the other world, was magnanimously and humbly filled with the service of God and man, but they did not stop to dabble in the “puddles” by the roadside. And they talked very little about religion. They loved God. The second reason may be, which hardly differs from the first, there is perhaps less regard to personal, to so to speak, domestic character than there was. Now it is all the “ologies.”

---

72 An allusion to 2 Cor 5:14.

73 Allusions to John 13:5 and 16:26-27.

It is delightful to think that nearly every considerable hospital in London or indeed in England now has its training school for nurses. But many of these hospitals give certificates at the end of three months', six months', training. At the end of two years' all, I believe, and then probably lose sight of the probationer. Some of these hospitals have as many as 100 probationers. This system would not matter if the public knew what value to attach to these certificates. But it does not. The certificate signifies a certain degree of skilled professional training. It has nothing to do with personal or domestic character. But the public know nothing of this. And many institutions engage their nurses and superintendents upon certificates alone (which are thus of great pecuniary value), without any personal reference to the matrons, etc., who besides have probably lost their probationers out of view.

All this tends to destroy in the public mind the perception of the real qualities which stamp a woman as fit for responsible hospital life. The entrance to these training schools is besides so easy—vacancies occurring perhaps every week—the obligations so little binding, a three months' perhaps—no more—that the hospitals which will not admit for less than a year's training and a two or three years' obligation, and keep in sight their trained nurses always, or as long as is desired (though applications are, as has been mentioned, more overwhelming in number than ever) have fewer serious probationers.

Among more material reasons for this may be mentioned the rise everywhere in England of high schools, colleges and professions for women—the pay which these give to their heads, higher than that given by hospitals, though the qualities needed for a hospital matron are perhaps the highest of all, yet less book learning is required. Those who come to hospitals from the profession of education are generally the failures. The greater independence of school life over hospital life which takes up the whole time and being. Perhaps the medical staff of a hospital do not yet admit the matron as one of themselves, but rather oppose her—though *we* have not found this at St Thomas' Hospital. These are the reasons which may in England be some of those to account for the present—we will hope only temporary—lack of the highest calibre of women to enter hospital life. But these reasons possibly or probably do not apply to Germany.

The extraordinary moral power which a real Christian citizen (I know not how to coin a short name otherwise) exerts over, say, a men's ward, far above that of teachers over pupils—for she is always with them—might well tempt a good woman. A little boy of five or six

years old is brought in knowing literally no words but oaths and curses. Without preaching she raises him till he becomes an unconscious little missionary in the ward. The men patients will not speak a word he ought not to hear. As Christ might well say: "The little child is the best preacher of you all."

On the other hand, the men patients are so sharp-witted. All now are primed by infidel or vicious books and orators. If a sister (head nurse) does not act up to her profession, their eyes are lynx eyes to see it. A head nurse who is not a Christian citizen, or who talks common scripture phrase without acting it out, is the best recruiting sergeant for the ranks of indifference to everything noble or decent. The men are well up in the arguments.

I could write much more but [breaks off]

**Editor:** In 1887 on the accession to the throne of the crown prince as Friedrich III the crown princess became Empress Frederick. Their son remained under the influence of the conservative, militarist set. Nightingale excerpted a letter of George Bunsen on the situation:

Living in a country far too much governed and increasingly so from year to year, I can sympathize with everybody who observes with sorrow that initiative and originality is *educated and administrated out of the young* systematically x x "the progress under difficulty of more natural principle in a Pestalozzi-Froebel Haus"<sup>74</sup> which the admirable empress (our princess royal) went to see as she has done these many years as crown princess.

*The people of Berlin* have quite shaken off the clouds of mistrust and dislike which the court set (la société) had raised up lately against her. *The people* see that they were right in their appreciation of her goodness, laboriousness and genius." He then says how he wished that "a long, long time be granted her for convincing the world and in the end—silencing, as Prince Albert did, that narrow set."

Nightingale added her own comment: "Alas! alas! O what a tragedy!"<sup>75</sup> The liberal Emperor Frederick, however, reigned less than a year before his death, of throat cancer, 15 June 1888. Their reactionary son, schooled by the Prussian militarists succeeded him. Kaiser Wilhelm

74 Founded by Henriette Schrader-Breymann, great-niece of the educator Fröbel; it established kindergartens in Berlin and trained women to be teachers.

75 Excerpt from letter c1887, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9011/202.



would be the instigator of World War I and, on Germany's defeat, the end of the German monarchy.

Nightingale was professionally interested in the emperor's terminal illness, a matter of medical quarrelling. The British doctor who treated him, Sir Morell Mackenzie (1837-92), wrote up the case, the subject of the next items.

The Empress Frederick last visited Nightingale in 1894, as noted in the final letter here. She sent Nightingale congratulations on her eightieth birthday in 1900.<sup>76</sup>

Source: Letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9012/58

21 October 1888

I sent Sir Harry six copies of the Queen's Jubilee Atlas, and Sir Morell Mackenzie on the emperor<sup>77</sup>—because he asked for them. It is equally impossible to believe that Mackenzie could have published this book without her, the Empress Frederick's leave, or that she could have had the unwisdom to give her leave. Everything that has happened must make her position more intolerable.

In reading the few pages I did, I thought how can M. Mackenzie expose himself to be given the lie to by these exact Germans, who of course have an attested copy of the post-mortem? This apparently is just what they have done—confuted him. But this heartless fight over the emperor's remains is agonizing. Never was there anything so horrible. How *can* she bear it?

And the German papers: "The Liberals would soon have found out the Emperor Frederick was wrong. And so would he!!"

Source: Letter to Frederick Calvert, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9012/139

27 February 1889

I return you his with many thanks. He was very much interested about what they call the "unveiling" of the Bismarcks in the *Contemporary*. If it is by George Bunsen, with more or less verifying by the empress herself of the domestic part, it is a very different thing from if it is by Stead, who is merely a very clever journalist is it not? Either way it must do the poor empress irreparable harm at Berlin, must it not? Royalties are so thin-skinned.

---

76 Letter 17 May 1900, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing O.26.

77 Morrell Mackenzie, *The Fatal Illness of Frederick the Noble*.

Source: From a letter to Henry Acland, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/94/2

Easter Sunday  
25 March 1894

The Empress Frederick came to see me before she left England, wise and businesslike and charming yet more than ever.

I waited till I had seen her before I answered your kind letter. And last week I was too much immersed in work and cares and weakness to be able to write.

### **Grand Duchess of Baden**

**Editor:** Correspondence with the grand duchess, Louisa Mary Elizabeth (1838-1923), daughter of the queen of Prussia and wife of Frederick William Louis, grand duke of Baden, has already appeared, four letters in *Society and Politics* (5:545-47). Two letters on nurses and nurse training and related issues on the nature of work, social class, education and the changing occupational opportunities for women are given here, the first lengthy. It is presumably in response to a (missing) letter from the grand duchess, with specific questions. Nightingale sometimes had long and important letters printed; the one here is printed in stylized print.

The grand duchess was a favourite royal of Nightingale's—a humble, intensely devout woman of enormous competence. She wrote letters, when under age twenty-seven, said Nightingale to her mother, that she wished “any administrator in the Crimean War could have written,” in *Life and Family* (1:185). Two short notes, one by and one about the grand duchess, show their mutual appreciation.

Source: From a printed letter, signed by Nightingale, to the grand duchess of Baden, ADD Mss 45750 ff164-71

31 March 1879

*Private.* I wish I could say, what I cannot say, how the great goodness of your royal highness fills me with reverence. Would that I could do the least little thing to help in the noble objects which you so nobly pursue.

As to the number of nurses who give up the work, either during or after training in Baden, we know and feel very much the same here, and also as to the number of applications from gentlewomen especially desiring to be trained. Those who fail during the course of training, after every care in selection, either from not being strong enough for the work, or from not being fit for the work, or from not liking it when they try it, are disappointingly many. We have many more

“lady” candidates; this seems to be the experience of all training schools for nurses. But whether it is a wave of human experience as so often happens in human life, or whether it is from more permanent causes, I could fancy that the quality of these lady candidates has decreased while their quantity has increased.

There have been years when we had a set of perfect jewels among our gentlewomen probationers fitted for superintendence and who, after serving three or four years as ward sisters (head nurses), are now superintendents or assistant superintendents in large hospitals, unless death or disability has removed them. There are years, and these are unhappily now, when few or none fitted for superintendence come to us. On the other hand the quantity of nurse candidates is often not enough to fill our vacancies, while their quality has of late years, at least of some of them, greatly improved.

It may be that, if this is not a mere “wave,” the reason is not far to seek. For gentlewomen, within the last five years especially, openings for the higher-class education have greatly multiplied; the Oxford and Cambridge universities have examinations for women; Cambridge has two women’s colleges affiliated to her university; Oxford University is about to have one. “High schools” for girls are being founded, a great contrast to the miserable education and ill-taught “accomplishments” so-called of the old “boarding schools” for girls. It is difficult to show to your royal highness in Germany where, for so long, diplomas, examinations, etc., have been required to prove a lady capable of teaching, while in England the only certificate a woman wanted was that she must earn her bread. (Any girl was good enough to teach others.) How essential this movement was. Now Englishwomen must be taught to teach and thank God it has come! But it has robbed us in hospital life I fear. Teaching the young appeals more to the imagination than nursing the sick and there is more freedom about it. Then there are the primary or elementary (board schools) under the last act of Parliament for poor children. These must have certificated schoolmistresses and possibly ladies who love liberty may enter the race for them.

Then some ladies who aspire beyond being nurses, to being “medical women,” have now the opportunity by a late decision of the “Medical Council.” I saw the other day a lady, wife to one of the secretaries to government at Madras in India, who, after a four years’ medical training at Madras, has come to London to qualify by examination and a further three years’ course for a medical degree at the London University. Her object is to return to practise in the zenanas [women’s

quarters] at Madras.<sup>78</sup> She is so impressed with the hopeless uneducated state, overfed and lost in laziness, of the richer women in the harems, who may see no man, and with the half starved or wholly starved, violently overworked and equally uneducated state of the poorer Indian women.

I have been for just twenty years working for India, an enormous subject, and I just hail this sort of devoted woman. One is not impressed in general with “lady doctors’” efficiency. Oh may nursing never be mixed up with doctoring! So many ladies come to us at our training school asking just to “pick up” a little among our nurses at the hospital, as if that would qualify them to go out and practise among the women in India where no doctor can be admitted.

But I am taking up your royal highness’s time with what is too exclusively English. I should return to the reasons for the failure of candidates during training. Only knowing that nothing is foreign, nothing English, but all welcome and homey to your royal highness, I am led away by the joy of sympathizing with her. But there are sad and sordid aspects of this work as there are great and generous ones. Many of our gentlewomen candidates are from the old incompetent class of governesses: those who undertake teaching the sacred little infant mind because they don’t know how to do anything and must do something. These as a rule are by no means the best suited for nursing work though we have splendid exceptions. Our present mistress of probationers, for whom I never cease to thank God, was a governess. She is a first-rate class teacher and she has a mother’s heart for every one of her daughters, rough or refined, though changing every year. And she does all as in God’s presence. But, as a rule, the previous career of most of these governess ladies is not such as to fit them for this work, and the difficulty of our choice, owing to the absence of anything in the way of a real test of qualification from work performed, is very great. But we have some bright examples to comfort us for many disappointments.

About women of the ordinary nurse class, there has for several years past, until recently, been a lack of applicants to fill the vacancies among the nurse probationers. The ordinary woman much prefers the more “genteel” occupation of being a “young lady” in a shop or a servant, whose wages now are good. On the other hand, we have

---

78 References to Dr Mary Scharlieb (1845-1930), who established the Queen Victoria Caste and Goshia Hospital in Madras and whom Nightingale consulted much on India issues; see the India volumes for correspondence.

recently had very good specimens of this class, women better than the “lady probationers” and far better than the old “sisters” class of the old hospital. This is the converse of the other proposition. The aspirations after a more devoted life in God’s service are not satisfied by the occupations open to the domestic servant class and therefore they come to us. For the class of old confidential domestic servants who live and die in the same family and are friends to their mistresses is alas! very much disappearing.

II There is great progress in public opinion and among the hospitals generally of this kingdom as to the necessity of having trained nurses, but there is still a deplorable lack of insight, even among the medical profession, or chiefly among the medical profession, of what training is, or of how nurses are to be trained.

1. What is meant by “training” is the key to the whole, as I need not tell your royal highness who has done so much for it so wisely and so well. One of the largest and richest hospitals in London calls “training” what is there taught, or not taught, to non-resident probationers who are admitted into the wards in the morning after everything has been done and leave the wards in the afternoon before anything has been begun—for three months only. The regular systematic year’s training with all its tests, examinations and records, with its training matron, training ward sisters (head nurses), disciplined “home” with all its moral and religious and comfortable helps, its classes and lectures and its “mother”-ing, by a good mistress of probationers, with instructions to the ward “sisters” how to train—this has hitherto been adopted by few hospitals.

2. Trained and training matron (lady superintendent of nurses), her office and duties, as distinguished from the old-fashioned house-keeper matron: these two (training system and trained matron) are the keystones to the whole reform of the organization of nursing. Where we have made any real advance in the organization of nursing in hospitals, it has been by an efficient trained matron who, sometimes by chance, sometimes by the help of a few among the managers, has been introduced into the hospital to fill a vacancy. The Royal Infirmary at Edinburgh, a hospital of 500 and more beds with a school of 1000 students, the largest medical school we have—St Mary’s Hospital in London, a hospital of less than 200 beds—St Bartholomew’s, the oldest and largest hospital in London (a quite recent reform), are examples.

As the system of training is the foundation, so the trained matron is the head of the whole reform. The rest is only the hands and the

body. What the matron does—what she is there for—this is the first thing. To advise hospitals to obtain a trained matron who can train—to advise what her responsibilities, her duties and powers are to be, including selection, appointment, dismissal, training, etc., discipline and governing of every nurse, “sister,” probationers, etc., in the building, subject of course to the hospital authorities to whom she is responsible for the responsibility of the ward sisters to carry out the medical orders for the treatment of the patients—this in the “nine hospitals” which your royal highness has so happily captured with your “100 nurses” appears to be as in England the mainspring.

It is now almost a truism and recognized as such that to put good new pupils under bad old nurses or conditions (a “new patch on an old garment”<sup>79</sup>) is to spoil the new and not amend the old. St Bartholomew’s Hospital—the oldest and in all other respects except indeed its nursing, perhaps the best in London—after trying this strange experiment resorted to us last year for a trained lady superintendent of nurses and her trained assistants. Fortunately we were able to supply the first, and two or three of the second. These began work with the first of this year. A real training school we hope will follow. The experiment will have begun at the right end.

Thirty years ago all the English medical profession were against any improvement in nursing. At the largest medical school in Great Britain—the Edinburgh Infirmary—it was the recognized duty of the senior house surgeon to have the drunken night nurses carried in on stretchers every night. (This comes of the medical man “doing” matron.) That hospital some years since asked us for a trained lady superintendent of nursing and trained nursing staff, which has answered to the delighted recognition of all the hospital authorities and has been for years now in entire possession of the hospital nursing with its permanent training school. (I am expecting the superintendent here now to stay with me.) In August they move into the new hospital which has been building for them, a very large and complete building.

The military hospitals are those which, although recognizing the value of women nurses, least recognize what real “training” is or the undesirableness of the medical officer being chief administrator and chief over the superintendent of nurses and her nurses. Our attempts to import properly organized female nursing into the army hospitals have not been successful.

---

79 A paraphrase of Matt 9:16.

3. Your royal highness asks whether we have undertaken any new branch of activity. The latest movement in which we have taken a part is that of providing trained nurses to nurse the poor at their own homes. This had been organized years ago by one of our very best merchant princes, Mr Rathbone, in Liverpool, one of the most active—but alas! one of the most drunken and therefore wretched of our large towns (we call it district nursing). The great mischief lurking in this, if the district superintendents are not first-class trained superintendents and of the most energetic disposition, is that the nursing constantly degenerates into relief giving, almsgiving of the most pauperizing description. The poor of course prefer it; they would rather have the money or the food (which they sometimes exchange for drink) than the nursing. The nurse, especially if she be not a gentlewoman, deteriorates, too, and would rather be the goddess of gifts than the useful hardworked skillful nurse of the sick.

Add to this that district nursing requires even a higher standard of nursing training than hospital nursing. It is more difficult; the nurse has no hospital appliances at hand; she has not the doctor always within call, though she must report to him yet more fully than the hospital sister. She has not the constant publicity and “*esprit de corps*” of the hospital ward to keep her up to her work. All this makes it needful that the district nurse should be of a yet higher calibre than the hospital nurse, more, if possible, mistress of her work, and under trained supervision of the very highest kind. She has, besides, the very first thing in entering on her sick case to put herself the most wretched room of the most wretched poor in the worst London or Liverpool lodging house into nursing order, to see that the family afterwards keep it so—to teach the poor the very simplest cleanliness and sanitary knowledge, and to report sanitary defects in drainage, etc., which people cannot remedy themselves, to the proper sanitary authorities. We do not find any but the very highest kind of trained nurse will do this. (Alas! I often think that it would be well if the palaces of the land also had their district nurse.)

Typhoid fever, diphtheria, etc., almost invariably come from defective drainage. In London, as a beginning, some good work has been done under the direction of Miss Florence Lees (who is known to the crown princess of Germany). An example has been set of thoroughly good skilled nursing (including all that *real* district nursing means, and dis severed from almsgiving and mere preaching to the poor) brought

to the homes of the poor. Hospitals are, after all, only an intermediate stage of civilization and to make *home, home*, among the poor is the real thing. The nurses are mainly gentlewomen living under a superintendent in separate “homes,” of which there are now three in operation. The cost has however been comparatively great and it remains to be seen how far the public will support it. Ultimately it is hoped to connect it with some kind of provident fund or dispensary whereby the poor, by paying in some very trifling weekly sum, might have a right to a nurse (as in other workingmen’s clubs or benefit societies to a sick allowance). People little know what poor people’s halfpence will do. We gave a year’s hospital training to these district nurses, besides three months’ direct district training under Miss Lees, who is I think the very best trainer I know. She is unique in the homes of the poor. So far as can be told these homes in which she has established order and cleanliness do not fall back into their former condition.

4. My brother-in-law, Sir Harry Verney, tells me that in consequence of the desire to build a new children’s hospital in Heidelberg, your royal highness wishes for some plans of the best “children’s hospitals” in England. There are three new children’s hospitals in London and another enlarged—the Victoria in Chelsea, the Evelina in Southwark, the East London in Shadwell, and the old Great Ormond Street one. There is a very splendid new one in Nottingham. I cannot say that I think England has been successful in her children’s hospital. But I will endeavour to procure and forward to your royal highness what she desires. I bid “Godspeed” with all my heart to the new Heidelberg hospital, etc.

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** The grand duchess of Baden was deeply moved by her visit to Nightingale several months after the above letter:

I shall ever remember my visit to you as one of those moments coming directly out of God’s hand and leading men’s hearts up to Him in fruitful thankfulness. Let me no more speak about it. It belongs to those things which bear in themselves a *sanctuary* and which many words do not make any holier or better, but rather take away from the wonderful high and bright light from above in which such court shines into one’s heart and soul, just like a bright summer morning, pure and holy!<sup>80</sup>

---

80 Letter 12 August 1879, Wellcome Ms 9030/63.



The last letter to her was in response to a letter of hers 23 April. It continues a number of the earlier themes about women's education, ladies and women.

Source: Incomplete draft letter, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/83/2

26 May-9 June 1883

*To G.D. of Baden.* Varieties—waves in our living material for nursing work, waves of splendid, waves of indifferent, gentlewomen—at present many applications, few good ones. Many are called but few are chosen<sup>81</sup>—not fit to control themselves, therefore not to control others. Reasons:

1. Schools rising up all over London, Edinbro', Dublin, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Belfast—great training schools for nurses—thank God—and many of these are under our own superintendents.

2. Women's intellectual life developed in England—high schools—university colleges—colleges for lady doctors—for art and music. Education, teaching, literary work, more attractive than hospital work—but not an “all-round” education like nursing. Still teaching a grand employment whether in schools or colleges, as well as in nursing—elementary schoolmistresses also a new profession. All tends to raise women more to the level God made for her.

3. Another side to question—reason why moral quality of ladies who come to us not quite what it was. Home and family life does not now supply moral discipline it once did. Young ladies not accustomed to obedience—to idea of duty pervading every trifle—to nice household ways as once—as they began to think of independence other than in marriage—to think of going into professions of maintaining themselves, the other idea of a strictly family life went out. Devotion to home duties best preparation for high devotion to hospital life.

There is good in all things. God's school the best: He is training His own world. He must do it in His own way. I only watch and try to learn what it is He would have us do—how He would have us follow Him.

4. Ladies do not come to H.R.H. as nurses. Too many come to us. In England primogeniture and the inequality of fortunes left to sons and to daughters is in our very blood. The proportion of gentlewomen who have to maintain themselves and even their families is large. This may account both for number who swarm about any open-

---

81 A paraphrase of Matt 20:16.

ing to professional life and for their not coming from highest motives or from any great fitness.

5. In Germany Baden and Berlin movement came from on high—highest lady of the land—with us it comes from below—etiquette that the crown or royalty should not patronize effort of this kind till it has succeeded. Much too inclined to fashion in England. Whenever we have become fashionable, we have declined in devotion and in the best things. If royalty were to make us the fashion, what would become of our higher motives except inasfar as loyalty *is* a higher motive. But we often degrade it.

To theorize about causes less useful than to suggest measures.

**Editor:** Nightingale in 1867 had met the grand duchess's mother, then queen of Prussia, later the Empress Augusta (1811-90). On the empress's death Nightingale wondered about the effect on the grand duchess, as she remarked in a letter to Sir Harry Verney:

One must be so glad when a short influenza cuts short the long sufferings (from cancer) of a good woman like the Empress Augusta. I wonder how the grand duchess bears this fresh loss—they were so attached.<sup>82</sup>

She told Margaret Verney that “the grand duchess of Baden has faith that God was right in taking away almost all her family.”<sup>83</sup> Very late in life Nightingale reported, also to Margaret Verney, that she had “a most touching letter of the grand duchess of Baden to show you” (in 1:703).

### Queen Sophia of the Netherlands

**Editor:** A liberal intellectual, Sophia Frederika Mathilde of Württemberg (1818-77), in 1839 married the simple, militaristic William III of the Netherlands. He resented the constitutional reforms brought in by his father and considered abdicating.

Nightingale was not able to receive a visit of the queen of the Netherlands in 1866 when first asked. She did see her a little later and again in 1870. Cook gives a brief excerpt of the queen's letter to Nightingale from the second visit: “I think of you as one of the highest and best I have met in this world” (2:187). A book on the queen's correspondence with Lady Malet has her reporting to her friend that

---

<sup>82</sup> Letter 13 January 1890, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9013/5.

<sup>83</sup> Letter 31 May 1890, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9013/45, 2.

she met Nightingale in 1857 on a visit to London: "I have seen everyone, Miss Nightingale, Mr Owen, I was at Holland House."<sup>84</sup>

Source: From a letter to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/54

14 November 1868

I received the most modest of little notes from the queen of Holland on Wednesday and saw her on Thursday. She was most interesting. She talked chiefly theology and the prospect of this world getting out of its woes and vices. I thought her much saddened and altered since last I saw her, but, if possible, more attractive.

### Other Royal Women

**Editor:** Princess Alice (1844-1900), the second oldest daughter of Queen Victoria, was the wife of Frederick William Louis, grand duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, hence sometimes referred to as Princess Louis. She also met with Nightingale's approval, although not as high as her older sister, the crown princess (see p 823 above). There is correspondence with her in 1866 regarding aid to war sick and wounded in the Austro-Prussian War. In 1867 Princess Alice asked for and got an interview with Nightingale, using Elizabeth Herbert as an intermediary. There is more correspondence with her in 1872 on having German nurses trained in England in a nursing volume.

On writing Julie Schwabe about arrangements for aid in the 1866 war Nightingale told her to send the money directly to the princess, "for she, it appears, does these things herself. She has great powers of business and of self-denial and perhaps will dispense the money better than anyone."<sup>85</sup> On Princess Louis's death (it appears, although the note is undated) Nightingale recorded a memorial: Love sprang up under her steps. But now she *knows*—she *sees*. She sees that "sight of sights," the "unveiled majesty of God." She has entered in.<sup>86</sup>

Nightingale's disapproving views of the queen of Greece when Nightingale was in Greece in 1850 have already appeared in *European Travels* (7:391, 393 and 410) and in describing the superiority of her successor *Society and Politics* (5:541). A letter to Harriet Martineau was

---

84 Sydney W. Jackman and Hella Haassee, eds., *A Stranger in The Hague: The Letters of Queen Sophie of The Netherlands to Lady Malet 1842-1877* 177.

85 Letter 21 September 1866, University of Alabama at Birmingham 5097.

86 Note, ADD Mss 45750 f163.

scathing in describing the ex-king and queen of Greece: “the queen, perhaps the greatest wretch in Europe? politically and morally.”<sup>87</sup>

**Editor:** Isabella II (1830-1904) was queen of Spain 1833-68, having succeeded her father while she was still an infant. Her questionable private life and political irresponsibility contributed to the decline of the monarchy and her deposition in a revolution of 1868. She went into exile in Paris and formally abdicated in 1870.

There is, as might be expected, no correspondence with the queen of Spain but the following item gives Nightingale’s negative views of her and the relationship between a ruling monarch’s personal conduct and the state of the country.

Source: Note for Benjamin Jowett, Add Mss 45783 ff227-31

[c1870]

Whether Spain is to be “excused” the consequences of the queen’s misgovernment; in what manner God “judges” the queen may be a curious question of *moral physiology*, to what degree her immorality and her unprincipled falsehood in government is to be attributed to her mother’s<sup>88</sup> ditto ditto may be a curious question of moral physiology. (I heard Olozaga say to Lord Palmerston, “the mother and the daughter never once told me the same story of any one single act of their common lives.”) Mark too how practically true is the dogma of “original sin” and how practically inconsistent with the other dogma: “God a Judge,” as religionists put the two dogmas.

Then, *is* God’s “judging” to let the criminal go scot free, because her mother was bad and her “intentions” were good, and to visit her deeds upon the country she has misgoverned. That is the “rummest” method of “judging” I ever heard of. It is as if a man had beaten his wife and the police magistrate were to say to the man, “I have nothing to say to you, because your ‘intentions’ were not bad, your father was drunk before you and taught you to drink, and when you’re drunk you beat your wife. *She* is to be beaten everyday for the rest of her life, and her children and her grandchildren after her.” *That* is really, “notwithstanding *all* appearances to the contrary,” the theory of the

87 Letter to Harriet Martineau [November-December 1862], Add Mss 45788 f173.

88 Her mother, Maria Christina (1806-78), acted as queen regent during her minority.

government of God held by religionists. What I mean is, while such absolute ignorance of the character of God exists (I believe there is absolutely no foundation for supposing that He exists in the character of “a judge” at all if, in the matter of this poor Spain, God’s business is to “judge” how much this poor queen is to be “made allowances for.” If Christ’s business is to “intercede for” her, why God had better not exist at all, Christ had better not exist at all. Is *that* God’s only idea of exercising His moral government over the affairs of Spain?) while such absolute misconception of the character of God exists, notwithstanding all “appearances to the contrary,” notwithstanding all the facts of history staring us in the face. (*Do* people believe that God leaves Spain to govern itself at random, while *He* is weighing the queen’s adulteries?)

That such daily misconception of God exists, I don’t think the thing to say is that it is difficult to find out the character of God. [Rather] mankind had better begin *today, this afternoon* to find out whether they *can’t* find out anything about it, not “amid appearances to the contrary,” but amid appearances to reveal it. “*Today* if ye will hear my voice,”<sup>89</sup> (I think scarcely any words in the liturgy more impressive than these) and *this* is “revelation.”

### **Empress Eugénie of France**

**Editor:** Nightingale’s unfavourable views of the Empress Eugénie, spouse of Louis-Napoléon, have already appeared in *Society and Politics* (5:540-41) and *European Travels* (7:724, 733 and 769). Nightingale was in Paris when the opulent royal wedding took place and thoroughly disapproved of it all. That correspondence also has Nightingale deriding the empress’s superstitious religion, a point that reappears below. The empress was a pious, practising Roman Catholic, her husband, an elected monarch who had to appease the clerical party in France, and hence the pope, while also supporting the republican movement in Italy—the pope’s main enemies. The politics were complicated.

In any event, the empress was someone whose influence the sanitary expert Edwin Chadwick thought could be brought to the cause of health promotion. He wrote Nightingale a lengthy, pleading letter to ask her help to recruit the empress, then about to visit England, where she would be staying with Queen Victoria.

---

89 A paraphrase from the Venite in the *Book of Common Prayer* morning prayer, from Ps 95:7.

I still think it desirable to the extent that may be practicable to get the highest ladies who can be got to keep the sanitary cause in countenance and progress. She is to pay a visit to the queen. Might you not ask her majesty to interest the empress in the matter? Would it not be worthwhile to show her the model cottages at Windsor and the other points of sanitary care there?

Chadwick thought that the queen and empress might “want other matters than common politics to talk about or be interested about.” Further, it would be good publicity for the cause of “model cottages.” Chadwick suggested that Nightingale forward the “smart copy,” presumably the library standard edition, of *Notes on Nursing* to the empress, and even suggested a suitably deferential wording for the covering letter! He explained further that if he made a trip to Paris for sanitary measures he would hope to be presented to the empress.<sup>90</sup>

Nightingale certainly owed Chadwick more than one favour and seems to have been willing to comply. She was relieved, as her letter immediately below shows, to have been let off. The other item is critical of the empress’s failure to assist the sick and wounded during the Franco-Prussian War.

Source: From a letter to Edwin Chadwick, ADD Mss 45770 ff210-11

Hampstead, N.W.  
10 December 1860

I cannot say but that I was very glad to be released from any communication with the empress, who was born to be a dressmaker and married the wickedest man in Europe to be made an empress. She has a heathen fetishism, so often called a religion, which makes her terrified for the consequences *to herself* of the emperor’s reported defection from the pope. So she torments her scoundrel and he sends her to Scotland this nice weather for her health. This I heard from no newspaper, but from one of the best authorities in Paris.

However I don’t say that I would not write a letter to the devil for you or even to the empress, if it would do any good.

---

90 Letter of Chadwick 3 December 1860, ADD Mss 45770 f203.

Source: From a letter to Mrs Cox, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA)  
H1/ST/NC1/71/7

30 April 1870

You can have no idea how touching it has been. . . . And though it stings one almost to outcry, to hear the falsehoods the Roman Catholic priests, both French and English, have put about (as to this generosity of the whole English people) yet the self-denial and true liberality of the poor and middle-class givers shines out the more brightly from the fog of such assertions as these: “oh,” say the French priests to the peasantry, when the English gifts arrive, “votre impératrice est là” [your imperial majesty is there] meaning, in England, and that she it is who sends all the English gifts.

(The impératrice has not sent one sou [penny], has not even given her name, for I was asked to ask her—I dare say she could not. She has been selling a magnificent fur cloak given her by the Emperor Alexander.) They have been so extravagant that they are quite ruined.

## YOUNGER WOMEN FRIENDS

---

### Adeline Paulina Irby

**A**deline Paulina Irby (1831-1911)<sup>1</sup> was a slightly younger friend and colleague, with enormous courage and dedication to her own causes, for which Nightingale greatly admired her. Irby addressed Nightingale as “Florence” (relying on their mutual association with Kaiserswerth, where Nightingale was “Schwester Florence”), while Nightingale routinely called her and referred to her as “Miss Irby.” There is much correspondence with and about Irby’s relief work in *Society and Politics* (5:262-72), Nightingale always prodding her friend to put more facts into her fundraising appeals, points which we shall see shortly again below. Nightingale assisted by drafting and revising appeals. She offered, further, to send in material to the *Times* on Irby’s behalf (another reason for insisting that the facts be right). Note the care Nightingale took in the writing and editing work she did and the attention to such practical details as how to get material into the *Times*. Nightingale was often exasperated, as the letters to her cousin Shore and his wife show, but the admiration remained.

In 1874 Nightingale referred to Irby as a “a beloved companion” for her mother for a visit to the Verneys at Claydon. Irby indeed had been to her “a stronghold and rock of defence during the last month. . . . I cannot conceive what we should have done without her.”<sup>2</sup> Several weeks later Nightingale reported that Irby was leaving for Sara-

---

1 On her life see Dorothy Anderson, *Miss Irby and Her Friends*; for a brief biographical sketch see *Society and Politics* (5:832-33).

2 Letter to Harry and Parthenope Verney 2 November 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/131.



jevo the next day.<sup>3</sup> She shortly reported having received a “tolerably good account” from Irby in Vienna, where she had a fit of lumbago, “but is well again,” and discussing transportation problems.<sup>4</sup> There was further correspondence with the Verneys in 1875 regarding Irby acting as companion to Nightingale’s mother. Nightingale sent a copy of Irby’s (co-authored) book to friends: “Offered in the ardour of our friend Miss Irby’s good cause to Mr and Mrs S.C. Hall, who have done so much for so many good causes, with warm regards and thankful heart of Florence Nightingale. Whitsuntide 1877.”<sup>5</sup>

Nightingale kept much correspondence from Irby (there are some forty folios of letters from 1870 to 1879 in ADD Mss 45789) but Nightingale’s letters to her were destroyed, with other correspondence, on Irby’s directions after her death. Nightingale left Irby £500 in her will for her “objects” (*Life and Family* 1:853).

Source: From a letter to Louisa Smith, ADD Mss 45795 ff36-37

12 January 1876

*Miss Irby*: have heard from her this morning (5 January at Agram [Zagreb]), gives her address Hotel Kaiser von Oesterreich, Agram (letters will be forwarded from there), hopes to leave for Stadishte or *Kostainica* in three or four days (8 or 9 January). Both well. Letter, though long, curiously devoid of facts, or I would send it to Shore and you.

God bless you. I feel so happy about my mother.

ever yours

F.N.

Source: From two letters to William Shore and Louisa Smith, ADD Mss 45795 f42 and f44

16 February [1876]

*Miss Irby*. I don’t know that I ever was (1) more relieved or (2) more aggravated by receiving a foolish letter. (1) I thought she might have got smallpox. (2) At the same time, there is NOT *one* fact. I enclose her letter.

---

3 Letter to Harry and Parthenope Verney 23 November 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/137.

4 Letter to Harry Verney 2 December [1874], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/141.

5 Copy with dedication at Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing.

Dear Louisa, thus far had I written when yours came—many thanks. I shall have almost as much as I can manage in seeing my mother today, but, as you think it desirable, will gladly see Shore this evening (after she is gone) and keep *both* letters from Miss Irby for the purpose.

It is impossible to go on advertising, as you say, with common honesty, in the absence of all facts from her, and yet more impossible to issue the “circulars” when the *only* fact she gives me is that she is *not* going to do anything she proposes in the circular. More when I see Shore.

22 February 1876

*Miss Irby.* I return *the* red book and I enclose £15, please, for my share to the advertising fund (Bosnian Fund) as I cannot bear that the advertisements, which you have done *so* well and with so much trouble, should be left off because Miss Irby fancies she cannot afford them.

Source: From two letters to Louisa Smith, ADD Mss 45795 ff47-50 and 51

2 March 1876

*Would something like this do?* As the Austrian government allowance of ten kreuzers a day, which just kept these poor fugitives from positively starving, is about to cease, money from England is yet more needed now than ever it was before. These generous contributions are devoted to rescuing and maintaining the wretched little waifs and strays, and to supplying clothes. Some Bosnia orphan girls are being boarded out. Every farthing goes direct to the object and nothing in expenses.

3 March 1876

*Miss Irby.* I suppose you have had the *Bradford Observer*; if not, I will send you mine. It is hopeless in this sense, that, as you once said, she wavers so much that she always takes the last tone of the last people she is with. The letter is crammed full of politics, which she has been *implored* not to do. The Foreign Office, *while Andrassy's note is pending*,<sup>6</sup> would be quite justified in putting every spoke in her wheel. I will take

---

6 Austria was the main European power concerned with the insurgency in Bosnia-Herzegovina as it shared a long border and Austrian Slavs had joined in the defence of the Christian minority. The note is named after the foreign minister, later prime minister, Julius Andrassy (1823-90); it set out the reforms the powers required of the Turkish government. The British government delayed its response to the note, which had arrived during the holidays, but required a Cabinet meeting; see *Times* 18 January 1876:8 and 9 March 1876:9.

your orders, when you have read the letter, about an advertisement. But one thing is useless, to ask her to write otherwise. *We* must write *her* advertisements *without her*.

Source: From a letter to Shore Smith, ADD Mss 45795 f55

6 March 1876

*Miss Irby*. This is how it strikes me: as “fit for publication.” I wish I had written it in ink instead of pencil if it would save you trouble. Pray don’t let yourself be kept from Thames Bank or Sam.

Perhaps if you would add or alter anything you think right Rosy could copy the whole in ink. I shall write to Miss Irby today, as she *has* sent *facts* at last, just to tell her what we have done.

Source: From four letters to Shore and Louisa Smith, ADD Mss 45795 ff56-57, 58-59, 60-61 and 62-65

9 March 1876

*Miss Irby*. I think you have put her on the right track now. These two letters do contain pretty much what is wanted. (1) I think (you ask me) that I would insert *in letter in Times* something of what I have marked *in red* in the enclosed. (2) I conclude the “*second*” *schoolmaster* is the one she describes as a “*pope*” (crippled) in her letter to me. In that case, I would tack on *this to that*, omitting anything in the first which seems contradictory. (3) *I would CAREFULLY OMIT anything about “ORPHANS”* (you see there are still only “*two*,” of whom one has a mother). Let people think that the *SCHOOLS are ORPHANAGES if they will*. (For my part, I don’t believe in the orphans except in her title, never did.) But I think her work is assuming shape.

If she would (*il faut qu’une porte soit ouverte ou fermée* [a door must be open or shut]) make up her mind, whether she is a political agitator or a reliever of distress, but this, too, is much better than it was, thanks to you.

I think (you ask) that the letter to the *Times* should be taken *by hand* to the *Times* office *by 12 noon on Saturday* to give it a chance for Monday. If she has left you any of her cards I would write upon one, if you wished it, and as she asked me, “forwarded by F.N.” This is all that occurs to me just now.

11 March 1876

*Miss Irby letter for Times*. I have done the best I can, but I am sure you can improve it. I think a happy mixture of the *vague* and the *precise* is what is wanted, the *vague* between orphanages and day schools,

between “waifs and strays” and orphans, between industry and destitution, the *precise* about accounts and money. *Please fill up on page 6 where subscriptions are to be paid in.* I have written a sort of “card” to the editor of the *Times* as Miss Irby asked, which I hope may be an *introduction* and *not* an insertion. There is no occasion for anyone’s name but *Miss Irby’s*, which should be made as *prominent* as possible, to go in.

“Message by Shore”: *Miss Irby*. Greatly relieved by her letter (and aggravated)—send my warmest love. It is not that it is “a trouble” to me to write, but that it is simply impossible (one need not add expletives to “impossible”) for me, coming to a great accumulation of work with greatly diminished strength. If she will send me *ten facts*, or even five, or even two (that is not much to ask) *such as can be made use of* for *HER work* I will lay aside everything else, do the “impossible” and write to her (and for any sake no *political* theories).

This is just the time when *advertisements* may be of use, but it is not according to “anyone brought up with British notions of honour” to go on putting in advertisements for collecting *money* in the entire absence of fact *as to how* if at all *it is being spent*, or indeed of any *facts* at all. *For example*, it is NOT a *fact* to say “while the children are in want of clothes and food,” it would be a *fact* to say, IF AND HOW *she is supplying them*. *Second example*: you can’t go on distributing *circulars* when the only fact she tells us is that she is *not going to do* what *they say* she is going to do.

17 March 1876

*Miss Irby*. I am so thankful for this letter that I am thankful even for its tone of offence. (Though what she *has* done, viz., “*asking*” to give blankets “needed by” insurgents *in the woods* and “*promising*” the same “to Vaso,” is worse than anything I expected. Yet I would take no notice of this.) I think she is buckling nobly to her work and the last sentences about *the schools, boarding out and securing these for three years* are incomparably good, and I should think good for *publicity*. (I wish “*unbleached strong calico*” had not always been called “linen”—it is so misleading.) Her “mission” is nothing if not a *non-political* one. Sometimes she sees this, and sometimes she does not.

This letter is, I think, written after mine of the 4th. She has not, I think, yet received mine of the 6th, in which I praised and thanked her for her letter of facts and accounts received by me the 5th, the same which, with yours, is in the *Times* of the 13th.

Please, if you write, *give her a most tender message from me*, bidding her, in fact, stick to *her schools* as you said, and saying that we think *she is doing wonders*. (She is full of genius and nobleness, but “unstable as

water; she cannot excel.”<sup>7</sup>) Tell her, too, about Dr Parkes’s illness and death, a cruel blow to our work and to us, almost a fatal one. He has left us much to do to save *the school* [Army Medical School]. He dictated a letter to me when he was dying. I have seldom or never known such disinterestedness and self-abnegation. He is a national loss—he was only fifty-six. He never thought of himself.

18 March 1876

*Miss Irby*. It seems hard that, when she is working so nobly and almost alone at such difficult and responsible work, her work should be embittered by ideas so entirely false about English feeling. Though nothing practical can follow her being disabused, it seems cruel not to try, because bitterness makes work, already hard enough, harder. She says, “It is terribly sad to find England believing in Turkish promises.” There is *not* one person in “England,” certainly not one person whose opinion is worth a straw, who believes in “Turkish promises.” *What is “believed” in* is that Turkey, finding all Europe (especially England) now against her, and NOT “*believing in ANY of her promises*” would be obliged to submit to the united influence of European powers, perhaps including the armed influence of Austria, and thus allow the fugitives to return to a *reformed* country. She has said (in many letters): “Andrassy’s note is humbug.” All the powers believe Andrassy’s note, Andrassy more than any believes Andrassy’s note “a humbug,” *if not* guaranteed, as it was, by the European powers. But Andrassy’s note, *backed by the powers*, is a very different thing.

She says, “As I hear from a person much in the world, many people only wish success to the Turks x x as holders of Turkish bonds.” The “Turkish bondholders” wish, *more than any* other people, the prosperity of the poor insurgent provinces, if only and *as the only* means to get their interest paid, and *more than any* others—if that be possible—*know* that the insurgent provinces *can* only be prosperous *if* the reforms, equality and freedom, as UNDERSTOOD *by* THE POWERS, become *fact*. There may be people—I have never heard of any—who do not know “that it is utterly impossible to the fugitives to return *unless protected by* an armed force.”

The *Times* is worth this: it is never a day before, it is never a day behind, public opinion. It is just what its name imports: the *Times* a faithful mirror of the opinion of the day. (Or, as one of its best men said to me, “The *Times* is a mercantile speculation, that is all.”) If she

---

7 A paraphrase of Gen 49:4.

would read the *Times* she would see that public opinion in England is *not at all* what she thinks.

But, as above-said, no practical effect will follow her being undeceived, because it does not seem as if she could, or ought to, advise the fugitives either way: one cannot advise them to go back and “be massacred” *on the faith of the Turkish promises*, UN-guaranteed by the powers. It would seem as if the insurgents’ recent success (at Muratovizza) had made them yet more disinclined to accept *any* terms (of pacification). It would seem as if the Dalmatian governor had himself said that “for the present there was no hope that an Austrian occupation would pacify the country” (whatever that may mean). Of course the Bosnians, like people nearer home, have not the least idea of what governments, ever so friendly, can or cannot do. To buoy them up with what *we* can do is cruel. Or the converse is equally cruel. But if they can, by fresh successes, and everything seems to point at Turkish finances falling lower and lower, which is the real hope, achieve a greater measure of independence than by accepting *any* guarantee now (even including an Austrian armed intervention) one can only—remembering what Italy has achieved in thirty years—but then Italy had such leaders—wish, *not* bid them Godspeed.

In the meantime it is certain that Austria (whose liberality in money seems to have been beyond praise) means, e.g., by the arrest of [illeg], his followers and “a lady” on *Austrian* territory, to show herself serious in carrying out her part of the agreement with Turkey. Miss Irby’s “mission” is nothing if not a non-political one. Nor could anyone’s be, for either you must assume the frightful responsibility (*in ignorance*) of persuading the fugitives to go back, or you must be able to raise some hundreds of thousands of pounds to enable the responsibility of *carrying on* the insurrection to be assumed.

One thing is certain in the meantime, and I echo Miss Irby’s words “with all my soul and all my strength, etc.,”<sup>8</sup> viz., “No greater field of work, nor opportunity for widely reaching help, can hardly be than we find here.” (This might do to put for a heading, after that bit about schools.) N.B. One might add that the *Times* never has been, never would be, induced to put in such a letter as that of its Ragusa “correspondent” today, or its leader of yesterday, were it not sure of public opinion and that “the public” is *not* “utterly indifferent,” as Miss Irby says. The *Times* never *leads*.

---

8 A paraphrase of Mark 12:30.

Source: From two letters to William Shore and Louisa Smith, Add Mss 45795 ff67-70 and 71-72

Saturday 25 March 1876

MISS IRBY. (She says, it is sad to hear the ignorance about the fugitives returning to their homes, etc., their homes no longer existing, etc.) There is *no* “ignorance” about this in England, Austria or Turkey (among people who consider the subject at all). It is perfectly well known that *everything* must be “found” for them *till the next harvest*, if there is to be any possibility of their return. Turkey has assigned a sum of £1,800,000 for it and has, it is understood, applied to Austria and Russia to lend her the money. Austria has likewise assigned considerable sums. The prince of Montenegro co-operates, it is said, with the powers in using his influence on [the] same side. All this is not to say that the fugitives ought to be induced to return. If they can get independence who would not wish it? or at least an armed intervention to protect them in returning to their own country.

Nor is it to say even that they ought to return till they have *seen* substantial pledges of the *preparation* to furnish them with *everything* till *next harvest*. This for *Bosnia* even more than for Herzegovina. But it is to say that no “ignorance” prevails on the subject, that Turkey knows now that she must *do* and not promise and that she must look to the European powers acting seriously and not to their believing in any firman [edict of the sultan of Turkey] or promise till it is being carried out. All this may be found in the *Times* and in the *Ragusa correspondent* (who certainly does not fail in a *leaning toward* the poor insurgents). In the *Times* of today [there were] two effective letters on Herzegovina.

*Miss Irby*: Certainly she is quite right in saying that *Miss Johnston's*<sup>9</sup> letter to her little niece tells us more than ever she has done: *the children with no clothes and little food crying to go to school, so weak from starvation that they cannot walk to school, the necessary dinner for them at school (that dinner brown bread), the nakedness, the national costume* (like that of Greece F.N.), *one loose shirt of very coarse calico with a girdle of warm stuff, a red cotton cross on the sleeve and a red fez (unbleached calico given to make each this one shirt)* and then (that this may be washed) *another, the children under three dying so fast, young men taking compassion on and bringing to these ladies starved, sick, miserable orphans, without father or mother, these ladies often visiting and getting to know the families in which these destitute little waifs are placed to*

---

9 Priscilla Johnston (d. 1912), with whom Irby traveled and worked.

attend school, the post going two days *in a cart*, with an *armed man* by the driver for *protection*, before it reaches the nearest station. All this makes a very telling picture and might do for an effective *heading*.

Sunday 26 March 1876

*Miss Irby (her letter to me)*. I send you her letter just received. There appears a misunderstanding: Austria, if she is to perform her part of the compact *must* make prisoners and stop ammunition. This is not the point, because all the powers taking part in the "Note" will say she is right. The point is: *is the other part* of the compact, the *making possible* the return of the fugitives, being carried out? That is, are preparations being made, and secured by the powers, for two things: (1) for *rebuilding, resettling and maintaining the fugitives till next harvest*; (2) for putting in execution *bona fide* the provisions of the firman *as understood by the powers*? It is impossible to wish any fugitive to return till these things are really patent to their eyes *as being done, absolutely in progress* and guaranteed (if necessary by Austria's armed intervention).

It is an important fact that "Turkish Croatia" is "worse" off than before the firman, if she can give details to support it. N.B. the Ragusa correspondent has already given more than a broad hint to the same purpose. And I am very much mistaken if the *Vienna Times* correspondent has not said the same thing a day or two ago.

I am glad she has written it all to George Lefevre,<sup>10</sup> but Lord Morley<sup>11</sup> is nobody. "Mr Gladstone" will not take it up.<sup>12</sup> Lord Derby is the only person.<sup>13</sup>

Source: From two letters to William Shore and Louisa Smith, Add Mss 45795 ff78-79 and 82

29 April 1876

6 A.M.

MISS IRBY. I set to work at 6 the morning after you left *her papers* here, but (while glad that you dispense with the accounts, *which are contradictory in themselves—see blankets* and fully appreciating your correc-

10 George Shaw Lefevre, Liberal MP, cousin of Irby.

11 Albert Edmund Parker (1843-1905), 3rd earl of Morley.

12 Gladstone did, however, write a preface to a book by G. Muir MacKenzie and A.P. Irby, *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe*, 1877. Much later, in 1895, he became quite bellicose on Turkey and the region, to Nightingale's disapproval (see *Society and Politics* 5:476).

13 The 15th earl of Derby, then foreign secretary in Disraeli's government.



tions) I was even more struck than before with the (new and hitherto undiscovered) fact that a “*report*” *must be a report*, that Miss Irby’s is *none*. It needs to be *localized*, vivified and particularized. *No places* are given, *no descriptions*: it might all have passed in a *hosier’s shop in Fleet St.* for anything *she* tells us.

(I am so overpressed at this time, writing all the morning and seeing inexorable people on business till 8 at night, that I was quite unable even to look at Miss Irby’s papers yesterday.) This morning I began at 6 A.M. and wrote *the enclosed*, which, however imperfectly, will show you what I mean about her lapsus pennae [misprint]. She is certainly the Coriolanus of advertisers. *If you will correct or amend or destroy this, I will gladly correct the press.* (One never can tell how anything *will look* till one sees it *in print*.)

Could we not change the *farce* of “*Orphans’ Fund*” to *Children’s*?

19 May 1876

5 A.M.

*Miss Irby.* This is the way I should correct the last proof, but I don’t think any of the corrections very important (if you do not) *except* the insertion of the *only* precise and *complete fact* she has ever given us: *the number 45946 on the military frontier* and a *tr.* at the *bottom of page 4*. (I think *speed* now more important than anything else.) I will gladly *look at the revise again* before printing off, *for fear of misprint in number*.

Source: From a draft letter presumably for Shore and Louisa Smith, ADD MSS 45795 f96

26 May 1876

*Miss Irby’s circular.* This is all right now, except that, I suppose, the first “*general secretary’s*” *address* has to be *taken out* (secretary’s a non secretari-ando). I have done so and I understand *from Stanford’s letter the “directresses”* London *addresses* are to be *put in* again. I have done so very unwillingly. I think the sooner this is circulated now, also sent to these wretched “*secretaries*,” *the better*. Is it not absurd to put in a *secretary’s* name *without an address*? Could not the two Evans’s names be lumped together?

**Editor:** In 1879 Irby wrote Nightingale from Sarajevo suggesting that Priscilla Johnston should visit Mrs Nightingale to talk with her about the slave trade; Johnston’s grandfather had been a colleague of Mrs Nightingale’s father in the struggle for abolition (see *Life and Family* 1:208).

Source: From four letters to Louisa Smith, Add Mss 45795 ff106-07, 109-10, 111-12 and 121, the first letter with a note on the envelope: “with *lilies of the valley* for my dearest mother and two hyacinths for Mrs Grace”

15 January 1879

Miss Irby sends me the enclosed letter to read *and post*. She expresses a wish that they, the Edinburgh people, should *print* it. It will not do her much good if they do and I almost hope they won't. How like Coriolanus she is! I think I cannot but send it round by you; *please post it tonight*. How good the Edinburgh people are!

I have been so “bedevilled” by people staying in the house. May I have the honour of “Cousin *Louis* and *Barbarina*’s company to tea on *Friday or Saturday, or Monday to tea at 5* (end of holidays dangerously near) and dear *Rosy* (and Sam,<sup>14</sup> but he is not going away) on any *intermediate evening* or on *Sunday at 5* (my visitors do not leave me till tomorrow, Thursday—Thursday and Friday are my African and Indian mail days).

RSVP. With very, very many loves to all the dear children and to yourselves, twain always,

always and ever

Aunt Florence

24 January 1879

Dearest, I do *so* agree with the words of Canon Liddon<sup>15</sup> which I have copied out. Of course he cannot write to Bishop Stroßmayer<sup>16</sup> till you hear what Miss Irby wishes?

Thanks for Miss Peddie’s<sup>17</sup> letter. What I do feel so grievously is that we can do *nothing* (as Miss Peddie says, I am so glad that they did not print that letter) *till* we have *facts*, *till* we know something definite about the poor homeless repatriated, *till* we know something about her plans and means for helping them. This was the terrible want in General Lefevre’s letter. It was more a party letter than an appeal.

I am working double tides to get Indian papers ready before meeting of Parliament.

14 All children of Shore and Louisa Smith: Louis Hilary Shore Nightingale (1866-c1945), Margaret Thyra Barbara Smith, later Lady Stephen (1872-1945); Samuel Shore Nightingale (1860-1925), a doctor.

15 Henry Parry Liddon (1829-90), canon of St Paul’s Cathedral.

16 Josip Juraj Stroßmayer, bishop of Diakovo, Bosnia.

17 Clara Sibbald Peddie (c1856-94), St Thomas’ trained nurse.

Yesterday Miss Helmsdörfer<sup>18</sup> (whom we trained at St Thomas') and who nursed Princess Alice<sup>19</sup> to the last was with me—I think I never heard a more pathetic account.

Miss Irby sent me the printed paper.

27 January 1879

I am rather *relieved* at the pacific tone of Miss Irby's letter! I have heard her say much more violent things against Bishop Stroßmayer. I think, as you ask me (with you) "good may still be done by recognition and mention of her." (I do not quite believe all she says against Bishop S., but then, on the other hand, *with that opinion of him*—you and I know her well enough to know that—she *could* not behave to him in any way that would promote his help. There is always that to be considered.)

I return your letter and hers in time, I hope, for post. I am always sorry not to answer your letters by return of messenger, but at present it is almost impossible to me to read a letter not sent by post before 4 or to answer it before next morning.

Thanks, thanks, for what you say about my mother; I read that. I am sorry for Saturday's dilemma. How good you are! I hope Sam is *quite* well again. And I return the dear little letters too from Hampstead. 1001 loves.

I should not like to trouble Barbara B.<sup>20</sup> to write a letter to be sent to Mr Long now. I *have* written to him telling him that he must not expect it and *must* call at Nannin's at Algiers. All good loves and good wishes.

12 February 1879

*Miss Irby's circular.* I don't know whether you were able to make anything of my rough pencil observations on the circular. If I could have had it till today's post time, it seemed to me I could have made so much more of it. I mean the circular wanted making so much more of. As it was not out six weeks ago, as it should have been (now, when Parliament is met, and this Zulu War, the best time is over for it, I fear) it did not seem to me that the delay of a post mattered, does it? Miss Peddie should have sent it you without waiting for Mr Evan's letter, should not she? They came for it at 4 o'clock and I am afraid I did nothing worth having. God bless you.

---

18 Charlotte Helmsdörfer, a German, came to see Nightingale the previous year with a letter from Princess Alice; Nightingale arranged training for her in England.

19 Princess Alice or Princess Louis, on whom see p 842 above.

20 Presumably Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-91), daughter of Uncle Benjamin Smith, wife of an Algerian doctor.

**Editor:** Irby settled in Sarajevo after the war and ran a school. In 1892 Nightingale made arrangements for a visit of Miss Irby “for a very few nights.”<sup>21</sup> There is a letter from Irby to Nightingale in 1896, from Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> Nightingale met with her at least as late as 1899, as a letter to Edmund Verney refers to her being in England and having a book for her.<sup>23</sup>

### Louisa Shore Smith

Most of the correspondence to Shore’s wife, Louisa (d. 1922), née Louisa Eleanor Hutchins, has already appeared in *Society and Politics* (5:264-72) or in the section on A.P. Irby as it concerns her and her work in Bosnia. Below are two letters not related to that subject.

Nightingale obviously grew very fond of her favourite cousin’s spouse. The tie deepened late in life when the Shore Smiths (later the Shore Nightingales) took Nightingale’s mother into their London home. Nightingale in her will left a picture of General Gordon, “The Last Watch,” to “Louisa Eleanor Shore Nightingale” (see *Life and Family* 1:855).

Source: Letter, Hampshire Record Office 94M72/F586/1

Lea Hurst

30 October 1879

My dearest Louisa [Smith]

Your letters drop manna in the way of starving people. God bless you ever.

I will return the (charming) prescriptions tonight. Thank God that, under your tender care, she is so wonderfully recovered. Pray give her “Florence’s” loving love. (You know Euripides says there is “unloving love,”<sup>24</sup> that *you* will never know anything about). I think I see dear Shore watching her.

I am so glad you have found etchings that Sam will like. But now comes the framing of them. Please be so good as to let me pay for this: I intended it.

21 Letter to Frances Groundsell 3 October 1892, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/92/17.

22 Letter 15 March 1896, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/69.

23 Letter 23 February 1899, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/122.

24 In fact it is from Aeschylus, correctly cited in a letter to Elizabeth Herbert (see p 690 above).

I have a letter from Miss Irby—all right—arrived alone at Sarajevo.  
But one of her best girls is dead of consumption “at home.”  
ever and always yours  
F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Louisa Smith, University of London Archives

16 May 1882

Dearest Louisa, I am sorry to say a MP has made an appointment with me upon India for Thursday. Encouraged by your and Professor Seeley's genius of friendship, I am going to make a most audacious proposal. He can but refuse.

Would you propose to him, if he could see me on Friday or Saturday afternoon at 5 or at 4 or at 6, or on Sunday afternoon, premising that I hardly dare to think he can have time to spare—but if he would propose any afternoon when in London *a little beforehand* (because I have always more people appointing themselves than I can well see) and I should think it an inestimable boon to make his acquaintance.

His lectures are so unspeakably important—I see a whole new vista for the education of the civil service candidates opening out of them. And might I keep his lectures till “the end of May,” as he said? Or *ought* I send them tomorrow (17th) to 54 Fleet St. is it? God bless you.

ever yours

F.N.

We await the ham for dear Louis.

### Blanche (Smith) Clough and Daughters

**Editor:** There is some correspondence with Nightingale's cousin, Blanche Smith (1828-1904), in *Life and Family* (1:552-56). She was the eldest child of Uncle Sam and Aunt Mai Smith, and married Arthur Hugh Clough, a Nightingale favourite. Nightingale's interventions in the family to get the engagement approved (to an impecunious and somewhat risqué poet) are in the above-mentioned *Life and Family* (1:552-53).

When Nightingale was entertaining delegates to the International Statistical Congress in London in 1860, both Blanche and her husband were invited to breakfast “to meet Quetelet.” An undated letter of Blanche Clough to Nightingale after the birth of her son said that she wanted to bring “Arthur to show you. God comfort and support you.”<sup>25</sup>

---

25 Letters 17 July 1860 and undated, Balliol College lots 305 and 308.

Source: Letter, Balliol College lot 301

Embley

21 March 1844

My dearest Bee [Blanche Smith]

You will be surprised not to have heard from me before, as it is just ten weeks since I took up a sheet of paper to write to you, but most of those ten weeks have been spent either in bed with an attack in the chest, or recovering from the weakness thereof, and I have only just been able to return home from Waverley, where Parthe and I have been for two months, owing to this. Marianne [Nicholson] came home with us and is here now.

I had a very nice letter from poor Czeslava the other day, in answer to one of mine. She says she “cannot really believe that Bozena is dead; it seems to her quite impossible, and that she cannot think what she shall do without her,” but that she “is very fond indeed of Miss Humble, she was so kind to Bozena.” She says the last thing Bozena had read to her was the strength of the lonely—she was so fond of Mr Martineau’s book—the sermon was own choice and C. read it to her. I am very glad poor Czeslava was with her. She has just got another little brother. I hope we shall see a good deal of her—poor child!

Her loss is indeed a sad one, but Bozena, I believe, had done a long work in a short life. I never saw such an absence of personality. She scarcely seemed to take one moment of the day for herself but was always occupying herself for other people’s happiness. The merciful man is taken away, none considering that he is taken from the evil to come,<sup>26</sup> and there would have been much that was hard in Bozena’s life, but now she is with her mother.

I am very sorry that Mme Ferrucci<sup>27</sup> is going to leave Geneva so soon, for my sake as well as yours, my dear, as we shall be farther than ever from seeing her when she is at Pisa. Mind you give her my tenderest love and all our loves when you see her again, and thank her for her letter very much and tell her why I have not answered it yet, and kiss Rosa<sup>28</sup> for us when you see her. (Tell me too how Mme F. is, pray. I am afraid she is not well. She speaks of la Sig[nor]a Bianca with the greatest regard and says how sorry she is you are not nearer, that she might see more of you.)

26 An allusion to Isa 57:1.

27 Caterina Franceschi Ferrucci, poet, supporter of Italian independence, whom Nightingale met in Geneva in 1838; see *European Travels* (7:32-33, 94-95).

28 Daughter Rosa Ferrucci, who became a nun and died in 1857.

Aunt Joanna and Alf set out for Nice the end of this month. William Nicholson is come back just the same as he went, except in colour, not the least difference in face, and just the same *homey* boy in himself. He is a nice fellow and is working very hard at his drawing, in case he should have to go out again, but he is so excessively unwilling to return to Australia, where he gives such an account of the disagreeable life of an officer. The society is so under par—I mean in morals—many of the officers so intemperate and the cabins in the bush so bad that everybody prefers sleeping out of doors and many a morning he has got up coated in white frost. If one has books, one cannot sit in these dens to read them, and many of the men in Australia die of the intemperance, which these drawbacks bring them to. No wonder William did not like these people. He used to lead marches into the bush, when they were sometimes twenty-four hours without water, and the rush of the bullocks (they had with them in their march) when they smelt the water at last was something quite tremendous. These marches were very picturesque. He has some drawings of them which Parthe has improved upon.

He is very anxious to get leave to go to the military college at Sandhurst for two years. He would have, as it *is*, to leave England again in November. He saw a good deal of Uncle Fred, with whom he was for a month. Mrs Fred has just had another little girl. William hopes to be a captain this summer. I was thinking that he certainly would not have found another family of all the people we know (so large as ours is too) where there would have been so little alteration in four years. Grandmama gone, a baby born, except that he has found us all the same, while in the Richardsons how much differences. Among the Martins (I do not know whether you know Mrs Hanford) she is just dead, the third and last sister, of a broken blood vessel, and Mrs John Martin has lost her daughter, daughter-in-law and brother in a few months. Poor Fanny Hanford is now very lonely. The Horners, I am very sorry to say, are going to leave London, as they do not like it at all, and live, they have not settled where, near Manchester.

That reminds me that Lord Ashley<sup>29</sup> has just carried the Ten Hours Bill, as it is called, by a majority of nine, against Peel, i.e., limiting the hours of factory work, which were twelve, to ten, but the government does not mean to let drop *their* bill and on Friday the question will come on again. The horrors which have come out about the sufferings of women in factories have made Peel's own people vote against him.

---

29 Antony Ashley Cooper (1801-85), later the 7th earl of Shaftesbury, an ally on various causes.

Mackworth Shore has sailed for Port Philip—he came down to Waverley to have William’s information, who thinks, but did not tell him to, of course, that his chance is a bad one. Henry is to be called to the bar in May. The Nicholsons and we are going to town after Easter, when we hope to see your mum a good deal. We go to old quarters at the Burlington Hotel.

Laura has been staying in London for three weeks and went with Aunt Jane to a dinner given to O’Connell<sup>30</sup> at Covent Garden—such an astounding spectacle of enthusiasm and unanimity she describes. It was of course meant for poor Ireland in his person. His speech was capital—sentence is not yet passed upon him, though his trial ended, as you know, in his being brought in guilty.

Monckton Milnes has just published some poems, with one to Miss Martineau. Perhaps your mum has sent you her *Life in the Sick Room*.<sup>31</sup> I read it while I was ill and like some of it most exceedingly, though I did not find what she says true about, how, as the material strength decays, we feel more the indestructibility of the conscious part of us. On the contrary, I was obliged to ask any kind soul who came into the room to read Channing or Mr Martineau,<sup>32</sup> or something strong to me, to make *it* live on in me. But what she says is so true, that a brief instant of good swallows up long weary hours of pain, in the results and recollections which are left upon us. The evil is gone, the good is immortal and the dreams of acting [?] stoicism in our lives, which I suppose we have all had in our youth, are carried out in a different way, in our wiser days, and we come to the same conclusion as the Stoics that “pain is no evil.”

If there *is* one thing that I think I learn and feel as I grow older, it is this, the use of failures and disappointments. I believe the light of eternity will make many strange revelations, many strange things plain to us, but more than all, will show from how many follies our troubles have kept us, that we did not know of anymore than from how many deaths accident may have kept us and we shall look back with the greatest pleasure on the thorns, great and small, of our life.

You will think this a letter bordering on the black, dear Bee—this is, I think, what is meant by faith—I did not mean it to be so. My next shall be whiter and brighter. I have been reading Airy’s *Gravitation*,<sup>33</sup> which is as

30 Daniel O’Connell (1775-1847), Irish emancipation leader.

31 Harriet Martineau, *Life in the Sick Room: Essays by an Invalid*, 1844.

32 William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), American Transcendentalist minister; James Martineau (1805-1900), Unitarian minister, brother of Harriet.

33 George Biddell Airy, *Gravitation: An Elementary Explanation of the Principal Perturbations in the Solar System*, 1834.



beautiful in its way as Raphael<sup>34</sup> or a poem and it gives such a clear account of what always appeared one of the greatest difficulties in the theory of elliptic revolution, viz., how the planet ever goes round the corner, i.e., why when it has approached most nearly to the sun, it does not rush into it, but on the contrary begins then to recede from it again and so continually retraces the same orbit. I hope you have read the *Töchter des Präsidenten*.<sup>35</sup>

I know you were reading *Das Haus*. I like this better, particularly the theory of a pre-existence in it, which is as old however as Plato.

The accounts from Nice are good, though Fan is still far from strong, yet she is better. Miss Rankin is not at all well. Aunt Joanna, who is now at Combe, talks of returning to England in July, but she has no house yet. I think you will see your mum before that.

Miss Johnson is much altered by her long and harassing attendance on Mrs Hanford, whom she nursed for two months, and though she takes her death beautifully yet she evidently feels the reaction much. Yet so little did she think of herself that she just came from one sickbed. She was so kind to me and used to read to me by the hour Channing's sermons, which I like so much, the Great Purpose of Christianity, the Evil of Sin, particularly, which I dare say you know. Aunt Hannah too, as we call Miss Nicholson, who I think is one of the most perfect of human beings, was so kind to me. She is here now and she *has* still the little pen wiper, or some little formless thing you gave her, when you were I should think *a half* at Ham, desiring her to keep it.

I should like to hear what you are reading in German very much and what with Mme Ferrucci, and all about her, how she looks, whether she is in good spirits, etc., what she talks about most. There is a continuation of P. Schlesmihl [?] now, but not nearly so good as the first part. I had two long letters from Aunt Ju while I was ill, giving a long account of the schools of Schelling and Hegel.<sup>36</sup> Mrs William Marshall is in London, very unwell, I am afraid.

The queen is going to add another royal scion to the three cradles already in being. She is going to take a house at Cowes for the sake of the sea, which Prince Albert has been down to look at. Helen's little Hope flourishes and is not the least shy. She came down to Waverley

---

34 Raphael (1483-1520), Italian Renaissance painter and architect.

35 Novels by the Swedish Frederika Bremer, *The Daughters of the President and The Family*, obviously read in German; for other comments on Bremer see *European Travels* (7:640, 642, 648) and *Society and Politics* (5:729).

36 G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) and F.W.J. von Schelling (1775-1854), German idealist philosophers.

while I was ill. I mean Helen did, but I could not see her except for a moment. Parthe has been giving William drawing lessons to his great improvement. All here send you their best love, with dearest Bee, that of  
your ever true and affectionate

Flo

Mama has been terribly engaged with the scarlet fever in the parish. Poor Mrs Tanner has lost four children out of six. Jem [Watson] is dead but it is going now. Gale has been very ill. I am getting well by dint of henbane, but it makes my hand tremble and difficult to read.

We shall spend more of the summer here this year than usual, which I am very glad of, as the agricultural meeting keeps us, which takes place at Southampton at the end of July.

Source: Letter, Balliol College lot 302

Embley

18 June [1852]

My dearest [Blanche Smith]

I send you an old Turkish thing, which I picked up in Bohemia, though, if it were not for the sentiment of the thing, I had much better send you two-and-six. This, however, has the advantage of being peculiar. That, you will say, perhaps would be still more so.

I had some converse with Mr C.<sup>37</sup> on the subject of America. I ended by offering to write for more information from Dr Howe and others. He seemed agreeable, but just before he went he said, "Do not till you have heard from me. I will let you know."

I have not yet heard from him, but I only wait for that to write to Dr Howe. Information would not compromise him. And I did not quite understand whether that waiting was in order that he might make up his mind between the eastern and western states, about which we had some talk, or between Canada and the States, or at all. I don't see how he can, however, make up his mind without information.

God bless you, my dearest, on this your twenty-fourth birthday. Indeed I believe He has blessed you (more than on your last) so I shall be satisfied and look forward to doing anything which you may desire in the way of collecting information, etc. I hope that you will receive a long letter from him and from me only the affectionate love of,

your faithful old

Flo

---

<sup>37</sup> Probably A.H. Clough, who had travelled in America.

**Editor:** The following letter, to an unspecified female, “My dearest,” is most likely to Blanche Clough. It must be to a cousin, one who asked Nightingale to be godmother to a prospective infant. Likely the child was miscarried; certainly there is no record of a William Edward being born to any family members. Blanche and Arthur Hugh Clough were married in 1854 and Nightingale was close to them both. He accompanied Nightingale as far as Calais on her way to the Crimean War. She became godmother to their daughter born in 1858, Florence Anne Mary (1858-c1901), called “Flossie.” There is no surviving correspondence with her but she is mentioned in many letters. In 1879 Nightingale sent her Farrar’s illustrated *Life of Christ*, a book she herself treasured.<sup>38</sup> Letters inquire about her, pass on news of her to others. Flossie, like the second daughter, was left £2500 in Nightingale’s will, but this was revoked in a codicil when she predeceased her.

This other daughter, “Thena,” Blanche Athena Clough (1861-1960), was a student at Newnham College 1884-88, became secretary to the principal, her aunt, Anne Jemima Clough, then vice-principal and finally herself principal 1920-23. A suffragist and member of the Cambridge Women’s Suffrage Association, she spoke publicly on the vote for women and worked on employment issues for women. Nightingale left her £2500 in her will (see *Life and Family* 1:852). The one surviving letter to her was included in *Life and Family* (1:559).

Nightingale referred approvingly to Thena Clough as living “a great deal with her aunt, helping her, Miss Clough being the principal of a college for ladies at Cambridge.”<sup>39</sup>

Source: Letter probably to Blanche Clough, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

Scutari  
Barrack Hospital  
3 March 1856

My dearest

I always rejoice to hear of your happiness and in this instance I cannot refuse to give my blessing, such as it is worth, to the little treasure you are expecting—it is *because it is yours*—for it is the first of all the requests of the kind I have ever acceded to as, in general, I think it degenerates to an empty form. If your child is a boy, I should like it to

---

38 Letter to Blanche Clough 28 April 1879, Boston University 2/22.

39 Letter to Bratby 6 July 1888, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C185.

be called after my dear father, if you like those names, William Edward. I shall be so glad to hear of you and of your husband and remain, dearest,

ever yours

Florence Nightingale

Take care of yourself—have you written to Dr Weber?

Source: Incomplete, undated letter to A.H. Clough, Balliol College lot 305/13

[c1860]

Please tell Blanche her daughter dined and slept here on Friday. She was friendly but not confidential. She did not like Dr Sutherland at all, whose unexpected return on Saturday quite disgusted her.

I like her best in her little flannel shawl, when I approve of her very much. She looks like the little infant Samuel. Next best in her splendid red uniform, when she looks like the “gallant 88th.” But I don’t approve of her full dress at all.

yours ever gratefully

F.N.

### Bertha (Smith) Coltman

**Editor:** Bertha Elizabeth Smith (1836-1923), “Puff,” was the second daughter of Aunt Mai and Uncle Sam and older sister to Shore. She married William Bachelor Coltman, son of family friends, a lawyer (executor of Parthenope Verney’s estate) and a person Nightingale trusted and esteemed. In her will Nightingale left Bertha Coltman her reproduction of the Michelangelo Sistine Chapel and her chatelaine (see *Life and Family* 1:855).

The correspondence below runs from childhood to old age, including the marriage of son William Huw (also a lawyer, left £50 in Nightingale’s will). Arthur Francis, the subject of two of the letters, died in infancy. Their daughter, Mary Urith Frederica (b. 1869) was left £100 in Nightingale’s will.

In addition to the letters below there is a letter to Bertha Smith Coltman in *European Travels* (7:485). The first letter below was written probably soon after the accidental death of their cousin Henry Nicholson. One letter (to Bertha’s husband) concerns the marriage of sister Beatrice. Late letters deal with wedding gifts for the children.

Source: From a letter to Bertha Smith, Boston University 2/20/12

Cromford Bridge

Friday [ca. October-November 1850]

My dearest little Puff

I am very sorry to hear that you have had such a cold, but I hope it is all right by this time. I send you an account from poor William—very satisfactory I think on the whole, I mean as to his having done all that could be done to obtain information and certainty. Uncle Nicholson listened to it with perfect calmness but yesterday he and Aunt Anne and Marianne were to have come up to town for their first visit to Henry's rooms and they could not come—their hearts had failed them. My people are going to Waverley at their special request on Monday or Tuesday. (Tomorrow they go to Combe.) I had felt such terror at the way in which the poor father and mother might possibly take it that I can feel nothing but relief just now at their great patience. I shall go to them after I leave here—I believe we shall be here a fortnight and I cannot tell you how I enjoy it being here with Aunt Mai.

You will, please, forward the enclosed to Ardtornish unless you hear from Aunt Ju to the contrary. Shore was here as you know, till yesterday, when he left us—I thought him very nice and satisfactory—except that he caught me no small birds for my owl.

I think your mum is very well—she has quite got rid of her face ache and is very happy here and dear Aunt Evans so nice. Do you ever write to Gertrude Passow? If you are ever happening to do so, will you mention that we know of a girl of twenty-two, really an admirable person, I wish I could tell you the story of her life, who has been for six years governess in a clergyman's family, and who now wishes to go into a kindly German family as governess, for small salary, for the sake of learning German. She is an enterprising person with much character, I wish I had the quarter—and teaches well.

Dearest, I have not time for more—give my dear love to Bab when you see her and believe me,  
ever thy Flo

Source: From a letter to Bertha Smith, Boston University 2/20/3

Hampstead, N.W.

21 December 1859

For heaven's sake don't *think* of going to Embley. (Yellow fever has not unfrequently been known to break out in Jamaica from a person in England having *thought* of the colony while in the neighbourhood of typhus fever.) For thought, like infection, is imponderable—Dr Andrew

Smith.<sup>40</sup> There may be a case of smallpox arise from it at Claydon during the present century. One never can tell. Think, think what then would be your feelings if you had been the miserable means of carrying the infection now. Be advised.

yours anxiously

F.N.

If I were you, I would retire into Patagonia or to a reef in the Red Sea for a year or two. Infection sometimes dries up by that time. But take the house and your unhappy sister with you. As for Mr Clough, he is to be burnt at Smithfield by the Public Health Act. Perhaps you know this. If so, don't tell his poor wife at present.

F.N.

P.S. I feel myself that I have caught "it"—I fear from a sketch of your nephew which Hilary made for me. It is so like. It must be that. Infection is so insidious.

F.N.

P.P.S. Be perpetually setting fire to the baby. The smoke from his clothes will go far to preserve him from infection.

Source: From a letter to William Coltman, ADD Mss 45799 f114

My dear friend

[c1865]

I agree with you that Mr Godfrey [Lushington] has drawn a prize above his merits. I love you for appreciating Beatrice so well. I hope he will take care of her (health). But, in short, God and she have decided. She loves him and we could not wish it otherwise. He is certainly most heartily in love.

I hope Bertha will take a complete change in autumn. You are not a doctor and I cannot explain to you how entirely our dear poor Hilary was ripe for organic disease and how, for the same reason, for those who have not lived under the same conditions, no such prognostic is to be drawn from her sad state.

Source: From a letter to Bertha Coltman, Boston University 2/20/8

18 February 1883

This is a sad anniversary to you—and yet I cannot help giving you joy. It is so glorious and touching to think that he [her son] lived on here

---

40 Dr Andrew Smith, later Sir (1797-1872), director-general of the Army Medical Department during the Crimean War.

as a bright spirit when the body was all but gone. Few or none have had such a privilege, to “entertain an angel unawares”<sup>41</sup>—*not* “unawares” though. You have seen a soul live on by its own livingness. To be the true mother of such a soul is a great cross and a great crown.

It gives an insight into immortality. He lives—he cares. You are together still. I thought that little doctor’s letter the most impressive thing I ever saw. I do not know how to say it. But I know how a sword has pierced the poor mother’s heart—and yet—she would not change with anyone. Pardon that I try to say what no words can say.

Willie was so dear and touching that day he was so good as to come and see me. He was quite still, but his voice could hardly be heard. He told me a great deal about Arthur as out of the fullness of his heart—but all so still: he cannot be a common heart and mind.

I hope, dear Bertha, you are better; it has been such a long strain—and yet you would not have lost a day of it. And I hope dear Urith is with you. It is worth an education to her to be so. May God bless and comfort you. Love to William and Urith. I hope he is well. I think of the days when you spent your second and third birthday at Embley with Shore.

ever yours affectionately

Aunt Florence

Parthe and Sir Harry came to South St. yesterday. She is certainly better “in herself.” But we fear the real disease has yet to run its painful course. P. has always said to me: “I hope they know I *could* not write.” She has thought a great deal about her godson.

His promise was so great it seems cruel that it should have been, as *men* say, not shown to us in the fruit and the completion. But who can say that it will not have as much more glorious a completion there than it could have had here, as we believe perfection there surpasses our poor puny failures here?

Source: From a letter to Bertha Coltman, Boston University 2/20/9

18 February 1889

Your birthday always recalls to me—and not only your birthday—the darling little child, the exquisite little creature, with Shore at Embley. Alas! This is a sad birthday—the breaking up of the home. I think I feel most for Flossie, whose real life has been in fact spent there and

---

41 A paraphrase of Heb 13:2.

who has made herself so many ties there and for Blanche who has done so much there, but who must need some rest. How I should like to know what occupied dearest Aunt Mai's thoughts during her latter years on those subjects which made the future to her almost as present *as the present*. Now she knows, I believe. What is her future now? Is it possible to believe that those aspirations are not carried out?

But I fear you have had sadder birthdays, still, with that dear boy who is gone, too. God bless you, dear Bertha. I am always trying to write to Flossie and to Blanche. Would you kindly give them some message? May you all of you have still some joyful birthdays is the loving wish of,

your affectionate  
old Flo

Source: From two letters to Bertha Coltman, Boston University 2/20/10 and 111

3 July 1900

Dearest Bertha

I am delighted that Willie and Grace liked the mirror. Please send me the account or tell me what you have paid so kindly. With love

yours heartily  
Florence Nightingale

4 July 1900

Many thanks for your kind note of yesterday. I enclose cheque for the glass and many, many thanks for the trouble you took in getting it for me.

I had a nice little note from the bride. We love dear Urith: She has been *so good*. I shall be very much pleased to see you next Monday at 5 or 5:30 as kindly promised.

your ever loving  
old Flo

### **Sibella Bonham Carter**

**Editor:** Sibella (Norman) Bonham Carter (1837-1916) was married to Nightingale's much-loved cousin, Henry Bonham Carter (secretary of the Nightingale Fund Council), and mother of their eleven sons and one daughter. Nightingale's extensive business correspondence with him include occasional greetings and good wishes to her, but there are only a few direct letters. Nightingale was clearly fond of her cousin's choice of spouse from their engagement into their old age.



Sibella Bonham Carter was a religious woman, Church of England, which church Harry also attended with her (despite his Unitarian roots and apparently ongoing preference).

Nightingale in her will left Sibella a picture given her by Henry Bonham Carter and models of Highgate Infirmary and Chapel made by patients there (see *Life and Family* 1:855).

Source: From two letters to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office, F582/7 and 8

3 April 1862

I cannot tell you how happy I am to hear of your happiness. Long may you wear it and well.

To me, from whom not only every earthly comfort but every earthly support seems withdrawn, it is a great joy to hear of someone who deserves it going to be happy.

I don't know whether you care to know it, but our dear lost friend, Clough, thought very much and very highly of you and your future.

ever, dear Harry

your affectionate cousin

F.N.

22 May 1862

Let me send you my blessing on your wedding day, whenever that is to be. And let me (very unsentimentally) send you a wedding garment of paper [a cheque], to be cut into what form you like best yourself.

My love to your Sibella, if she will accept it. And thanks to her for making you so happy. If I dared, I would write to her that I think her, too, a happy woman.

ever your affectionate coz

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F582/9

24 April 1863

God bless the little man and the young mother.

ever yours

F.N.

I send you the enclosed account (paid) only that Harrison may not send it in to you again.

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, Harvard University, Countway Medical Library Archives

1 March 1889

No words of mine can tell the sympathy for such a sorrow. Sibella must find in her own grief how deep is our feeling for you and for them, the nearest to him who is gone: a man so grand and so graceful, so good and so spiritual, tried in life and in death and not found wanting, What a gap he leaves. May it be that the home be not broken up, which adds such a pang to the terrible blank left by death in our bodily life—not in our souls.

One feels so for the daughters—I hope the boy is better—and the poor wife? My best love to you and yours.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From three letters to Sibella Bonham Carter, Hampshire County Record Office F583/1-/3

27 March 1896

St George sitting on dragon, Joan<sup>42</sup> sitting on music stool. Is not five pounds cheap for this?

your affectionate

F.N.

12 April 1896

I think the Sabbath is a proper day to remind you that Miss Joan has not sent me in her bill yet for Charlie.<sup>43</sup> As to Charlie, the “temptations” to a “young man” starting on a “soldier’s life” *are* indeed very great. But do you know what is the *only* safeguard? Early training. Charlie was quite angry with me because I said that we could not expect such frequent communication from *all* boys as writing home once a year. He said, “*I* write home once a *week*. Mother taught us all when we were children to write letters, and what to say and how to say it. And I do. And she does to me.” Alas! I know boys, rather young men *now* (*not* of our family), with many kind qualities, who get into all sorts of scrapes. Why? because they have had no *home* training. The school training and the training of the playground, though good, are

42 “Joan,” the one daughter, Joanna Frances Bonham Carter (1864-1950), left £100 in Nightingale’s will (see *Life and Family* 1:853).

43 Charles Bonham Carter (1876-1955), son. See *Life and Family* (1:457) for correspondence with him.

worth little without the home training. In a long life I seem to learn this more and more every year.

With our nurses, home training is invaluable. Miss Crossland partly supplied the want of it in some cases in her (individual) training at the N[ightingale] Home. *Now we shall have none.* It is individuality that makes the difference. You can't train human beings like monkeys and dancing dogs, or *muzzled* dogs, as now, poor things. Why have all missionary efforts failed hitherto, more or less, especially in India? Because you can never obliterate the early life. You may plaster over the Hindu, but the early associations always *show through*. I remember Sir John Lawrence saying: it takes two generations to make a Christian. Had he lived to see the results of the government education, he would have said: it will take ten. *Now* they have neither Hindu nor Christian religion.

The only religious Orientals I have ever seen are the Muslims who lived for three months in Dorchester House, opposite us. But then they were Afghans, who, though they murder a little, and would have liked, I dare say, to kill us all in South Street in a night *after prayers* (I heard them practising with pistols), are delightful with their boys and their prince—unlike the Hindu babu, who is odious, as far as I have seen him. So *I* bet on Charlie and his *early training*. And I shan't lose my bet.

ever your affectionate

F.N.

*Please remember the bill.* Charlie is in a *good* barrack. There are two bad barracks and one, a cavalry barrack, which is, thank God, no more. The horses said, "If we are not moved, we shall mutiny." And man and horse were removed to the Curragh. And the barrack either has been or is being demolished.

*Military* horses are quite capable of organizing movements. Did you ever hear of Jack? Jack was a riderless horse (his master having been killed) at the Charge of Balaclava. He was seen collecting about thirty riderless horses and, at the head of his troop, leading them back to, I suppose, cavalry headquarters. I have failed to discover whether "Jack" allowed some horseless men to mount some of *his* horses—these men certainly returned on horseback—but when they found that a comrade or an officer was missing, they rode back, one and another, mounted the wounded man and fought their way out of the Russian *mêlée*, but many died in the attempt—a glorious death.

When I see in the hansom cabs in Park Lane horses who, by their beautiful legs must have been hunters or even racers, galloping up

Park Lane as long as they can stand, I say too “a glorious death.” Horses should teach *us*, not we them, duty, do you think? Now I’m talking nonsense, you will say.

26 April 1896

Very many thanks for your very kind letter. I stick by parents’ early training and Charlie. Parents must of course have wisdom, like you, and not be werriting the children, and the father be a father, as the mother a mother—like yours. There seem to be odd exceptions, but you generally find when you look that there has been some friend, perhaps only an old nurse, who has captured the child’s attention. But that’s an immoral doctrine and you are not to listen.

I don’t know whether you mean to come up for the May second concert in aid of St Thomas’. I was sending down two tickets for Joan (the great singing mistress) and a brother. But I can’t get the tickets till tomorrow, Monday, when they shall come.

Thanks so many for the bill and all the trouble you have taken so kindly. But was not there a *blotting book* (writing book) to be got for Charlie besides the despatch box? . . .

ever your affectionate

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Sibella Bonham Carter, Hampshire County Record Office F583/4

13 October 1896

I cannot thank you enough for your great kindness in thinking of me and wishing to lend me your charming house on Hayes Common. Alas for me! I fear there is no earthly chance of my being able to avail myself of your kindness. I have not been out of my own room but five or six times since before Christmas and then only to go into the drawing room. And I was told only the other day again that I must on no account go out. It sounds only too delightful. But please not to disorder any “dismantling” for me—for I am quite sure no doctor would let me come. 1000 thanks.

Love to Joan. Do you hear “every week” from Charlie? He told me he wrote AND YOU to him “every week.”

ever your affectionate

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Sibella Bonham Carter, Hampshire County Record Office F583/5

28 July 1899

*Private.* I hope you will be kind and let me send you this small sum. Harry saves me ten times that sum every year. I am glad he is going into the country, though I miss him so very much when you go. It is not “genteel” when a wife tells her husband these trifles. If you do it, I will bite you, which is very genteel. God bless you both.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

I will get this cheque cashed for you at the bank if it will save you trouble.

Source: From three letters to Sibella Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F583/6-/8

*Tuesday* 21 January 1901

Dearest Sibella, Many, many thanks for your most kind letter, but I am sorry (for myself) that I am engaged today and all the week up to today week. Could I ask for *tomorrow week*? or any day *after*, if you would kindly say what would suit you best, at 5 (five) P.M.

And also I should so like to see Gerard<sup>44</sup> one day next week, if you would kindly say what would suit him best at the same hour. With much love,  
your affectionate

Florence

23 January 1901

Dearest Sibella

I shall be so glad to see you next Tuesday at 5. Would it be convenient for Gerard to come on Thursday instead of Wednesday at 5? May I ask, is it necessary to give my maids mourning?<sup>45</sup> as I feel undecided whether to do so or not? So I thought I might ask your advice.

I should like to do something to show that one cares and this is the only thing that it seems one can do. (It would of course be only a simple black gown, not expensive.) Or a cheaper thing to do would be to give what they had not got: a black hat to anyone who had got a black gown. With much love,

your affectionate

Flo

---

44 Gerard Bonham Carter (1865-c1960), commissioner in South Africa during the Boer War.

45 Queen Victoria died 22 January 1901.

18 February 1901

Dearest, I am not very well this morning, but my chief concern is that I am not able to see you. Could you kindly come this day week?

ever your  
old Flo

Source: From a letter to Sibella Bonham Carter, Hampshire Record Office F583/9

16 October 1901

Dearest Sibella, I am sorry to trouble you, but may I ask you, do you think it necessary for my servants to be vaccinated? One does not want one's servants to be the only ones unvaccinated, if there is necessity. But if there is no necessity, why do it? With very best love,

yours  
Flo

[on envelope] EXPRESS *wait for answer.*

### Maude Verney

**Editor:** The long friendship with Maude Sarah Verney, née Hay Williams (1846-1937), sister of Edmund Verney's wife, Margaret,<sup>46</sup> began in 1870 with the engagement and marriage of Maude to the youngest Verney, Frederick. Nightingale's first letter to the bride is warm and welcoming, addressing her in Latin as "stella matutina" and "ancilla Domini" [morning star, handmaid of the Lord] praying that her ideals would be accomplished, through troubles and joy, altogether treating her seriously as a fellow Christian. She was marrying an ardent Christian also, a would-be clergyman (Frederick Verney had been ordained as deacon but in fact did not proceed to the priesthood). Nightingale's wedding present was a prosaic "fipun" note (she could not get out to shop). Maude Verney was an accomplished musician and owner of a Stradivarius.

For the next years, while Frederick Verney was serving in Sheffield and Middlesborough, and still seeking his rightful vocation, there are only greetings to Maude.<sup>47</sup> By 1873 there is correspondence regarding

---

46 There are biographical sketches of Margaret Verney and Edmund Hope Verney (1838-1910), later the 3rd baronet, in *Life and Family* 1:840-41).

47 This correspondence is largely in *Society and Politics* (5:210-22) as it deals with social reform issues. Further correspondence with Frederick Verney appears in the income security section above.

a visit.<sup>48</sup> Maude Verney was involved in her husband's work as secretary to the Siamese Legation, so that some of the correspondence regarding the visits of royal princes and princesses involves her.

By 1881 Frederick and Maude Verney and children were staying on occasion with Nightingale in South St. By this time also Nightingale was asking to see Maude, and even asking to hear a bit on her Stradivarius. Nightingale recommended a dentist for her when she had a toothache: "There is a first-rate dentist at Derby, who 'removes' with gas. (Derbyshire people come from London to go to him)" and made subsequent inquiries as to how it went.<sup>49</sup> Later she advised on an oculist (see p 920 below). There are practical letters from then on about such matters as references for a servant, comings and goings, the Verneys' sport of tricycling and buying a wedding present for another Verney.

By 1883 Maude Verney was assisting with visits of student nurses to Claydon House. That year also she was recruited to help with doctors' visits to and the selection of nurses for Nightingale's sister (Parthenope Verney was, to her sister, a terrible patient and switched doctors without cause).

That year Nightingale became godmother to Maude and Frederick's daughter Kathleen, so that letters from then on include inquiries about her health and activities. Nightingale was substantially involved in instances of serious illness of all three children, passing on reports of temperature and pulse (see p 892 below). In August 1883 Maude Verney became "dearest Maude" in correspondence, a promotion from the "dear Maude" of the 1870s. She offered to help Nightingale with such things as buying Christmas cards. The content of letters goes on to more serious matters as well, for example, workhouse nursing (see p 900 below).

By 1884 Nightingale was consulting Maude Verney about projects, beginning with getting a "private" letter printed on the candidature of Alice Stopford Green for mistress of Girton College (see p 885 below). In 1885 messages went to Maude and Margaret Verney as "electioneers" in their husbands' campaigns, "and may not Kathleen too?"<sup>50</sup> A letter to an Indian governor reported that both Verney sons

---

48 Letter of Maude Verney 25 September 1873, Add Mss 68882 ff83-84.

49 Letters to Frederick Verney 13, 14 and 15 October 1881, Add Mss 68883 ff3, 4 and 11; letter from Frederick Verney 14 October 1881, Add Mss 68883 f8.

50 Letter 6 October 1885, Add Mss 68883 f155.

had their wives campaigning with them, in the case of Edmund and Margaret Verney holding more than a hundred meetings, “often in the mud with his back to a wall—or in a wagon with his back to a tree by the light of a single lantern, wife by his side, who has made 5600 and odd intimate friends, or in a cowshed with the toilworn rugged faces, looking over the stalls by the ‘lantern dimly burning.’” But Fred Verney, who pursued the same tactics was “too late in the field and lost by a small majority in a very heavy poll.” Nightingale, a fierce Liberal, added: “The public houses were engaged on the Conservative side. And not even a Liberal *horse* could obtain a shelter.”<sup>51</sup>

The family dispute over home rule in Ireland emerges at several places. It was so great that Edmund and Margaret Verney had to rent separate lodgings near Claydon during the election in which he was seeking to succeed his father; Nightingale stayed at Claydon House to act as emissary.

The correspondence became increasingly political, Nightingale discussing issues of India and war. In 1886 Maude Verney brought Nightingale the queen’s speech and debate on it, of great interest to Nightingale because India for a change was included.<sup>52</sup> In 1887 Maude Verney was consulted about domestic arrangements for the queen’s jubilee. That year also Nightingale accepted their invitation to use their secondary residence in the country, Pine Acres, Sunningdale, Berkshire, for recuperation, and offered them her home in South St. while she was at theirs.<sup>53</sup>

In 1888 the Frederick Verneys stayed at Nightingale’s house when he was convalescing and while Nightingale was at Claydon House. Nightingale that year consulted Maude Verney about practical arrangements at the Gordon Boys’ Home (see p 916 below). She asked Maude Verney for her views on women to serve abroad.<sup>54</sup> Nightingale called for “all divine blessings” to attend “her every footstep. She blesses every house, cot or den she is in.”<sup>55</sup>

By 1893 Maude Verney had become a full colleague, reading a paper on rural health for Nightingale at a women’s conference in Leeds (in *Public Health Care* 6:607-21). By the time of the Verneys’ sil-

51 Letter to M.E. Grant Duff 15 January 1886, British Library, Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection EUR Mss F234/10.

52 Letter to Frederick Verney 10 February 1886, ADD Mss 68883 f184.

53 Letter 8 January 1888, ADD Mss 68885 f79.

54 Letter dated 8/12, ADD Mss 45791 f409.

55 Letter to Frederick Verney 23 January 1888, ADD Mss 68885 f111.



ver wedding anniversary, June 1895, Nightingale's message to the "happy pilgrims" justly celebrated their joint lives. The "thorns" and "trials" referred to in it probably refer to the conviction and imprisonment of Edmund Verney on a sex morals offence (certainly Frederick Verney's political career was set back).

It was to Maude Verney in December 1895 that Nightingale confided her experience of religious conversion, in a letter recounting the book that influenced it (see p 927 below). (Nightingale otherwise wrote and talked about her "call to service" but this is the only reference to surface about the conversion experience that preceded it; both were the subject of "jubilee reflections" on Nightingale's part (reported in *Spiritual Journey* 2:543-50).

By 1898 Maude and Frederick Verney were entrusted with Nightingale's charitable work (she sent a cheque to them in Pleasley, near Lea Hurst, asking them to make use of it there<sup>56</sup>). In Nightingale's last decade Maude Verney brought information on the outer world when she could not read (and of course, from of long, did not go out). It was Maude Verney who told Nightingale about the atrocities of the Boer War (see p 930 below). The last letters show kindness and care on Maude Verney and her family's part, much appreciation on Nightingale's. The letters get shorter and shorter; the last we have dates from 1901 and is only a couple of sentences.

Nightingale left Maude Verney her "framed Madonna di San Sisto (with a little secret between us about Gwendolen's likeness)"; this was a reproduction of Raphael's Sistine Madonna, which Nightingale had loved so much on seeing it in Dresden (*European Travels* 7:455 and 459) and which had continued to be a source of inspiration (*Life and Family* 1:855).

Only two letters to Maude Verney appear in *Life and Family* (1:711 and 713) so that the bulk of the letters to her published in the *Collected Works* appear in this volume, beginning in earnest in 1881.

Source: Letter, ADD Mss 68882 ff1-2

[printed address] 32 South Street  
Park Lane, W.  
1 May 1870

Dear ideal maiden [Miss Maude Williams]

("Stella matutina," "ancilla Domini" [morning star, handmaid of the Lord]): I come praying that your ideal may be accomplished, in

---

<sup>56</sup> Letter 5 October 1898, ADD Mss 68889 f43.

this world and another, through all difficulties, through all troubles, through all joys and hopes and fears and sorrows. I pray not that you may be delivered from these, though gladly, (if only you might go free, I would lay down my life) but only that they may bear you safe to your ideal in both worlds and to your ideal for him whose “star” you are to be.

Soyez comme l’oiseau,	[Be like a bird,
Perché pour un instant	Perched for a spell,
Sur un rameau trop frêle	On a twig too frail,
Qui sent ployer la branche	Who feels the branch sway,
Et qui chante pourtant	Yet who sings anyway
Sachant qu’il a des ailes. <sup>57</sup>	Knowing he has wings.]

May *your* ideal always be winged!

You will have pretty presents enough, darling of many hearts, but I, prosaic, sure that I can find nothing worthy to deck such a gem, and mindful too that, when you are an ancient Briton, you may not have *a stool to sit on*, humbly and like Caliban, tender a 5 “fipun note” to procure two such articles for you and Mr Fred to sit on. *Does* he know anything about furnishing? This unideal question rather engages my anxious mind.

Though that “ancient Briton,” Sheffield,<sup>58</sup> is a tough kernel to crack, yet I have many dear recollections connected with it and almost look on it as my native town. I rejoice to hear that you are going to Lea Hurst. It is of the most rustic, but, *I* think, one of the loveliest spots in England, though perhaps it is only the eye of my childhood that sees it so.

Will you thank Lady Sarah Williams for a very kind note for me and, with God bless you, believe me, dear lady fair,

ever your affectionate old “aunt”

Florence Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Emily Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9004/44

7 June 1870

Our maids are very anxious to see “Miss Maude” in wedding garments, which pleasure would be, I suppose, much enhanced by seeing her with all her bridesmaids.

<sup>57</sup> By Victor Hugo.

<sup>58</sup> Frederick and Maude Verney lived in Sheffield while he was a curate; Sheffield (Tapton, in its outskirts) was the home of Nightingale’s Shore grandparents; she had visited her grandmother there often.

I really don't think it's vanity but family love (since all our maids who have been with us any time have brothers and sisters in all our family or in yours). Could you ascertain whether, and if so where, it would be not disagreeable to Lady Sarah Williams for me to send two of my maids to see "Miss Maude" come out or going in or go up or come down tomorrow? And at what hour?

ever your affectionate old aunt

F. Nightingale

R.S.V.P.

Source: Card to Maude Verney, Florence Nightingale Museum

5 January 1881

With Aunt Florence's very best love to the dear Mama and the dear little newcomer<sup>59</sup> and her tenderest welcome into this world and anxious inquiries after its health, wealth and character and after its dearest Mama.

Source: From an incomplete letter to Maude Verney, Add Mss 68882 ff178-80

27 April 1881

*Mrs Brown.* My dear Maude (if you will allow me to call you so), I come to your kindness to ask you to give me a *searching* character of Mrs Brown. If it had not been that *you* were her last mistress, I should not have had the courage to try her: I, an incompetent, though, I hope, careful mistress.

1. You see her *antecedents* are: two places of five months before that, one of six weeks before that; before that six years with an old gentleman who is dead, *no* mistress at all. These are such very poor references.

2. Add to this, she was so excessively nervous when with me, jumping up from her seat and bursting once, à propos de bottes, out into tears, then begging my pardon for her "nervousness," that indeed I should have suspected drink? But it is such an immense thing to me to have a servant from *you*, who I know will take pains to tell me the truth, and kindly allow for my "incompetency," which makes me ask troublesome questions, that I very much incline to Mrs Brown, if *you* know her *thoroughly*.

3. She told me that she left you because it was "such very hard work" during your "confinement." This seems a queer assertion. Will she leave me in the same way?

---

59 The birth of daughter Gwendolen Verney.

4. She told me that you gave her “£25, everything found” including “beer”; “there *was* beer, but she hardly ever drank it.” (This was the *very* thing told me by a cook who was *never* quite sober.) I foolishly did not ask her who kept the “beer” with you. With me it *is* the cook.

5. She confessed to taking “perquisites,” but said she “never *asked* for them” (from the tradesmen).

6. She said she was “used to cooking for *invalids*,” but could not think of anything she cooked for them except “mutton cutlets” and “beef-tea.”

7. She said she was “a Brother” (I always give a seat to each servant wherever she is accustomed to attend, but am not fond of “Brothers” and don’t want my poor little foolish Derbyshire girl servant to become a “Brother.”)

It is so difficult to ask you questions when they are “confidential” ones, other than by telling what one’s impressions from seeing her were. Do you feel you know her enough to be sure that she is a perfectly *trustworthy* upper servant, in all the senses? I liked her dress, not much, as I have said, her manner. The cook has so much in her power, as regards the other servants. How does she *behave* to *them*? What is her *temper*? What is her principal *FAULT*? Everybody has faults. Is she punctual? She came long *before* the time appointed, a very inconvenient time.

Is she a good cook for an *invalid*, that is, in making *tender* little dishes of meat, so as to be able to cut it with a fork and not with a knife, delicate, *not* sauce-y, little dishes of fish fillets, minced quenelle and warmed-up dishes, rather common things, done exceedingly well, than “made” dishes. She could not tell me any invalid’s dish. (I told her that I had only one thing at a meal, so that if it was not good, I had nothing.)

Forgive me, dear Maude.

Source: From a letter to Frederick and Maude Verney, Add Mss 68883 ff19-20

Lea Hurst

19 October 1881

God speed you both and the chicks. Give me a postcard from Rhianva to say that you are alive and well.

You were so good as to offer to show me the Stradivarius and, if I might hear the mistress of the Stradivarius draw from it a little Mozart or Beethoven, and then “Home, Sweet Home,” that would be indeed a pleasure. You will smile, but there is perhaps nothing in the world I

should like so much to have heard as you leading “Home, Sweet Home,” etc., and the people singing.

I heard last night an ecstatic account of your performance and the entertained from Mr Haywood, the schoolmaster, by no means an ecstatic person. Thank you a thousand times for it and again 1000 times.

*To Maude.* Does Mervyn [her dog] look in that spiritual manner? Someday perhaps you will tell me exactly how you feed him, with *what* biscuits? query: sopped in milk?

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 f56

15 August 1883

Just starting for Claydon. What a Godsend you have been at Claydon. I hope you are not the worse. Would you be so very good as to tell me what you think of each respective nurse at Claydon, any hints I am to observe about them, and what hours on duty each nurse is, I mean whether day or night. I wish I could save you the trouble of writing this. God bless you.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 ff75 and 76-77

21 December 1883

Thanks very much, dear Maude. I think about twenty-five or twenty Christmas cards would satisfy my rapacious maw (IF you are getting some for yourself). I have a good many already, but they are always the same things—a trailing flower and a text—not always well chosen, especially *not* for children, who like faces and scenes.

ever yours gratefully

Aunt Florence

22 December 1883

*PRAY*, my very dear Maude, don't trouble about the Christmas cards for me unless you are getting them for yourself. I will never give another Christmas card again, if you do. You are so very busy. Mervyn says you must not.

Last night, when your kind message came, the chairman [Edmund Boulnois] of the great St Marylebone Infirmary (which we nurse) was settling with me the details of the building and the regulations for a new school for probationers which we are going to help in having there. *I did not know what* I wrote to you.

It is wonderful, it is extraordinary that after twenty years trained nursing has become almost a fashion, the difficulty of getting nurses for workhouse infirmaries whom you can *bear* about a patient, unless you train them yourselves, is almost as great as ever. With love to chicks,

ever your loving  
Aunt Florence

Source: From three letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 ff85, 97 and 101-03

16 August 1884

I trust that you slept and are not *very* tired. *You* did all the work—all our work—and made the nurses so happy. Our very best love and God's blessings on you. You have to command the Light Cavalry today and the Heavier, in the person of my distinguished goddaughter. You and they will be so missed here where every face is wreathed with smiles as they go by the carriage, Gwendolen behind twenty-two able-bodied females required to maintain order in the house (i.e., the dicky) and Ralph<sup>60</sup> in front: "Mr North, will the horses stop while I ask Granma whether we may all have whips?"

You will think of Mrs Green<sup>61</sup> and pray that the thing may come to good. It is so important. God bless you dearest Maude.

ever your loving old  
Aunt Florence

9 December 1884

I wanted to have caught you before you left South Street, not only to have the great pleasure of seeing you but to ask you what I should do about giving leave to have my poor "private" letter to Lady Stanley about Mrs Green's candidature printed. Mr Fred knows pretty well what was in it. Indeed it was concocted by him and me. I dare say you do; I cannot of course remember the letter exactly. What shall I do?

With a kiss to the childer three, and especially to my distinguished goddaughter, and kind regards to Miss Shalders.<sup>62</sup>

---

60 Children of Maude and Frederick Verney: Gwendolen (1881-1932) and Ralph Verney (1879-1959), later 1st baronet.

61 Alice Stopford Green, then an (unsuccessful) candidate for the post of mistress of Girton College.

62 S.M. Shalders (1861-1956), governess, later a nurse.

22 December 1884

Mr Fred says that you will be so good as to take some lots of Christmas presents (if I send them tonight) to Claydon on Tuesday. But pray leave them behind if you find them too heavy.

Would you be so very good as to choose, out of the picture books I send, one for my beloved Ralph. I wanted a *bird* book for him, because he used to be so fond of hearing about the little birds whispering to God before dawn at Aunt Florence's window. One for Gwendolen, one for my distinguished goddaughter and one for little Morforwyn (G. Verney)<sup>63</sup> whose name I can neither spell nor pronounce. If you wish their names written in the books, would you kindly return them with the who's who? marked, and all the other books which I shall give to less worthy but perhaps more necessitous applicants. (I am afraid the G. Verney parcel will be rather bulky, that is, to wait at Claydon till they come.)

Of course you are kindly to keep these most important secrets deep in the caverns of your breast till *Christmas morning*. Christmas cards will come too. And I will, if you give me leave, send the whole parcel tonight for your kindness to take. And that a joyful Christmas and peace and goodwill and a blessed new year and many of them may rest upon you, dear Maude, is the faithful prayer of,

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

*Pray* don't take the G. Verney parcel if too heavy. They are books the boys and Catherine suggested they should like, when I saw them at Claydon, *favoured by Mr and Mrs F. Verney*: one large parcel—the George Verneys' to wait at Claydon till they come; one parcel, Mrs F. Verney for Christmas Day; one very small parcel, Sir Harry Verney; one very small parcel, Mr Morey;<sup>64</sup> one very small parcel, Mrs Greig [total] five.

F. Nightingale

With many thanks. Please send back the heavy one if too cumbersome to take.

---

63 Morforwyn Mary Levison Verney (1880-1957), daughter of George Hope Verney (1842-96) and Harriet Julia Morforwyn Hinde; they later took the name Lloyd-Verney on inheritance from her Lloyd relative.

64 William Morey, butler to Sir Harry Verney.

Source: From a letter to Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68883 ff116-17

11 January 1885

Please thank Maude for Kathleen (the Rape of the Lock<sup>65</sup>). Her god-mother thinks her hair beautiful—Titian would have painted and poets sung it. Excuse great haste as the doctor is waiting.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

I hope little Ralph is better and Gwendolen hurraing.

Source: From a note to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 f150

16 May 1885

To mix matter and mind: do you have mutton and chickens from your Bala butcher in the *summer*? and would he supply so very small a consumption as mine? And would another customer not rather interfere with *your* supply? If you approve, would you be so very kind as to give me his *address* again? You probably have a hamper twice a week? Do you have anything besides mutton, chickens and eggs?

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 f164

24 December 1885

So many, many thanks for your two dear comforting letters from Claydon, so many thanks, and for your kind trouble about the Christmas cards, which were just right. And the happiest Christmas that the Almighty Father can give be yours, and the best New Year for you and *all* yours. Fare you very well.

your loving

Aunt Florence

Ten shillings enclosed in another cover with thanks. The new “constituents” cannot commit any excess with the one shilling over.

Source: Note, ADD Mss 68883 f165

[December 1885]

But that God is listening! more than listening, sitting as close as the man by the “refiner’s fire”<sup>66</sup> that it should not be a bit too much. The

---

65 Daughter Kathleen (1883-1966); an allusion to Alexander Pope’s poem, “The Rape of the Lock.”

66 An allusion to Mal 3:2.



country is coming through the “refiner’s fire.” We cannot keep the present generation back.<sup>67</sup> We would not wish it. Would that the dear old people of my generation here could see it so! Fare you very well, dearest Maude.

Source: From a dictated letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68883 f192

[printed address] Claydon House

Bucks

28 May 1886

Dear one, I am very unhappy about the poor babe and am so thankful that Margaret is with you. Pray do not scruple sending the two elders here if they are not ready for the great journey. The nurseries and the garden room are like another house. And I will avoid my babies as if they had the plague.

Dearest Maude, my little goddaughter lies on my heart. We pray God that she and you may come well through this, *well* it will be, we know. The doctor and nurses think her not worse by your account.

*To Margaret.* My dearest love to Margaret. I wish I could give a better account of my sister. She was very seriously overtired the day before yesterday. God bless you.

Source: From a letter to Maude and Margaret Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff1-2

Claydon

1 June 1886

How good of you to write us much about the darling little child. Your anxieties are our anxieties, your relief ours, the telegram this morning an inestimable comfort. The wind here this afternoon is S.W. and balmy, quite a change. Pray God it may be so with you.

We hope for a telegram this evening, but if Mr Fred has one, he will send it on here. He rode over this afternoon for a couple of hours, was satisfied with the looks of Ralph and Gwendolen. Their grand-mama is so very glad to have them here. She sees them through windows. They arrived all right last evening about 5, were very merry over tea, had a capital night, have been out since their dinner today, splendid afternoon, “hobby gee gee” transferred to their nursery. They are relegated to the rooms beyond the back staircase and to Miss

---

67 Home rule for Ireland was becoming an issue. Nightingale and the Verney sons supported it; Sir Harry and Parthenope Verney were virulently opposed.

Shalders's room, the one over cedar room, but do not seem to regard themselves at all as convicts.

Miss Shalders gave me a long account of all three, including dear babe, last night. She is, as you know, so very interesting. Her narrative of Gwendolen's tastes, of her suffering with others' sufferings "as much as they do," of her love for the poor people, is wonderful. Mr Fred looked, as you may suppose, rather grey with anxiety, but much cheered by this morning's telegram (God grant the improvement betters itself) and able to care a little about the amazing turn of the political tide and alas! it appears, prospect of dissolution??

Fare you very well, you pair of sisters dear to the Almighty Father. May God bless you and He *will* bless you. I always think of you two as standing on green grass plots let down out of heaven in a dusty world.

Source: From three letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff3-4, 24-25 and 32-33

Claydon

2 June 1886

We hang upon your notes and Margaret's. How kind of you to write. The darling little child seems to keep her ground and that is much. We must not be discouraged, I believe, because no steady progress is yet made, but thankful that these most distressing attacks of fever in the afternoons seem not to leave exhaustion behind.

Ralph and Gwendolen have been haymaking in the little mounds of grass mown and left for them on purpose on the lawn both morning and afternoon which were still and very warm and delightful today, their little voices sounding so cheerful. Now it has turned to rain,

5:30. O thank God, thank God, thank God for the favourable blessed telegram just received. Thank you so much. We give you joy and put our trust in God.

ever yours

Aunt Florence

I almost hope Margaret's children may not be coming for a day or two that she may be able to be more with you. I wish I could send a better report of their grandmama. Bless God.

7 June 1886

I felt quite appalled at this new trouble come upon you in Kathleen's measles. But really these young people of yours seem to know their own affairs best, or rather God our Father does. I should call Ralph's measles, indeed I shall *advertise* it as "A Simple and Natural Cure for the Whooping Cough." He never coughed all night till eight this

morning. Your circus is a delight to him. He orders his own meals with a judgment which nature might envy and is to have jelly tomorrow. He asks after grandpapa, who is out riding. Gwendolen “as fresh as a daisy” still, playing at ball very happily on the lawn by herself.

I am sorry to say it is a bad day with Parthe. We have got a fresh nurse as third from Oxford. The two were quite worn. I do trust Kathleen is developing recovery as well as measles. But it is very sad that you should be separated from Margaret. Miss Shalders will write you all details of childer dear. Sir H. is here (blue room). In haste.

8 June 1886

So thankful got this morning’s telegram about the darling little child. “From her enemies defend her, O Christ.”<sup>68</sup> Ralph had not a very good night but today is the best day he has had. Doctor not coming tomorrow, he is so well. And on Thursday, please God, he is to get up for awhile. “To verify quotations,” I am to tell you that I found him in great delight putting your circus performers mounted on their heads, on their stomachs, in their proper way, on horseback that he is going to teach Aunt Florence a game, a “very difficult game,” where you must “keep” your “head cool.” He has taken all his food well today and been asleep, no company. We are a very fortress of carbolic [disinfectant]. Thank Mr Fred for his box, but the “pure carbolic” I have absconded with—he must let me pay Cooper’s bill.

Gwendolen as well as possible, Miss Shalders gone to bed (by my orders) in another room, but *quite* well. Gwendolen sent some May by me to Ralph. She is so very tender to him. Grandpa *much* better. Poor Parthe so very bad, but I trust today will be the turn. Please tell Mr Fred I will answer his letter tomorrow, if not today, but things are going to go better. There was enough to account for it in her bodily state.

We are so grieved for your separation from Margaret except by *shouts*. It is so difficult to shout one’s love.

ever dearest Maude

your loving Aunt Florence

Not by *shouts*, but in spirit always. Gordon<sup>69</sup> wrote to us, “I come daily to see you in spirit.” So do I. I take daily messages from “mother” and “father” to Ralph.

---

68 From the litany, Book of Common Prayer.

69 General Charles George Gordon, killed at Khartoum in 1885; Nightingale’s correspondence with him is in *Society and Politics* (5:490-512).

Source: From four letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff43-46, 52-53, 54-55 and 56

Claydon

14 June 1886

I hope you will not be too much distressed to know that Gwendolen has measles. You would not be if you saw them as I do. Gwendolen's face is as fresh and as beautiful as if she were running about the lawn. And General, Major-General Ralph, is exercising on his charger, the hobby gee-gee. You understand that they are both now in the inner east nursery since this morning. Gwendolen in bed, of course, with her doll and two picture books, but without a trace of apparent illness. Dolly "has *not* got measles"!!! Aunt Florence's orders were to come back and read to them "Mother's birthday Review." Of course she obeyed her general and general's sister—"Them's my orders."<sup>70</sup>

Both send "love and kisses" to "mother." I think there is some idea of getting up a "birthday review" with seven donkeys for mother's next birthday in Onslow Gardens. You see we're not very bad. Ralph, on being told that there were hopes that baby Kathleen would not "forget her English," said, "what language will she speak? oh French," in his dear little funny voice. You would never guess they were ill. The rash on Gwendolen will be more "out" tomorrow. Dr Benson<sup>71</sup> has seen them.

We have put Miss Shalders to bed in the wainscotted room. I really hope there is nothing the matter but what she says she has often, though one is very much concerned to see her, so spirited, so sick. She is now going to sleep over brandy and—no the last was milk and soda water. We trust she will be up tomorrow, though I think we will not let her sleep with the children again. Harriet sleeps with them tonight and Kate in the outer east nursery. Miss Shalders says that you know that she has these attacks of sickness and will not be frightened.

You know we are expecting Aunt Margaret (and Uncle Edmund) tonight. The invalids will be delighted to see her. My poor sister is very bad indeed; we have telegraphed for Dr Acland. Sir Harry is depressed and looks feeble. But I know I am always told and am glad to believe that I exaggerate his state. He does suffer so very much *with* his poor wife. The third nurse from Oxford is a nice person. Sir Harry has no

---

70 From Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's School Days*.

71 Dr Philip Benson, physician at Claydon, with whom Nightingale frequently corresponded about her "caseload."

cold now; Mr Calvert,<sup>72</sup> who is here, is good company for him (though one would not quite have selected him as a “jolly good fellow”) in the absence of everybody else upstairs. God bless you all. Bank holiday has deprived me of Kathleen’s news. God grant it may be good!

ever yours lovingly

Aunt Florence

I *would* tell you if there were any cause for uneasiness, but there is not. We will telegraph tomorrow.

16 June 1886

We have measles out very fully, not room for one more: temperature 102.4, pulse 130, still no complication at all, cough rather troublesome, but kept quiet by poultices—only an ordinary attack of measles, though rather heavy. She is not at all unhappy—views with interest the removal of her bed to a more airy part of the room—has Dolly in bed with her.

With regard to the great question, Miss Shalders and I have meditated and consulted (and admitted the doctor to advise). I really think that what you would wish, could we put all the circumstances before you, would be what we here submit: Ralph, who would have been allowed to go out today were there not a northwest wind, cold—to remain at Claydon for the benefit of summer walks some little time longer, not to live in Gwendolen’s nursery but to remove today to Miss Shalders’s room (the wainscotted room)—Miss Shalders to remain here. She does not seem to think she can go home. Kate to remain here, because she is wanted to wait on Harriet and Gwendolen and the little maids here have not had measles.

Miss Shalders seems pretty well now. She will only go into the nursery on *visits* to Gwendolen, and I hope will not be overdone. She will go out every day. Dr Benson, though he says Gwendolen’s attack is heavy, does not anticipate that it will be longer than Ralph’s. The rash is well out. It is possible all may return together, or at least that Gwendolen may be convalescent before Ralph returns. Dr Benson decidedly prefers Claydon to London for Ralph at present. We are so thankful that Kathleen is “waving” a “hind quarter of beef.” That is a flag of peace and farewell to fever, I hope. What a blessing the fluid in the lung departs.

---

72 Frederic Calvert (1806-91), Harry Verney’s only brother.

17 June 1886

Nothing but good news of Gwendolen:

	Yesterday	Today
Pulse	130	104
Temperature	102.4	99.4

Rash fading, cough much better (it was not a whoop but only the cough of measles), on the road to convalescence, the high road.

It was only the bad weather prevented Ralph from going out today. He is bonny. Miss Shalders well. Would that you could say the same of Kathleen! as we can of Gwendolen. Parthe is very bad—I cannot speak to her at all of the coming-on elections so near my heart. Sir Harry is very dear and gentle but lachrymose about them.

What can I say about Mr Fred? I believe it is as much the calling of God when Captain Verney was appointed to the *Growler*(?)<sup>73</sup> do you remember Margaret was upon her knees praying in the bedroom here when news was brought her? or when Mr Fred stands for Bath.<sup>74</sup> May he prosper? as when an apostle starts on a missionary tour. The plan, the life plan, is in God's mind all the time and has been from all eternity.

When a Claydon rose delights you or me, or a violin tone speaks volumes to you, don't you think that it was in God's mind from all eternity when He made the laws that created that rose or that chord, the pleasure that it would give to you or me? It would not give me half so much if I did not think God was thinking of it. Last night at midnight a nightingale was singing his song, his prayers to God, out of pure joy and devotion, singing by himself in the moonlight. But was not God thinking of it?

Dearest Maude, I could not bear to think of the desperate anxiety and fatigue you and Margaret will have, complicated as it is by so much.

18 June 1886

And oh! I shall miss your letters. I go to 10 South St. tomorrow. Dearest Maude, God be thanked for the good telegram. May all Kathleen's

<sup>73</sup> Edmund Hope Verney commanded the *Grappler*, which sailed to Vancouver Island bringing brides to the men in the new colony (HMS *Growler* was an ocean-going rescue tug). See Peter Johnson, *Voyages of Hope: The Saga of the Bride-Ships*.

<sup>74</sup> Frederick Verney ran fourth in the election in Bath in 1886; Nightingale wrote an election appeal for him, in *Society and Politics* (5:350-51).

improvement continue! Nothing but good news from here. Gwendolen pulse 86, temperature 98.8, rash fading rapidly, cough much better—everything in a state of improvement. I am afraid this is the last letter you will have from me from here. And oh how sorry I am to leave them. God bless them.

ever yours most lovingly

F. Nightingale

Source: From four letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff68-69, 74-77, 80-82 and 97-98

22 June 1886

Thank you much for writing. I am so *very* glad that you are able to go to Mr Fred. But *pray*, I *trust*, that, as the physical work will be lighter, no driving fourteen miles after meetings in the winter nights in a cart or a tent. How thankful we are for that. So the desperate mental anxiety to exhausted bodies will be lighter. You said you would take “mental chloroform.” Please do. My fervent “Godspeed” is yours. I shall send to inquire after Kathleen. Good speed to her. Might I have your address at Bath?

Please tell Mr Fred that Mr Dadabhai Naoroji<sup>75</sup> has written to me today and yesterday about his having accepted the candidature for Holborn, wants me to “support” him, which I don’t know how to do, but suppose he wants me to write him a letter. If Mr Fred’s hand is in, perhaps he would help me with a few hints of how one should write to Mr Dadabhai, but don’t let Mr Fred trouble himself, he and you must be so busy. Further, Mr Dadabhai wants me to “attend” his “first public meeting” (Holborn Town Hall) on Thursday which of course I can easily do.

Capital news of General Ralph and Gwendolen from Claydon this morning. Goodbye. All joy and peace throughout whatever clamour.

26 June 1886

I have just received my answer from the little woman at Onslow Garden, the little woman whose “smile” is priceless, more precious than the imperial smile which made and unmade nations. She says she is much “better” and went into the next room yesterday morning with great advantage and is “much more like herself” for it.

I think it is a grand thing to teach the multitudes great political “principles” apart from the “local gossip” and animosities, which ani-

---

75 Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), president of the Indian National Congress.

mosities alas! reign in circles which think themselves higher than “local,” to speak of Lord Hartington and Chamberlain<sup>76</sup> as they ought to be spoken of and show the multitudes what they ought to think of them. And if it could but be without the agitation and fatigue to you, I should say that this in itself is a great thing to accomplish, a great victory won.

It is not so everywhere, not even among the best men. I saw someone yesterday from Edinburgh saying that Mr Goschen<sup>77</sup> had been speaking as men speak in public houses, saying what “men said” of him “in London,” and how unfair it was, etc., instead of enlightening his audience on political principles.

Please tell Mr Fred I give him joy, and though I hope, oh how I hope for success, yet surely this is success already. The press is getting an awful hold upon us. It is like the “pieuvre” [octopus] enveloping us in its fearful legs and arms and only such speakers as you describe can stop the creature.

A thousand thanks for your most kind, too interesting letter. Good news of Ralph and Gwendolen today. I am so ashamed of myself that I cannot write a proper letter.

Tell Mr Fred that Mr Dadabhai Naoroji’s meeting at Holborn was a very crowded and enthusiastic one. Mr Naoroji spoke exceedingly well, in beautiful English: “It was a wise, great speech,” this I hear from the people to whom I gave my platform tickets. I am sorry he read a letter from me [reproduced in *Society and Politics* 5:364-65].

À Dieu, à Dieu, à Dieu. God is in the train to which we are coupled if we are really going for truth and principle. This is a great crisis in our history, but the greater the crisis the more God is in it. It will be success whatever happens. The train in which God is cannot be smashed or wrecked. Great love.

28 June 1886

I was very glad to see Mr Fred, but afraid he had a slight cold, which however I hope will come to nothing. Or rather I think he is coming to great good; let what will happen. We had so much to talk about that

---

<sup>76</sup> Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), a consistent opponent of home rule for Ireland, which the “Gladstone Liberals” Frederick and Edmund Verney and Nightingale favoured. Frederick Verney was defeated by “Liberal Unionists,” or Liberals who opposed home rule.

<sup>77</sup> George Joachim Goschen (1831-1907), former president of the Poor Law Board, left the Liberal Party over home rule in Ireland.



I did not mention to him that Surgeon Major Evatt<sup>78</sup> is “standing” on the Liberal side (Unionist Home Ruler) at Woolwich. Dr Evatt is *the* reformer of the Army Medical Department—of army medical administration—a man of singular talent in the reforming administrative line and in speaking. He asked me for “a line,” of course. I know nothing of his chances (but should have liked to talk him over with Mr Fred) in unseating the present C[onservative] member Hughes (?). I am all on the administrative “go”—for India—for Army Medical, etc.

Sir Harry comes tomorrow till Thursday when he attends the Conference on Imperial Federation, on Wednesday the Gordon Boys’ home committee. You saw the letter of the prince of Wales to the duke of Buckingham, prompted by Mr Fred, in the *Daily News*. Sir Harry has about eight meetings on Wednesday. I am greatly alarmed. Sir H. is a magistrate, and I think my sister will have me taken up.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* has done worse than I hinted to Mr Fred. It has put in my letter to Dadabhai Naoroji, with a heading “Letter to the Electors of Holborn”—too bad, and side by side with its own expressions of “hatred to Chamberlain” and “detestation of Lord Salisbury.”<sup>79</sup> *Que diable allais-je faire dans cette galère* [what the devil could I do in this mess]?<sup>80</sup> Those “hatreds” are certainly not mine. I shall be imprisoned in a Claydon dungeon.

I cry Hurra! to you with all my might. Don’t you hear me afar off? I think it is a grand thing to be making speeches on *principles*. Thank you so much for your lovely views of Bath. I cry again Good Speed!

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

2. I have two pieces of good news for you: one that a home mission clergyman, without a church but only a room, is making quite a reformation among the very worst in the circle round our St Marylebone Infirmary. He has something every day, not only on Sundays; among other things he is forming a provident and temperance union, called the Sisters of the Phoenix Society, which admits the very poorest women, and which is begun to be managed by themselves with a com-

78 George Joseph Hamilton Evatt (d. 1921), supporter of women nurses; Nightingale did eventually write a letter of support for him in the election, which he lost; in *Society and Politics* (5:367).

79 The marquis of Salisbury, the illiberal Conservative leader with whom Nightingale had dealings earlier as secretary of state for India.

80 Molière, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* II.7.

mittee elected by themselves. *He* is as poor as a rat, and has of course three children every year.

The other is that our nurses at St Marylebone Infirmary are reviving the desire of a provident union among all trained nurses, for granting pensions and for sick pay—*upon the principle of never drawing out their money*—but, whether they cease to subscribe, upon marriage, or giving up the profession, or not, leaving whatever they *have* subscribed in for the common fund. You may perhaps remember that our Edinburgh nurses said the same thing.

4 July 1886

How I grieve over your fatigues; of course I cannot help a little tear at the result. But good work is never wasted. A canvass rightly and nobly carried on, though it ends with what is called defeat, really contributes more to the good cause than a dozen of so-called victories impurely won. I trust you are not much the worse. I was so grateful to you for your letters.

I had a letter from a candidate (on the right side), who is not yet beaten but expects to be on Tuesday, saying “No one has learned more than I have from the whole campaign” and “I think it (the battle) has been of an educating character to many people and questions have been discussed before great audiences which, whether I fail or succeed, will waken up thought.” That is what I feel so strongly, but, aunt-like, I wish you had had the success too—a little success too. But I won’t be done out of my conviction that the victory has been yours. The good speed has been yours.

Source: From four letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff93-94, 95, 99-100 and 103

4 July 1886

*Babykins*. I heard that you did not wish to bring the children back to little Kathleen yet, and that you wanted some air for them more bracing than Claydon and not so far as Scotland. Pray remember I am not advising—I know how happy they at Claydon are to have them and there is always a risk in sending them to a strange place.

But it occurred to me that, as our Miss Crossland had been on her holidays one year with a sick “ward sister” of ours to a farmhouse half a mile from the sea on a breezy common in Norfolk, yet undiscovered by watering-place goers, with a sandy beach near her brother’s, and both recovered health and spirits, you might like to hear about it.

I enclose the brother’s letter and Miss Crossland’s (Miss C. goes on her holiday to Ireland tomorrow morning). The brother was a mis-

sionary in Borneo and those parts for many years, lost his health, came home and has now a small living in Norfolk (see his date), Ridlington N. Walsham. He is an excellent doctor, which I only mention because the “farmhouse,” which you will see Miss Crossland recommends, is five miles from doctors. “Bacton,” which she does not recommend so much as the “farmhouse,” is a large village town and close to the sea, much nearer than the “farmhouse.”

If you would not think of this (Bacton) for a moment, I think I will write to the brother and tell him so. (You see he asks.) Otherwise there is no occasion for you to trouble yourself to take any notice. Forgive me if this bothers you. Good speed to all three darlings.

5 July 1886

Thanks for your most kind note. We grieve together over your fatigues, anxieties, disappointments—they are mine—but they are God’s, too.

9 July 1886

PRIVATE. I wish I could give you better news from Claydon, so will say nothing more than that it is kind and pacific.

Shake paws with Mervyn for me. What does he say about the election? I return Mrs Gladstone’s<sup>81</sup> letter to Mr Fred, because I am afraid of its being lost.

I send only love to Ralph and Gwendolen, because they will have their mother.

1. If you have quite made up your minds about Norfolk, would you kindly let me know that I may write to Mr Crossland, whose letter you have? But don’t let this bother you. Might I trouble you with these three small parcels for Claydon?

2. And might I trouble you to tell me of some book Miss Shalders would like? I fancy it would be German, but a generation ago closed my knowledge and repertory of German.

Give my love to the morning thrushes at Claydon.

3. Also, might I ask you to kindly find out any book that good Davidson, Parthe’s maid,<sup>82</sup> would like? *O that it could be settled that Emma, the excellent little nurse (housemaid), might be the third attendant on my sister! Three* are quite essential or she will lose Davidson and also every nurse (one after the other), broken down, just as she wants them most. Please *destroy*.

---

81 Catherine Glynne Gladstone (1812-1900), wife of W.E. Gladstone.

82 Mrs Davidson later became a nurse.

17 July 1886

Thank you so much for your letter. I was so grateful to you for telling me the whole scene and so anxious about Margaret. When you hear of them from abroad, I am sure that you will kindly let me know. I cannot yet think of it without tears, but they are tears of joy and admiration as much as of grief and astonished disappointment.

We should wave our banners and strew our flowers not for the winner: he *has* (so-called) success, but for those who have the something higher than success. There is an old Italian hymn, which I dare say you know, not about a saint, but about one persecuted unjustly: “*Martirio in terra appella si, Gloria si appella in cielo*” [Called *martyrdom* on earth, in heaven called *glory*], that which is sometimes called “defeat” or “failure” here we shall come to call the only real glorious success.

The crowning victory of all in man’s history was apparently the deepest defeat and destruction of all hope the world has ever seen and *He* had palms strewed in His way to it. I keep all these things in my heart.

I send you a charming letter of good excellent sensible Mrs Robertson, which please return to me. I should like to send it to Sir Harry, but dare not, on her account. Sir Harry and my sister are, I am sure, genuinely grieved, Sir H. dreadfully so.

How sorry I am Ralph and Gwendolen still look so delicate. And how are you? and Kathleen still progressing?

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68884 ff148-53 and 160-62

29 October 1886

How more than charming your princess is. She is a *divine* woman: *God dwelling in* her, whether she calls it by that name or not. It is a lesson and a sermon to be with her even for an hour or two. Luckily for me, I was so be-coughed that I could not talk much and *she* talked, O so beautifully—the gentle reformer of Siam. She told me that you had taken her to a club—I suppose Miss Maude Stanley’s,<sup>83</sup> and “little books,” what she calls the “arrangements” for this, and for a lunatic asylum (the lunatic asylum book told “how they were to be fed,” etc., she said) and for a board school, she means to translate for the benefit of Siam.

She asked me for similar “little books” for a hospital, a high-class school (female) and we talked about coffee houses, because, she says,

---

83 Hon Maude Althea Stanley (1833-1915); her book, *Work about the Five Dials*, 1878, describes work with the people of a poor London district.

the drink and the opium smoking in Siam is so frightful and makes them so “lazy.” Have you seen her little books? and could you give me an idea what they are?

1. *What* is the “board school” book? (I think she said *you* took her there.) What she wants of me is, I imagine, a book of the regulations, course of study and “arrangements” of a high school for girls (*is* this, do you think, what she wants?) *Is* this, do *you think*, the needful thing? (or as she says a school for high-class girls). I suppose that in England, where all is done by private means or societies, there is no similarity between these. But I will do my best to get her something from Miss Buss.<sup>84</sup> Unless you can kindly explain to me *what* she wants better. Is it to comprise cooking and needlework? (It is so touching her learning to cut out, etc., in order to teach. O what Christian so good as she?)

2. There is the same difficulty about hospitals. These being all the result of private effort, there is no manual common to all. (Were they *manuals* what she has?) And I don’t think our *army* hospital regulations at all good, nor those of St Thomas’ for that matter. Perhaps the *workhouse* (Poor Law) infirmaries come nearer to what she wants. I will write to our St Marylebone and elsewhere and to our St Thomas’ treasurer for what she wants.

3. *Coffee houses*: the best introduction to them is the series of books of Lady Hope of Carriden,<sup>85</sup> but these are so strongly impregnated with Bible teaching that—would they do for Siam?

*Opium Smoking*: you know that two or three years ago six vigorous young graduates of Cambridge went to China—o why did they not go to India? as a sort of lay missionaries. And only last Sunday week an Australian lady, now returned to Melbourne, told me of an *opium refuge* two of them had set up. Your princess seemed to think the drinking and opium smoking quite hopeless.

Our graduates don’t think so, but perhaps it is not the business of the gentle princess. I could easily get information about the opium refuge in China (I have got down the name) if you thought well. Please don’t trouble yourself about these things. Only I know that, if you could help me with hints of what she wants, to get her what she wants—most lovely being—you kindly will.

---

84 Frances Mary Buss (1827-94), pioneer of education for girls; at least one other Verney girl attended her North London Collegiate School.

85 Elizabeth R. Cotton (Lady Hope), *Our Coffee Room* and *More About Our Coffee Room*. See *Society and Politics* (5:205-09) for Nightingale’s work on coffee rooms as an alternative to alcohol.

Perhaps it would give you least trouble to return me this letter with your kind reply. O pray excuse this rigmarole written under interruption.

ever, dearest Maude  
with love to childer three  
your loving Aunt Florence

I had a touching letter to Parthe from Margaret last night, not much better. Do you suppose that Lettice is never moved at all? that the bed is made with her in it? that everything is done for her in bed? Or is she ever lifted off to an adjoining bed while her own is refreshed?

Brave, brave Margaret, what a terrible illness it is. Have you ever heard what they call it? (Is there any danger of bedsores?)

4 November 1886

The enclosed papers of the Wesleyan Girls' College at Milton Mount, near Gravesend, seem to me to denote a girls' college so much more like your princess's requirements, and to be so much fuller in detail than any I have seen, that I send them for her. If she cannot see the college, they may be useful to her. If she is going to see it, they may direct her attention as to what to look at. (*Page 17* in the *report*, which I have turned down, gives some idea of its objects, more at least than most reports do.)

Four papers I send with it and a card (the four "Milton" papers embrace, besides the college, day school for girls and kindergarten, technical college for women, high school for girls and kindergarten). (I have been unsuccessful in getting anything from hospitals worth her having.) I will write again about hospitals, but they have nothing. I am writing to Calcutta for a report about their hospital, and to Pune for one about their high school.

I trust you are better. I am so sorry that I have not seen Captain Verney before he went. I suppose he is *gone* (to Leipzig). I wrote to him the day before yesterday, begging, if I might, to see him, and sent him a note by hand this morning. But I suppose he went last night? They did not seem to know whether he was gone abroad. All good be with you.

ever yours  
F. Nightingale

If your dear princess has been to Gravesend, and got papers of her own, might I have these papers back?

F.N.

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff1-4 and 7

4 January 1887

Thank you for your gracious letter. Indeed, indeed, I do so grieve for you and Mervyn [her dog], but you had given him such a happy life. It is a great thing to look back and feel that he had never been unhappy. I sometimes think that the loss of a faithful animal is felt almost more than those of human beings, except the very greatest, because we are not sure of their living again. But I can never believe, can you? that those animals who are so much better than we are, their faithful love, their forgiveness, their self-sacrifice, in devotion to duty, will not live again.<sup>86</sup> “And thinks, admitted to an equal sky, his faithful dog will bear him company.”<sup>87</sup>

When I see the hansom cab horses, the fineness of whose legs shows them to have been hunters or riding horses, running to the last their very best, in what must be to them humiliation, for duty’s sake, I think how much more fit for heaven they must be than the masters who sold them. A faithful friend like Mervyn!! he is without price. The dog or the cat which will die rather than leave the deathbed or the grave of a human friend, “Greater love hath no man than this”<sup>88</sup>—their patience in suffering. My dear Bismarck [Nightingale’s cat] who nursed his mother when she was ill, though she did nothing but snarl at him, which nursing I never saw any other do—whom I gave away to a sick lady seven and a half years ago—he is just dead after much suffering. She wrote to me that he preserved his courteous, kindly manners to the last, and was “so much more patient than” she. I had a cat friend who lived with me seventeen years, the most faithful—I cannot speak of her even now—I had to have her laid to rest—but I found out afterwards that she had not been kindly treated while I was away and she might have lived for years. But your Mervyn was always happy, always kindly treated. No cat can fill her place to me, no Mervyn to you.

I am very glad you stay at Rhianva till you go to Claydon. What a comfort to Margaret to have you there, filling her place, if only for a time. Does Ellin make at all something of a mama-kin to the children? What is Captain Verney doing? Pray give him my love, if I may. Can you tempt him out, as you say? God bless you.

---

86 For Nightingale’s love of and views on birds and other animals see *Society and Politics* (5:809-24); on pets see “Cat Care” in *Life and Family* (1:755-66).

87 Alexander Pope, “Essay on Man” Epistle 1, stanza 3.

88 John 15:13.

14 January 1887

*Private.* I do feel that you must not “force” yourself about dear Mervyn. It is true that, in real losses, every year only makes one feel the loss the more. But then one learns to think of those who are gone as happy now, as perhaps waiting for one. The pang is not so rending; one even thinks of them as rejoicing in doing one some good. They are not under the soil, extinct forever. Do Ralph and Gwendolen try to make up in some measure for Mervyn?

Source: From two letters to Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff24-25 and 32-34

16 June 1887

I did not know till I saw dear Maude that your next winter and her next winter were decided—you in Siam, she and the bairnies at Nairn [northern Scotland]. How brave she is, how calm. It is a noble crusade you are going on, so full of usefulness. May all good attend you. I can scarcely conceive a more important mission with all its side issues. That your prince is a good one I am most thankful. It makes all the difference.

2. I give you joy with all my heart that the Jubilee Fund undertakes you. *Now* the Jubilee Fund is something worth having. One of the three which it patronizes I could not quite read. There is “Widows’ Pensions” and “FREE” (this is the word I could not make out) “Nurses.” I do think, with Lady Frederick Cavendish,<sup>89</sup> that if this Women’s Provident Union, etc., and House of Call, etc., can be carried out, it will make a difference in working women’s existence. They are now slaves to the competition for employment. But it will miss you in Japan and Siam. Do you know that you have *a third* of the Jubilee Fund?

3. And now a weighty question. What would Maude, if she were I, allow her *maids* to do on Tuesday, as to seeing the procession, or more particularly the *illuminations*?<sup>90</sup> (I have no man servant, and the messenger I have had for eleven years, and who ought to be trustable, is fond of the drink.) I expect that the cook-housekeeper, the one Mrs Grey recommended, and who is of little or no use as an upper servant, will ask to go out to see the illuminations, and take a maid with her. (The three are all young girls) and stay out, as she boasts, till 2 A.M. The very idea of it sends a cold perspiration down my back. *Ought I to permit it?* If there is an accident, it will be my fault. I can’t control her, but I must govern

---

89 Née Lucy Lyttelton, wife of Lord Frederick Cavendish.

90 To celebrate the golden anniversary of Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne.



the maids. Yet I should like them to see something of the great day.  
*What would you, in my circumstances, permit?* God bless you all.  
ever yours affectionately  
Aunt Florence

Claydon  
20 July 1887

Success to your goings out and your comings in.<sup>91</sup> Your going on this great expedition is a thing which is eminently right to do. So it must be successful in the highest sense. God bless you both all the day and all the night. And, as somebody says, “Then you *must* be safe all the time.” As for Maude going to Nairn, I think it is heroic—rejecting the lesser consolations. She is not obliged to stay if she does not find it agree with the childer quite so much as may be hoped. She is not going to build a Balmoral on the dunes of sand, nor take a house on lease. *That* too will be successful. This is in answer to your kind of apology for the Nairn expedition.

Source: From five letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff35-36, 37, 38-40, 43-46 and 49-52

Claydon  
20 July 1887

Will you kindly use the enclosed to get Mr Fred something useful for the great expedition. It was very stupid of me not to send it before. Or, if too late, perhaps he would get himself something odd and appropriate in Siam or Japan. Pray do not take the trouble to answer this till we meet. We think of you hourly. I wish even poor I were in London next Sunday for you to see somebody besides packages. Kind Sir Harry says perpetually about your stay here, “We only want Maude to do what she likes best for herself.” And in his morning talks with me it is always about Mr Fred.

I have heard from Margaret—good accounts—she and Ruth and Harry wading without shoes and stockings in bogs after flowers. That sounds delicious. Sir Harry says: “How I should like to be going [on] Fred’s expedition, just what I should like, a sacrifice and a risk—and so much important to do—so much hanging upon it.” God bless you again and again.

ever with great love yours  
Aunt Florence

---

91 An allusion to Ezek 43:11.

27 July 1887

No, dearest Maude, the children's sweet lovely voices "indoors" and "out-of-doors" are delightful to me—to me who never hear any but the poor little bodies crying in Hyde Park on a Sunday. Please let me enjoy them as I hope to tell you soon and hope soon to hear what Mr Fred tells you. I am so glad you have a cheery letter. Today he is two thirds on his way. Does he write—his post town, Queenstown?

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Claydon

20 August 1887

How can I thank you enough, dearest Maude, for your letter some days since? God bless you and the children and Mr Fred. With you two I can feel more than I can say, because I have known what it is to have the war minister and the India Office minister removed every four months—to have the war minister taken away just as he is carrying measures you have been hatching for years as, e.g., W.H. Smith<sup>92</sup> was taken away from doing what nobody else could do at the War Office to do what *nobody* can do as leader in this (wild beast sort of a) House of Commons. But take courage. Or rather you have more courage than anyone.

That Mr Fred is not going on to Siam with this excellent Prince D.,<sup>93</sup> with whom he has already done much good, is grievous indeed. But then it is impossible that this minister, who is like a man without ears or tongue, could carry on the most important business in England *at all* without Mr Fred, that is obvious. How could they send such a man? (How could they put Lord Lytton<sup>94</sup> in India?) I do trust Mr Fred will yet go to Siam and make the king's acquaintance while Prince D. is prime minister, with whom he has begun so well. What is it that Gamaliel says: If it is of God, no one can overthrow it. If it is of "man, it will come to naught."<sup>95</sup>

---

92 W.H. Smith (1825-91), a Conservative politician but a competent and conscientious one Nightingale respected.

93 Prince Damrong Rajanupab, minister of education. Frederick Verney was English secretary of the Siamese Legation in London.

94 Lord Lytton (1831-91), viceroy of India 1876-80 during a famine that caused millions of deaths.

95 Rabbi Gamaliel, teacher of St Paul.

Mr Fred's letter is courageous and gallant and true. Thank you for it 1000 times. (Am I to understand that I must not communicate it here or anywhere?) As for Nairn I suppose that it is of the first importance that he, Ralph, dear laddie, should be set up in health and ozone now and Gwendolen too. But one must sympathize, alas! with you being rent in twain. You throw your "body" in the "breach" so gallantly. I am glad you are with Margaret now during this time of strain. On Wednesday next you will be starting. God speed you! Aunt Florence's love to all.

I have written to London to send you a July *Fortnightly*. You do not mind? I have written all over Seeley's article<sup>96</sup> in the copy you left here. Fare you very, very well.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence—che pensa a voi [who thinks of you].

Claydon

2 September 1887

6 A.M.

I come as welcome, I know, as your telegram and your account of the nice little house with sea and shells and common (and no Parade!) at Nairn was to us. For I bring in my hand a letter from Mr Fred. Ah me how strange is the trial, he all strung and ready to go to Siam and achieve good there (and you), and yet the necessity of his return for Siam's good. Well, we shall see even here that it is for the best, but it is grievous—"cast down but"<sup>97</sup> still upright and lively.

Sir Harry is at Manchester—Mr Calvert gone—my sister and I alone here. I return to London on Tuesday, where St Thomas' and India call.

I have thought it best not to mention Mr Fred's letter. Please return it to me. I was so grateful—we were so grateful—for your delightful scraps on the journey and for your safe and happy arrival. Is Elm Bank

---

96 John Robert Seeley; Nightingale was greatly impressed with his *Expansion of England*, 1883, for its "invaluable doctrine"; she wanted him to know that "she studies it every day and has given away many copies to *deserving* folk" (note 16 November 1883, University of London Archives).

97 An allusion to 2 Cor 4:9. The trip was called off when the king asked another prince to undertake a study of European forms of government for the modernization of Siam. Prince Damrong became minister of the interior, later of public instruction, and was highly involved in the political and social reforms brought in. Frederick Verney in fact made an extensive trip to Siam in 1892.

Cottage the place you took while you were here? God bless the dear children and their dear mother.

I sent two books on the seashore for them to the Post Office, not alas! the books I meant—not books for children at all—but the best I could get with coloured plates.<sup>98</sup> Coloured plates is the necessity. I remember when I was a child how I used to toil over the uncoloured woodcuts (without proportion) in a conchology book and never identify a single shell. Catalogues are aggravating. I ordered the books I wanted at different reprises for the children—answer always “out of print.” At last I found a Routledge catalogue of *last year*—answer “out of print.” I want particularly a book on seaweeds which, through Margaret’s kindness, I hope to get in London. But it is not for children—and to send that, and one on British butterflies—but there is no science *for children*, except in Margaret’s head.

We have a tremendous storm here. How thankful that you had it not at sea. I trust that you are able to do the music—music without instrument—that is so wonderful—and that the sea breezes are blowing ozone into darling Ralph and Gwendolen and Kathleen and that the lessons do not worry you. I am sure they must be good for *them*. I cannot say what I fain would say, dearest Maude, how much I am,

ever your and their loving

Aunt Florence

The early post is leaving.

18 September 1887

Thank you so much, so very much, for your letters and Mr Fred’s. Indeed it is coming very near, 24 September. I hope the equinoctials, begun so early this year and so unreasonable and violent that they have spent all their fury and have not a breath left apiece. We have actually had here a fog, that most provoking of all things, a fog with a high barometer. But it presages well for the sea. The air was perfectly still.

I delight in you and Ralph taking your bath on the pier. Still I may hope that a more “fashionable” way of bathing and promenading may succeed now. Aunt Florence’s best love to the three little robust, growing dear ozone-seekers—and to their best beloved mother Godspeed. Thanks too for the nest in the tree—the cedar at Claydon—the most delightful, I think, of the photographs—of the mother and the

---

98 For Nightingale’s efforts with Margaret Verney to get better books for children on biology, see *Society and Politics* (5:660-62).

three. Thank you so very much for Mr Fred's letter which I return. (Margaret was so good as to send me one on the "Rockies" which I sent on to Colonel? George Verney, as bidden. I think I have missed the one before that.)

I do not like to delay returning you *this* letter any longer. But I should so very much have liked, with your leave, to have printed a leaflet from it for private use as to emigrants (as I have printed a leaflet from a letter of Margaret's for private use, with her leave, as to botany which I enclose). . . .

I have been breathlessly busy since I came back to London, as I am sure you, dear soul, know, for I have not sent dear Ralph his algae yet, but they are coming. Only I hope all the real algae are not lodged on your roofs and on your gardens by the storms. For one thing, I have had to do some Indian business before *our* "ministers" separated for holidays. All were off yesterday and much hangs fire and much is done all awry, and such a deal of letter writing as "requested." For another, our new matron, dear Miss Pringle, as you kindly remember, has arrived at St Thomas'—an anxious job. Dearest Maude, fare you very well—I keep wondering what your plans will be. In the meantime, good speed to ozone and to music. I am so glad the lessons are all right. God forever bless you.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney and one to Frederick and Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff59-60 and 63

9 October 1887

I have seen Mr Fred and he looks even better than he did when he started: well and full of vigour. I think the seeing you again and the childer makes up to him for all the disagreeables. He does not even regret the letting of Onslow Gardens.

He was so pleased to hear what I was able to tell him from your letters, so kind, about Ralph's improvement particularly. I trust that all these worrying alterations in your plans will not tell upon either you or him too severely. His eagerness to be again with you overcomes all else with him.

My love to babies three. I am obliged to write shortly, though my thoughts are never short with you. I will tell you another time why. God bless you, dearest Maude. I hope Nairn has really done a good deal for the children.

18 October 1887

So you are together at last! I give you joy, joy, joy. And old Aunt Florence gives herself joy and trusts to this compensation for what was indeed a strange trial. God bless you.

ever your loving old

Aunt Florence

How are the bairnies three?

**Editor:** The next letters, all written from Claydon House, deal with Fred Verney's serious illness. He and Maude Verney stayed at Nightingale's house in South St. while she was at Claydon House, having spent several weeks December 1887 at the Verneys' country house, Pine Acre, Sunningdale.

Source: From eight letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff87-88, 94-95, 96-97, 102-03, 120-21, 134-35, 140-41 and 153-56

Claydon

10 January 1888

Thank you so much for your letter and telegram. It is the greatest possible relief. He will get well twice as quick for your being there, but I fear it will be some little time yet. Blow the "minister"! He must wait.

Please order whatever is right for Mr Fred from Mrs Neild, who will be delighted to make little dishes. She tells me she is making jelly. I hope you are sleeping and breakfasting and supping at South Street. I was very much flabbergasted by temperature 104 and am thankful that temperature is resuming its duty. It does my old heart good to hear my sister talk of you and Margaret and your little three as she does. Now my sister has sent for me and I must go.

Sir H. is very anxious about Mr Fred. Please let me pay that poor little sum for poor Miss Morant. I fear her prospect is not very good. O what a tragic thing this life is—and how comic. But I must finish my lucubrations tomorrow.

ever your loving

Aunt F.

16 January 1888

That was a nice little visit to Pine Acre, though well I know how tantalizing to the dear children and to you. How rejoicing are Mr Stubbs's prospects with his great Italian basilica (S Paolo fuor le mura at Rome)

at Liverpool.<sup>99</sup> He has written a most affectionate and inspiring letter to my sister, which, like Gwendolen's beauty, "ne nuit rien à l'affaire" [does not hurt the matter]. Her (Parthe's) cough is, alas! no better. A nurse has come from London, a nice woman, for Davidson was quite worn out.

The trio are gone; Dean (and Mrs) Fremantle, Mr Calvert and Mr Battersby.<sup>100</sup> Sir Harry is quite relieved, because the "imprimatur" of the great man is put on Mr Battersby, his sermon and all. Sir Harry applauds (he too has a bad cold which he treats by an open phaeton) Captain Verney's choice.

Mrs Neild is only too glad to be your (query?) "victim"; I feel like the stoker of a fire engine: "Keep your fires alight, keep your steam up." Please, you must just let me have my own way and let the things come from the Farmers' Association. (I have a small deposit account there.) We found the larder stocked for gluttons and we embezzled it all into our own stomachs, like gluttons. It was I put off the order's execution by telegram, when I found you had outwitted me (as I outwitted the black dog, in feeding the birds). Now it only awaits your order. I earnestly hope that you will be able to move Mr Fred tomorrow (Tuesday). But I know you both are wise as serpents and will do nothing rashly, and query? harmless as doves?<sup>101</sup>

Is the "minister" gone to Holland? Sir Harry asks me daily; I can scarcely prevent him making a descent on him at the Legation. God speed you. (I feel all pulse and am as blind as a beetle.) Remember me to Nurse Murray.

your loving old  
Aunt Florence

18 January 1888

Joy, joy and thanksgiving: how thankful I am that the move is made and successfully. May God give a good night. For so He giveth His

---

99 Charles Williams Stubbs (1845-1912), previously a vicar near Claydon, then dean of Ely and later bishop of Truro; he conducted Harry Verney's funeral service. It is not clear what building Nightingale had in mind; the magnificent Liverpool Anglican Cathedral is Gothic and later (1895), the largest basilica in the United Kingdom.

100 William Robert Fremantle, vicar at East Claydon before becoming dean of Ripon; Mrs Fremantle, née Emily Caroline Calvert, sister of Harry Verney; George Harford Battersby (1860-1921), vicar at Middle Claydon 1887-97.

101 An allusion to Matt 10:16.

beloved sleep.<sup>102</sup> How canny it was of you to move him so. And now I do hope you yourself may take more rest. Dear Maude—it is quite out of the question for you to make the dressing room your bedroom and sitting room. The room and the bed are alike impostors. The room looks cosy and is not. It is either hot or cold. The ventilator, if open, gives a draught right on the bed, if shut, it is close. The bed looks comfortable and is not. The street is often *very noisy*. You would have no proper rest. It would make me miserable to think of you there. Besides, it is important to the green room to have a fire always in the room under it. You could not write in the dressing room. Please, you must sleep in the bedroom, write your letters there (you may dress in the dressing room, if you like, as Kathleen would say).

Please, you must receive your visitors and otherwise disport yourself in the drawing room. Please have the large sofa there taken up into Mr Fred's room. Please, you must feed in the dining room. And mind, dear Maude, you do feed. Now you would do me a great service if it does not bore you, to go down into the kitchen and larder every day to order your foods. (*I can never be there*). Mrs Neild would take it from *your* kindness very kindly. And you would say a good word to "Nelly bagh,"<sup>103</sup> who was most anxious to serve her liege lady, poor child. Now Godspeed and thank God. If you are in the dressing room you might just as well be at a hotel. But I know you won't grieve me, *please*. I sing a Te Deum in my heart. Ever believe me,

your loving  
rejoicing and grateful  
Aunt Florence

20 January 1888

Your good news is as welcome as flowers in May. I had taken it into my stupid head that he would have a bad night after his move. And as light to idiotic people, so are your letters to me.

Some little plants, I hope, came creeping to your door this morning and humbly asked to be let into his room, if suitable. There is a basket table in your bedroom for their use. The sun glinted at us this morning for the first time since 10 January. I hope you have him. And *that* brings me to this: it is contrary to my principles—and you would not pull down my principles—I haven't many—that you should sleep

102 Ps 127:2.

103 Ellen Owen, "Nelly," cook, former employee of Margaret Verney (see p 995 below). "Bagh" is a Welsh diminutive for "small" or "child."



in a north room after all. (God only knows how many your anxieties for the last six months and more.) Your bedroom, which is to the south, will be cleared, ought to have been cleared last Monday. The fire must be kept in because of the room overhead, to keep it warm. You must be in your bedroom *some* times. And then you will see whether you like to sleep in it.

My kind regards to Nurse Murray, who is a great friend of mine. I need not say to her that I hope she will be comfortable because you will make her comfortable in your own house, blessed house to have *you*! Thank God.

ever your loving  
Aunt Florence

24 January 1888

Fair lady, you drop manna in the way of starving people. Your letters, dearest Maude, are real gospels [good news] to me. I do thank and bless God that He has blessed your good nursing so remarkably. I thank Him all the day long. The chart is the loveliest sight that nurses' eyes can see. It is worth a National Gallery. I will return.

I know how tantalizing it must be to see the dear chicks *so*. But, please God, Gwendolen will be clinging round her father's leg and looking up in his face with unspeakable love before many weeks are over. It is such a thing for children to have a tender, joyful father. In afterlife they who have had it *not* can hardly believe in the heavenly Father's love and tenderness. And as for the mother what shall we say? You will make little Nelly dance with joy by talking Welsh to her.

About the bed: the position I thought best was with the head to the wardrobe, feet toward the fire. This gives the window light on the right side, and not in the eyes, screen between bed and door. But patient must choose. I am so thankful that he likes the room. Yes, the weather has been really like May—hot. But poor sister has made cough and pain worse with resuming carriage. And the house is *so* close with *hot air*. Even in these May days they ventilate? the rooms when she [is] not in them with *this*. Sir Harry rides today and yesterday again, almost rid of cough. Still I fancy he looks older.

Does Dr Townsend think that any defect of drainage or the like in any of the places he, Mr Fred, has been in has given the typhoid tinge to this illness? I don't insist on lighting the fire in rooms underneath when the green room is "*too* hot." But who could have expected this celestial weather in January?

27 January 1888

A “Te Deum” for the first day out. I was only sorry he did not rest in the drawing room (which they call the “merry” room) till he went to bed. Now that he is able to leave his room, you will, of course, use the drawing/merry room for him, please. Don’t waste the room. It is made for him. I shall hate it if you don’t use it. I have written to Mrs Neild.

With unparalleled impudence, I wish you could keep Nurse Murray a few days more. It will save you anxiety. Nelly is in ecstasies at your talking Welsh to her. I return the chart (with my compliments to Dr Townsend). The last lines are so beautiful in their outline, so easy in their flow—Michelangelo never produced better. The first are produced by his “spirits of hell.” I can’t say my sister is any better. God bless you all.

Aunt Florence

I with the utmost astuteness put off a letter half written to Prince Narès by Sir H. till next mail. Give me my orders.

29 January 1888

I earnestly hope that you will use the drawing room. You do not know how important in that illness, especially in convalescence,<sup>104</sup> is light and sun and air *all* day. The walks are good, but they give light and air for half an hour. The patient wants it for all day. Air and light and food are three of the first elements of nursing. The drawing room is healthier, lighter, sunnier, airier *far* than the dining room. Indeed I think he had better be in his bedroom than in the dining room. He should always be in *sun-purified* air. The proximity of the front door is also bad. Let him come in from out of doors and sit in the dining room, and have his luncheon there if you like it, and rest, then go upstairs to the drawing room and have the rest of his meals there. (There are little tables enough.) It will make all the difference, it will indeed, in his convalescence. The dining room is not a healthy room. (It is odd indeed if, with a messenger and a charwoman in the house, they cannot carry up these little meals to the drawing room door and Frances take them in.)

He should never see a visitor without being asked first. The visitor should be shown into the dining room, then he, Fred, be asked in the drawing room whether the visitor shall be brought up to him. (You say truly you were in an “agony” on Friday when the four visitors came.)

---

104 The advice Nightingale gives here echoes that given in “Convalescence” in *Notes on Nursing*.

It is so bad for a convalescent, every time the doorbell rings, to think “who is that?” and for the “who” to be marched straight in to him. Please, dearest Maude, humour me in this even if you think me a “fool”—“Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing you yourselves are wise.”<sup>105</sup> Do not hurry about fixing the day of the move. If you do, I will *bite* you, as Mr Quilp said to Mrs Quilp.<sup>106</sup> Convalescence and the weather will have their own way. But the drawing room will help the weather to be good.

I am glad the French is coming. He will of course have his meals at your house. I shall tell Mrs Neild. I wish I could offer him a bed. But there is no difficulty at No. 4, Sir H. says. I am sorry Nurse Murray is gone, and greatly disapprove of Mr Fred’s reason for jubilation.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

2 February 1888

Thank you a thousand times for your delightful letters—all delightful excepting poor Miss Morant’s sad tragedy. Pray take any of my books you like—they will be honoured by going with you—only leaving me a little memo of what are gone. I am delighted with your “reflection” on Macaulay and his father.<sup>107</sup> It is so true. But first I must beg to observe—not for the consideration but for the guidance of H.H. the Convalescent, that here there are 20° of frost, that the snow is frozen on the trees, that it really is exceedingly cold, that the crows and sparrows are besieging this fortress for food and that there is no reason to suppose the Pine Acre is any warmer, that Waterloo Station is exceedingly cold and so are its carriages, though the latter may be warmed, but the former cannot, nor can the road from Pine Acre.

Whenever you go—and I am much mistaken if Dr Townsend, who is the proper person to ask, will let you move in this cold—whenever you go, you must have an invalid railway carriage, which you will allow me and Gwendolen to provide, and a brougham to Pine Acre—both well warmed. It is the proper frame of mind of a convalescent to be

---

105 2 Cor 11:19.

106 The cruel Mr Quilp and much-abused Mrs Quilp in Charles Dickens, *Old Curiosity Shop*.

107 The much-cited historian and politician, Thomas Babington Macaulay was the son of Zachary Macaulay (1768-1823), member of the Clapham Sect and ardent opponent of the slave trade, on which Nightingale’s maternal grandfather also worked.

extremely cross—to abuse his food and threaten to throw it out of window—to kick the fire irons and the cat and declare there is not a book in the world worth reading. I am afraid Mr Fred is not in this proper frame of mind.<sup>108</sup>

I think my sister is better.

Poor Miss Morant. O how tragic this here world is—and how comic, how grave and how grotesque: what dreadful things people do, and what idiotic things—how our lives, our minds, our happiness seem to hang by a thread, and how awful this would be, did we not know that Infinite Love has spun this thread, irresistible as love. What a commonplace trivial surface the world seems to have, and what unexpected tragedies crop up under one's feet all at once, which perhaps, after all, are less tragic than the trivialities and the indifferences of the world.

I remember, when I entered hospital life, half the nurses were fallen women and the other half deserted wives. Perhaps every one of those wives had her tragedy, though a sordid one. The best wardmaster in Scutari had eight wives, I mean eight wives alive, at different stations, and he regularly sent home through me 5/ a week out of a scanty pay to the child of a ninth, who was not his wife, a mere schoolgirl out of Mrs Bracebridge's school. He was tried when he came home at Warwick Assizes for what was euphoniously called bigamy, but was octogamy. He was a good fellow. There have been wives more maltreated than his.

*There were nine tragedies in one opéra comique.* Every one perhaps has a skeleton in the house or in the lunatic asylum or somewhere. The greatest sorrows are those one can never speak of, as somebody says.

I have known sorrows unspeakable in many a hospital, many a house, many a workhouse. I think madness is the worse. I am so very sorry for that young Rathbone. I wish that dear good Mrs Richmond every success.

I must not take to moralizing, except on snow—I assure you frozen snow, particularly between London and Pine Acre, is very cold. It's all the fault of that eclipse, but the weather is impassable for a convalescent on that road. The blackbirds are starving and the crows and sparrows take the food I provide out of the mouths of thrushes and blackbirds. It is evident the animals think the cold is to last. God bless you both.

ever your loving though moralizing

Aunt Florence

What a sweet and capital soul that lady of Wasperton must be.

---

108 Observations made in "Convalescence," *Notes on Nursing*.

Source: From a letter to Maude and Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff171-72

9 February 1888

How can I thank you for the noble rug which met my astonished eyes at the drawing room hearth? Indeed, indeed, I do not deserve it. And dear Maude's choice too. How can I thank you? I trust the lumbago is somewhat going off but it requires care.

My sister seems none the worse for her journey, though she is certainly worse than some months ago. Sir Harry's finger is worse and more swollen. He saw Mr Savory<sup>109</sup> for it yesterday, who told him to eat and poultice. Eat he did here, and poultice he did, but it is no better and Mr Savory has been sent for. It is the right hand. He is not aware of any prick to account for it. He is now resting. I am so glad that Maude and Gwendolen go tricycling.

I have had the most terribly insane letter from poor Miss Morant. She wants to come here and pour out all her wrongs. I don't think I can refuse to see her but this week it is impossible. On second thoughts I think I will enclose her letter. You will judge. Please return it with advice. God bless you.

ever your loving and grateful

Aunt Florence

She has sent me besides a commonplace rant (*printed*) in verse addressed to her "brothers."

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68885 ff182-84

26 April 1888

*re Matron: Gordon Boys' Home.* I am very much exercised in my old mind about the Gordon boys' *washing* and whether there is anything *to wash*: sheets: yes, perhaps none, but blankets must be washed at least once a century; ticks: have they any bolsters? You say no mattresses? towels and cloths: perhaps they have only one *round towel* to twenty boys, but these must be washed *occasionally*. I suppose mugs and plates are sometimes washed. Then they must have cloths to wipe them and themselves. Table cloths: do they have any? Dusters: I suppose they have some housemaid's work? *Underclothing*, shirts? Yes, I am sure *soldiers* wear shirts because in all wars, we, the women, have had to supply shirts (for lost kits) and washing. And the men could not lie naked in their beds when they had any. Do the Gordon boys lie naked in their beds? I am sure that is bad and immoral. If they don't their shirts

---

109 William Scovell Savory (1826-95), later Sir, eminent physician.

must be washed. Stockings: I think certainly they must have stockings (or socks)? Then these must be washed. Linings? to trousers, to caps, these must be washed? sometimes? how can we find out? I can't ask General "Hig"<sup>110</sup> and Mrs Hawthorne is in Jersey.

Rags for the hospital? I think the boys *must* have underclothing, because Mrs H. said: stand fast for matron to teach the boys to mend their underclothing—it brings them in contact with matron. Hospital linen: there must be *some*, I should think.

I am so glad we had that bit of conversation about the Gordon boys. But I am afraid I kept you too long and you were very tired. I am sure, are not you? that the matron must be a woman of strong sense, character and kindness to hold her own, herself the only woman, among the sergeants especially, who will probably hardly acknowledge her or else make her one of themselves.

N.B. My nursing instincts are rather appalled by the broken leg being left alone in barrack ward. Had he an electric bell to make himself heard? One would have thought that, unless the "slight" cases in "hospital" were infectious, *they* should have had the training of waiting upon him in hospital. Even in the worst barracks, a broken-legged soldier would have had a comrade or orderly to wait upon him. No better training could have been given to a "Gordon" boy—could there? And could not Mrs Tyndall,<sup>111</sup> have come in?

Source: From a letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9012/36

8 June 1888

Maude went to the queen's ball. She had a little dinner here. She looked so nice and beautifully dressed in her Princess Narès tail and her little ostrich feather—she had dressed herself entirely herself. But I think her much altered these last few months. At forty she looked like a girl of twenty-three. Now she looks thin and a little worn in the face, flushed and twenty years older—but still so piquante and always unlike anybody else—but anxious.

---

110 General, later Sir George Higginson, chair of the committee for the Gordon Boys' Home; for correspondence see *Society and Politics* (5:242-56).

111 Wife of General Tyndall.

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68886 f38-39 and 42

15 January 1889

Very many thanks for your letters. One cannot help feeling *very* anxious. There is no one to say: you *must* and you must *not*. Do you hear *when* Sir H. Acland is coming back? I think my sister must have heard from him. He is the only person who can. Dr Benson has no authority, though he is sensible and watchful and clever, Sir H.A. says.

How good you have been in writing. My aunt at Embley [Mary Shore Smith] is dying. She can hardly survive this week, and I cannot get rid of the thought that before the earth, as you say, has put off its solemn winter's sleep, these two homes may have been broken up. We must trust them with God. I return Princess Narès' lovely letter. It is the heavenly "possibility" of her life that she has you and Mr Fred. (For her boys, what would she do without you?)

I send "Daisy Doll" (Mother Grumpy) sung and acted with triumphant success by the board schoolchildren of St Thomas', got up by themselves after school hours under their own master and mistress. God bless you, dearest Maude.

1 P.M.

Love to Kathleen. Thanks, thanks for this morning's note. One must feel very anxious. With these shivering fits, however slight, and temperature going up and cough, there must be some mischief going on, easier to lament than to stop, as you say. What does Dr Benson say?

7 February 1889

There really seems to be some improvement today. She is so anxious lest you should all be hurt by her persisting in declining "the dear ones" "who all offer." I have a letter from her by afternoon post. She says "Dr Benson says it is a most critical moment. A little thing may turn the balance the wrong way. Ask them to put it off four or five days." I have assured her that you only want to do what is decided as best. Thank God if the improvement is real. And thank God, too, whatever happens, for what He does is done in His love. In great haste.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

She feels it like Niagara, she says, standing on the brink. And so do I.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney and one to Frederick and Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68886 ff55-56 and 57-58

19 April 1889

Good Friday

Indeed I do, I do feel with you and for you, dearest Maude, at Ralph going to school—his new life and his “new port[e]manteau” and that little mother, Gwendolen, at his side, who is still cogitating her plans for being the “mother of the world” (and not *only* responsible for Kathleen’s salvation). Those children are so interesting they would fill volumes, let alone hearts. Still I hope, if you don’t overfatigue yourself, that it will be good for you both, and even for Ralph, not to be overstrained, *as you say*, for you to go to Venice.

23 May 1889

Welcome home again. I do trust that you have had a refreshing as well as most interesting time among the never-to-be-forgotten splendours of Venice and Genoa, and have not committed suicide at Monaco. It was so kind of you to write. I shared my joy, of course, with No. 4, as they did with me. And how is Italy? in good health? The patriots, now in heaven, ask.

Thank you for sending Mr Morant’s noble, most interesting letter, which I return. I have read it most carefully. I sympathize most deeply with him and with you. But such work, springing from such a spirit, such minds, cannot fail to bear fruit a hundredfold, even if the harvest be sometimes delayed, sometimes blighted. I never liked fashion. Humiliation is more fruitful than fashion. God will grant His highest success to what you and Mr Morant are doing for poor Siam. But I was not going to moralize.

Miss Amy Morant paid me an unexpected visit while you were away. A great deal came out quite naturally in our long conversation, such as she would say to a person who greatly sympathized with her and did not think she was going to be mad, of which there was not a trace. But that “great deal” all told one way, that she is perfectly unfit to go to her brother and that she could not be a week in Siam without getting him into some scrape. There is a certain silliness about her (not incompatible with genius), a certain credulity, a want of that uncommon quality, common sense, a total want of knowledge of the common motives of common humanity. And all this without the slightest excitement, as if she were telling you that black was black, white was white.

By her own account, her companion who came with her is just the same (to *her* satisfaction). She talked about going to her brother, but



not as if she longed for or expected it much. (I did not of course say anything against it, nor anything for it.) I ought to have returned his letter sooner, but I have been engaged in anxious (and humiliating) work.<sup>112</sup>

God bless you and He *will* bless you. How are the children three?

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68886 f87

29 January 1890

So sorry that my dear Gwendolen wants an oculist. The man that the medical faculty employ for salves and families is Henry Power, 37a Great Cumberland Place, W. (I don't know that it is specially for what you say, but I am rather afraid of specialties.) Many cling to "old" Sir William Bowman, as they do to "old" Sir James Paget, for an opinion merely, and with reason. I know Power personally and think highly of his care and keenness. "Collyrium"<sup>113</sup> is only their name for a whole class of preparations. Please let me know when they, the little girls, arrive, how they are. I thought they were coming today.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Today is our day of crucifixion.<sup>114</sup> May it be a day of salvation.

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68886 f156-57 and 183

11 November 1890

Margaret is the richest woman I ever knew. Her cruse of oil never fails, nor her handful of meal,<sup>115</sup> though she is torn in pieces, for all the pieces. The miracle of the loaves and fishes is fulfilled in her, and she has baskets of fragments over for all of us.<sup>116</sup> No one is left out unfed by her. And so is it with you, my darling.

---

112 Possibly a reference to the conversion to Roman Catholicism of the matron of St Thomas', Angélique Lucille Pringle; Nightingale tried to talk her out of it.

113 Eye salve or eyewash.

114 Nightingale had just met with Miss Pringle regarding her replacement at St Thomas'. The loss of Pringle thanks to her conversion meant the loss of an extremely competent administrator. Further, Elizabeth Herbert, herself a convert, protested the exclusion of a Roman Catholic from such a post (see p 708 above).

115 An allusion to the widow in 1 Kings 17:12.

116 An allusion to the miracle of the loaves and fishes in John 6:13.

Claydon House  
Winslow, Bucks  
30 November 1890  
St Andrew's Day

I can find no words for Parnell's<sup>117</sup> manifesto, so able and so diabolical, but Chief Justice Erle's<sup>118</sup> on the bench to an attorney: "Sir, you do not know the strength of the expressions I am keeping back."

**Editor:** For the year 1891 only one letter to Maude Verney has been selected (there are numerous business letters to Frederick Verney). Even this one has several lines excised and only a cryptic remark remaining, presumably because they dealt with the matter most on all their minds, the conviction of Edmund Verney and loss of his Parliamentary seat for the offence of attempting to procure a minor for immoral purposes (see *Life and Family* 1:604-05). His older brother's conviction and imprisonment for a year doubtless also impeded Frederick Verney's Parliamentary ambitions. He and the "blessed Margaret," who forgave her husband, behaved admirably (Nightingale had to lean on Harry Verney to effect a reconciliation). Here we get only a remark about Margaret Verney being "distressed" at Westgate (presumably the prison, but Edmund Verney was, if so, also at Pentonville) and "the worst" having been said.

The "will business" refers to complications from Parthenope Verney's will. Nightingale believed that her sister's intention, as expressed to her, to leave money to Frederick Verney was unfulfilled in the actual will and that some compensation should be found to make it up to them (see *Life and Family* 1:664-66).

Source: Letter, Add Mss 68887 ff13-14

*Private*

19 July 1891

My dear, dear Maudie and Fred

Thank you, Maudie, for all your dear letters from Claydon. Your care has saved Sir Harry's life and health. Thank you, Fred, for your letter about Godfrey Lushington, etc. You have done all that man can do, and more. (I thought I never saw blessed Margaret so distressed as when she went to Westgate.) But, as you told me, Mrs Daniell said the worst. [cut out]

---

117 Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-91), leader of the Irish Parliamentary party, home rule advocate.

118 Sir William Erle (1793-1880), judge.

2. Thank you, Fred, for your letter about the will business. Of course I agree with every word, except I think you very moderate. Something may be done, I think. I commit our way unto the “Lord” in both these dreadful things/entanglements. *He* knows.

3. Thank you very much, Fred, for your note about Toynbee, etc.

4. I have seen your Mr H. Smyth and like him oh! [part removed] He asked. But oh what a boy he looks. There seems so much to talk about.

Of course the thing most to be anxious about just now is: [two lines removed] I don’t like to hint at either of you coming, because you have been so little together lately, but if you were coming this way this afternoon and could give me ten minutes, I should be thankful. If not, could you write? I hope to see G. and K. before they go. But I have been so driven.

Dear Fred, your notes [lines removed]. . . .

The last of my wonderful old sanitary comrades, Dr Sutherland, is dead.  
ever your loving

Aunt Florence

When are you going to have *your* holiday?

**Editor:** A letter to Margaret Verney asks for an invitation to be passed on to Maude Verney, who was coming to London for a concert and lesson by Herr Gomperz on the 17th, to lunch and dine, with daughter Lettice.<sup>119</sup>

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68887 ff62-63

16 May 1892

I have had a letter from Fred, Bangkok 9 April, chiefly about court doctor for Bangkok—I am very sorry to think that Dr G. is actually “reinstated” (though perhaps “only partially”)—them Easterns are somewhat aggravating.

I suppose we may actually think of Fred in Europe on Thursday. Are *you* going to put up at the Siamese Legation or where? How many Godspeeds have been said for him. And thank God who *has* sped him. (As the last man I should have expected to make that sort of remark, Mr Knowles<sup>120</sup> of the *Nineteenth Century*, once said to me: “Thank God there *is* a God.”)

---

119 Letter 12 February 1892, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9014/7.

120 James Thomas Knowles (1831-1908), founder of the progressive journal, *Nineteenth Century*.

Mr Fred made a nonsensical observation to me in one of his letters, for which you must chastise him. He said he hoped I would not destroy his letters till after he came back, he wanted to look at them. Tell him I have kept all his letters in a portfolio to themselves, but I don't know that I *shall* let him see them after that absurd remark.

I hope you will kindly telegraph to us when you have seen him again. Excuse me if I don't send back the Sonapundit and the Devawongsee nice letters tonight—they shall come without fail tomorrow.

Thanks, dearest Maude, for your letters and postcards—very great thanks—I do think he is going on well—and Fred's return will be an immense delight to him. But I feel what you say about the silent solemn figure of Death coming up the big staircase, but I hope he may be spared a little longer yet,<sup>121</sup> and I do want him too to do the cottages at Steeple Claydon before he dies, etc.

Dr De'Ath<sup>122</sup> has sent me Dr Wilson's certificate of the six young lady teachers of health. It is very satisfactory. And this too will please Fred and, I hope, Margaret.

I feel as you once said that we are entering a fog and don't know when or where we shall come out. But Margaret is a light in herself—a burning and a shining light.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68887 ff168-69

15 November 1893

How good of you to take my cross. The inscription, too long, is within. Dear Vortigern.<sup>123</sup> *Please thank his brother Harry for his most touching note to me.* How I pray that the brothers may be lifted by God's own hands over this terrible time to Vortigern's joy in life.

It seems years since I saw you on Sunday. You know perhaps that Mr Jowett's successors are appointed: Caird of Glasgow elected by the fellows as master,<sup>124</sup> [Ingram] Bywater appointed by the crown as Greek

121 Harry Verney in fact died in 1894.

122 George Hanby De'Ath (c1862-1901), medical officer of health for Buckinghamshire.

123 The death of Edward Vortigern Verney (1874-93), son of George and Morforwyn Verney.

124 Edward Caird (1835-1908), the next master of Balliol.

professor—both such different men and types from Mr Jowett. But there was *no one*.

I pray for you all. Vortigern remembers you all. God bless you. Don't tire yourself too much. I hope you saw blessed Margaret in some peace.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

With love to all at Clochfaen.<sup>125</sup>

Source: From a letter to Maude and Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68887 ff189-90

27 August 1894

You perhaps may have seen Shore's death in London on Thursday night last, so that I could not write. Just at last it was very sudden: only twenty-four hours' illness but very suffering. Only he was simple and good and kind and gentle to the last just like himself. It was pneumonia and heart. Only his wife and Louis (and two nurses) were with him. Unluckily Sam, the eldest, and Barbara were in Cornwall for a much-needed short holiday. They came back as fast as they could, but it was too late to see him alive. Their mother went up herself to Hampstead to tell it to Rosalind (the married one), who came back with her. All the burden of the day fell upon dear Louis, who was everything to his dying father, and afterwards did all the sad, sad business in the most efficient way, and joyfully, though he came here to cry. And he kept his mother calm.

The funeral is today at Wellow (Embley). They persuaded their mother not to go, and I hope she will go up to Hampstead and stay there with the baby and a lady friend. . . .

Aunt Florence's love to the three dear chicks. No more at present from,

your ever loving

Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68887 f199

22 December 1894

You ask me to write something in Gwendolen's Testament. I have no words about Gwendolen. I have not seen her lately, but when I saw her last she had got back that wonderful look in her eyes like the Infant

---

125 The home inherited by Morforwyn Verney from her uncle in North Wales, when the George Verneys changed their name to Lloyd Verney.

Jesus in the Dresden Raphael, which embraces the whole world. (I remember her in the days when in that low solemn inward voice as if she were singing to God. She used to talk about having blind people in her house and poor people—not that I want her to be only that.) What *can* I say to her but “God bless thee”? That takes in all. But on the birthday of the child Jesus, I would wish her His simplicity—not multiplicity—innocence—thinking no evil—purity—or seeing God, not self.

“I must be about my Father’s business”<sup>126</sup> and all this to lead to a love and devotion which takes in the whole world (or the world around Him). I did so hope that she might have remained under your *wing* (at least till past her teens) that she might have preserved that wonderful mixture of genius and simplicity (like yours) which all the world cannot give but *can* take away.

Do what you like with the inscription—I am afraid it is wanting in that very simplicity.

Source: Greeting on 25th Wedding Anniversary, with flowers, ADD Mss 68888 f51

8 June 1895

To Frederick and Maude Verney  
 Oh blessed Silver Wedding  
 Oh happy pair of pilgrims  
 to whom the hard trials of life are  
     without thorns  
 always intent on good work  
     never hindered by self  
 who passing over the stony highway  
 of existence make it a well of living water  
     to yourselves and all you reach  
 May your Golden Wedding be the  
     complement of this  
     the genius of marriage  
 to yourselves, your children and  
     the world  
 is Aunt Florence’s fervent prayer

---

<sup>126</sup> Luke 2:49.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68888 f92

22 July 1895

My heart is with you and Fred. But still, as you I know feel, there are the greatest of consolations in the way you conducted the contest. But I should like to drown B. in beer<sup>127</sup> and am constructing an apparatus similar to that of the prince who was drowned in Malmsey.<sup>128</sup> Thank my Fred for his letter.

Could you tell me how you thought poor George and how you thought Margaret? Just a word, please—if you will be so kind.

Source: From three letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68888 ff119-20, 135-36 and 137-38

1 November 1895

*Private.* G[wendolen] is more beautiful than ever, *that* is with being with her mother. But I wish I could help you to find a lady governess, how I wish! She has, I should think, quite as much power of reflection, making progress now every year. I hope I did not excite her.

She would not have any tea and I am afraid there was nothing to tempt her appetite. But there was a horrid fog all night here. It is difficult not to talk to her, because she asks such searching economic questions. There are Graham Wallas's<sup>129</sup> economic lectures going on now at the Society of Arts. I do not think the Nash baby attends them yet, but its father and mother and grandmother<sup>130</sup> do. I hope they are not too radical. Fine weather to you.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Thank you so much for your list of books. How good of you to think of it. Aunt Florence's love to K[athleen] and kindest regards to Mrs Davidson, please. I hope you will not be too tired.

6 December 1895

Many, many thanks for your note. I do so want to send you something you will like (for the children's confirmation) *for daily duties*, as you

---

127 Frederick Verney was again defeated in a general election, running in Norwich; "B." is presumably Sir H. Bullard, the second of the two Conservatives to beat him.

128 George, duke of Clarence (1449-78), is said to have been drowned in Malmsey in the Tower of London; in Shakespeare, *Richard III*, Act 1, scene 4.

129 Graham Wallas (1858-1932), first lecturer in sociology at the London School of Economics.

130 Vaughan and Rosalind Nash and Louisa Smith.

say. I have looked through several of the S.P.C.K.'s<sup>131</sup> books—in all is something good—in all is something ecclesiastical. Also, they are too much for *poor* children.

Nevertheless I think I will send you two or three. But what I have found the best for poor and rich is: *Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth*,<sup>132</sup> which gives the idea of the busy life of daily hard work for God and man. I dare say you have it. Nevertheless I send it. Also the *second* edition of Jowett's *Sermons*<sup>133</sup>—the first and indeed the second sermons are, I think, worth your reading for the children. But I do think *your* talk with your children better than all the books in the world. I send Jowett. A friend of mine said to me: "It's not like preaching—it's not a sermon—it's like an undergraduate talking, especially "Eating and Drinking." (He shows them the act; he shows them the life and *not* the dogma. He does not say: Do this and do that, but he says: Here it is—what do you think?)

I have written expressly for books for the confirmation of educated boys of sixteen and girls of fifteen—not the poor—books which will tell what the daily duties are and inspire how to do them, but I [breaks off]

10 December 1895

One does feel so very sorry for the terrible disaster to dear Mrs Davidson, but her steadfast mind is much in her favour and for you for I fear you have no one but Mrs Davidson to place over Mrs Davidson's sickroom with unbounded trust. My best love and prayer for her.

I send you four books, but I wish I could send you books that were *all* good. I think *The Laying on of Hands*<sup>134</sup> has good things, because the writer was a layman before he was a clergyman—there are not so many stock phrases. The habit of giving "*addresses*" takes away a good deal of the individuality, the main instrument of good in 3 and 4.

I wish I had an American book which converted me in 1836—alas! that I should so little have lived up to my conversion—*The Corner-stone*.<sup>135</sup> There was such a striking chapter: Pharisees, Peter, and Judas

131 The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

132 Robert Bird, *Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth*, 1892.

133 Presumably his *College Sermons*, 1895.

134 Alexander Boddy, *The Laying on of Hands: A Bible Ordinance*, 1895.

135 Jacob Abbott, *The Corner-stone, or, a Familiar Illustration of the Principles of Christian Truth*, 1834. See illustration on p 972.



even, all live now. And then it gave them as they appear in these days.

ever your loving  
Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Gwendolen Verney, ADD Mss 68888 f191

26 July 1896

I send a few roses for you to give to Mother. When you have affectionately to smell your train for twenty-four hours, you are glad of roses to smell. I am afraid they will be rather shaggy for I was obliged to get them last night or not at all. And now I wish you one and all a delightful run in Switzerland and Mother not too much fatigue.

ever your loving  
Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68888 ff192-93

17 October 1896

I did not know that you were all absconding on “6 November” and I don’t even know whether the place you are going to is at the North or the South Pole. It is very good for the crown prince and very bad for us. But I forgive you and wish you all well and glorious. Good Speed.

I do pity and sympathize with you in your making of households. I wish I could see you all before you go. Have you a post town where you are absconding to? Love to all,

your ever affectionate  
Aunt Florence

Thank you very much for a brace of partridges. I did not forget my thanks, but my head was scrambling.

F.N.

You must not think of “paying” anything for poor Mrs Callander. She has no kind of claim upon you. I am only afraid of troubling you much too much as it is. What kind of “books” does she like?

You are not going to let your present house, are you? I shall hate the people who take it “with a mortal undying hatred and would pursue them to the confines of eternity if I had but the time.”<sup>136</sup>

---

136 From Charles Dickens, *Old Curiosity Shop*, chap 38.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68889 ff1 and 6-7

28 January 1897

Here is £1 I owe Fred for books for the children, though I don't know what they were, except Gwendolen's. I have to write to you about dear Ralph, who is much more manly, quite as thoughtful, but I think wants gymnastics and dinner. I cannot write now.

Please thank Fred for MacNaughten's capital book of Kathiawar.<sup>137</sup> Ralph always interests me so very much, but he is not like a boy.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

I always remember of Ralph that he was "preferring one another in honour."<sup>138</sup> See Harry minimus. That is a noble character.

23 February 1897

Thank you, thank you, dearest Maude, for defending me about the "relics" of me and the Crimean War. What *are* the "relics" of the "Crimean War"? The tremendous lessons we have had to learn from its tremendous blunders and unavoidable ignorances.

1. (I do not here enter into the blundering at home—the green coffee, etc.), but Lord Raglan with all the qualities and the défauts de ses qualités [faults of his qualities] of a great noble, want of resource, initiative and combination; Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople.<sup>139</sup>

Our men said they had rather lost their rum than their rice. At Constantinople everybody eats rice every day. Also drinks coffee. Salt meat and biscuit, dying of scurvy. Shores of Euxine [Black Sea] crowded with cattle, which could have walked themselves up to camp. Sleeping on the ground, mattresses, etc. All this requires explanation—no use going into it now.

137 Chester MacNaughten published *Common Thoughts on Serious Subjects*, 1896; he published a six-volume memoir, *Forty Years of the Rajkumar College*, 1892.

138 A paraphrase of Rom 12:10.

139 The 1st Baron Raglan (1788-1855), British commander in the East, had been military secretary to Wellington in the Peninsular War, was personally brave but had no experience in battle; the 1st Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe (1786-1880), ambassador to Turkey at the time of the Crimean War; he is considered to have fomented the war, encouraging the sultan to resist Russian demands instead of seeking a settlement.

Second lesson: *untrained* nurses useless, often worse than useless, no characters. The TRAINING of nurses our second lesson.

3. *Hygiene. Sanitation.* The total ignorance of this cost Lord Raglan himself and thousands of our gallant soldiers their lives.<sup>140</sup>

What filled our hospitals at Scutari? fevers, scurvy (miscalled frost-bite), diarrhea, dysentery, cholera. We took in 4000 from these diseases in seventeen days. We had four miles of beds in one hospital alone at Scutari.

Lord Palmerston sent out the Sanitary Commission (and the Commissariat ditto) in March 1855 and, with their help, we learnt the terrible lesson of the Crimean War on hygiene. (N.B. But even now, I have not seen one book on the Crimean War which gives it.) *These are the tremendous “relics” of the Crimean War.* And I will not give my foolish “portrait” (which I have not got) or anything, as “relics” of the Crimea. It is too ridiculous. You don’t judge even of a public house and the victuals inside by the sign outside. I won’t be hung up as a *sign*. Please tell the kind ladies politely.

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney and one to Maude and Frederick Verney, ADD Mss 68889 ff22-23 and 27-28

2 September 1897

I am quite shocked at your reading *Trooper Halket*<sup>141</sup> *in the train*. But as I can’t undo it, I will tell you something that is *confidential*. The government here was so struck with it that they would not believe it. And they despatched a man (whose name was told me) to Mashonoland to report to them. IF he has reported, they keep it dark, but whatever has transpired, tends to show that the book *is* true. This *is* sad.

I send a half sovereign for each of the two dear girls, but you must tell me what K. said about Ellin, please.

11 October 1897

Thanks more than I can say but less than I feel, my very dear Fred and Maude, for your most kind offer of lovely Burnham Lodge while you are away. But I am told that it is impossible for me to move, and so I must decline (unwillingly), but never shall I feel less grateful. The “cats” also offer their purring thanks.

---

140 Lord Raglan died mid-war, 28 June 1855, of fever.

141 Olive Schreiner, *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonoland*, 1897, which gives a Boer perspective of the brutality of the British administration of South Africa.

It makes me young again to think of the ecstasy of a voyage from “Marseilles” to Alexandria and my first sight of the rising of the sun from an eastern sea—not rising rather pale, as he does here and shivery, but leaping like a bridegroom out of the sea with a flood of light and warmth. And beautiful Cairo, but first the little group of solemn dignified Easterns of two and three years, sitting on the ground eating their breakfasts. All blessings on your journey.

Are Gwendolen and Kathleen to be bridesmaids at the wedding on the 20th?<sup>142</sup> Please tell someone kindly to tell me this.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

Do you remember the Persian’s answer to some Englishman’s stupid remark about the sun: “But that’s because you have never seen it.”

Source: Note with flowers, ADD Mss 68889 f29

7 February 1898

Offered to our dearly beloved Maude Verney on her birthday. And may each petal of these flowers bring to her a token of our love and of our firmest wishes and prayers for her, and hers who are dearer to her than herself.

Florence Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68889 ff36 and 39-40

30 June 1898

Thank you so much for the beautiful present of strawberries you were so kind as to bring me.

25 August 1898

How kind, how very kind it is of you to think of me and of the pleasant “wind among the leaves” and all other delights of Burnham Lodge for me. But I am afraid they are not for me. *Rest* I am afraid is all that I can take, and here you cannot tell how deeply I feel your care for me.

Love to Fred and to the dear Gwendolen and all your “180 villagers” must have been delightful. I have a nice view here—quite unlike London. Good angels speed you in Holland, and they *will* speed you.

---

<sup>142</sup> Presumably the wedding of Ellin Verney, on whom see p 942 below, to William Henry Salmon.

Source: From two letters to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68889 ff51-52 and 59-60

25 May 1899

Would you be so very good as to get me a revolving bookcase, small or bigger (I believe the small ones are about £5 and the bigger ones £6. I would go as high as £10, but I hope I shall not "have to." I send you a cheque for £6.) It is for Harry Lloyd Verney or Lady Joan Cuffe.<sup>143</sup> They have been asked three times in church. Collinson and Locke, Oxford St., is said to be a good place, but I dare say you know best. Sorry to give you the trouble.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

They are to be married 6 June 2:30 P.M. at All Saints', Ennismore Gardens, are they not? and afterwards there is to be a luncheon.

7 December 1899

So many thanks for the lovely lilies of the valley. How good of you to send them—they look beautiful in water and will last long with the care they will thankfully receive.

We are here almost as dark as Erebus<sup>144</sup> and I have no eyes. I was obliged to send the "type papers" yesterday without looking at them, but when Fred was reading them to me, I heard a mistake. It was that "he" was an "old friend of my father's." It was rather the contrary. Please give my love to Harry Lloyd. I hope he will soon be quite right again.

Dear Ellin and dear Dorothea:<sup>145</sup> I am sure it was a lovely christening. May all blessings attend her and you too.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Gwendolen Verney, ADD Mss 68889 ff98-99

11 July 1900

Will you present my ardent thanks to your dear father and mother for the lovely little glass from Venice and yet more for their kindness in thinking of me. The adorable little serpent crawling up the stem is an invention of genius and dignifies and sweetens the whole race of ser-

---

143 Harry Lloyd Verney (1872-1950), son of George and Morforwyn Verney; Joan Elizabeth Mary Cuffe, daughter of 5th earl of Desart.

144 In Greek mythology Erebus (darkness), one of the primeval deities sprung from Chaos.

145 The birth of Dorothea Salmon, daughter of Ellin and William Henry Salmon.

pents, which has been most unwarrantably cried down. What can be more amiable and inspiring than this little fellow? He “lends enchantment to the view.”<sup>146</sup>

I am so glad that your father is so much better.

The “Lord Chamberlain” has absconded for three weeks to a place called Hastings and “has left me mourning.” No, not exactly “mourning,” but rather blind and impatient. Pray excuse any failures on my part.  
 ever your loving  
 Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Maude Verney, ADD Mss 68889 f124

10 October 1901

How good of you to call! I am rejoiced to hear that you are back in London. I should like to see one of you, either you or Fred, on Tuesday week (I have no earlier day) at 5, if quite convenient to you or him. Please say how the children (I mean the little angels) are. Could you not put off the winter?

your loving  
 Flo

**Editor:** After that contact with “Aunt Florence” continued with messages, flowers and gifts, in the last years through Nightingale’s secretary, Elizabeth F. Bosanquet.

### Other Verney Relatives

There is less correspondence available (and probably much less written) to Harriet Julia Morforwyn Verney, wife of George Verney, than the other Verney wives. Some known letters are, however, unavailable as this volume goes to press (copies under embargo at the British Library as the originals were sold outside the country). Morforwyn and George’s son, Harry Lloyd Verney, had a distinguished career, variously as secretary to a governor in Australia, in the household of Kings Edward VII, George V and Edward VIII and as secretary to Queen Mary. He was knighted in 1927. A daughter was also named Morforwyn; the last letter seems to be to her rather than the mother (and possibly one or more of the others might be as well).

146 Thomas Campbell, “The Pleasures of Hope”: ’Tis distance lends enchantment to the view.

Source: From copies of three letters to Morforwyn Verney, British Library RP 1364

My dear Morfy

13 October 1896

How can I thank you for the excellent and beautiful book your great kindness sent me? It has so much in it.

I have been *very* sorry not to be able to see you. I hope you are pretty well. And Morforwyn—how does she get on? Much love.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

Excuse pencil.

20 May 1897

You know how glad I shall be to see you. But we are so driven by work. Tomorrow as you kindly offer it is impossible. Could you come *today* at 6? Is that too late for you? It is the only time I can make today—I never know what it to have  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour's leisure.

ever yours

Aunt Florence

24 June 1899

Would you be so good as to tell me the *number* of Harry Lloyd's house in Ovington Gardens? I have something to send there.

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

Source: From copies of three letters to Morforwyn Verney, British Library RP 1364

Dearest Morforwyn

19 February 1901

Many thanks for your kind letter, also for the report of the Cardigan Nurse Eastons, which I think is excellent. I should very much like to see you to have a talk with you. And I could see you *next* [illeg] at 5, if that would suit you. With love to all.

your affectionate

Aunt Florence

26 February 1901

I am so sorry (for myself) that I cannot see you today. I am not very well, but it is nothing. I only want a day's quiet or two.

I could see you on Monday if that is *quite* convenient to you at 5.

your loving

Aunt Florence

3 October 1901

I have only tomorrow (Friday) free and then I should be delighted to see either you or "Mother" at 5 o'clock, if convenient. With much love,

yours

Aunt Florence

### **Lettice Verney**

**Editor:** Lettice Sarah Verney (1875-1908) was the daughter of Margaret and Edmund Verney. She attended Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford, became the librarian and for several years ran the village library at Claydon, which Nightingale supported. Lettice Verney also shared Nightingale's concerns about the local tenants and villagers, assisted with managing the "caseload" (see *Life and Family* 1:772) and handled messages for Nightingale. When she was young Nightingale sent her books; when older they exchanged information and recommendations about books. Lettice Verney's lengthy illness in Germany while travelling with her family in 1886-87 was the subject of much family correspondence (1:657-58) and further concerns about her convalescence back home (1:660). Her poor health continued to be a preoccupation—Nightingale gave advice on travel and offered to pay for a carriage for her. Lettice was invited sometimes to come to Nightingale's with Margaret Verney.<sup>147</sup>

A letter to Margaret Verney asked whether Lettice was "going into the schools or whatever they are called at Oxford, that is, whether she is able to go."<sup>148</sup> Letters also show that the two shared matters of faith. There is one other letter to her in *Society and Politics* (5:811-12) and numerous mentions of her with regard to the library (see *Life and Family* 1:693). The sermon preached at Middle Claydon Church after her death was titled "Death of the Righteous."

The material here is taken from a scrapbook made up of Nightingale letters to various family members, compiled by Dorothea Salmon, daughter of Ellin Verney and her husband, William Henry Salmon. Most of these were copied to the Wellcome, some incompletely and some not clearly enough to be read.

---

147 For example, letter to Margaret Verney 28 March 1892, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9014/12.

148 Letter 12 December 1896, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/83.



Source: From letters to Lettice Verney, Claydon House scrapbook of Dorothea Salmon, copies Wellcome (Claydon copies) Ms 9013-15

Dearest, There had been “much pain in the knee”—they feared it would prevent her from sleeping. She was “giddy and tired,” but “quite quiet and cheerful” and “her own dear brave self again.” At “6:30” mother puts in a P.S. “Thank God the dear child is asleep.” Thank God.

You shall tell me after breakfast what mother says to you. Grandpapa writes a word that he *may* come home today by tea train.

your loving

Aunt F.

November 1890

So, dearest Lettice, you are promoted to the place of Mother, the pearl of great price,<sup>149</sup> to take care of Father. I know how sad you are and how glad you are. I shall not ask you to come, knowing how busy you are. But ANY moment you can spare yourself to me, Aunt Florence will be so glad.

Shall the flowers in the blue room go to Ellin today? And does she want *us* to send “Brothers of Piety”? Shall I send it? You must give me something to do for Ellin. Your letter from Aunt Maudie decidedly good. I expect telegram.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Telegram just come. “Better night—very cheery—both send much love—progress satisfactory.”

4 January 1891

Letter from Maudie quite radiant with Ellin’s prosperous arrival and happiness. Margaret goes early tomorrow morning. (Please tell “dear everybody” as Margaret sometimes says.)

Dearest Lettice, Mr Calvert, quieter night but weaker this morning. We shall hear from Aunt Maudie whether Grandpapa stays and from Mr Power whether he keeps you. I hope if he does you will be *here* dear soul.

I shall see you when you come back. And, I hope, Aunt Maudie, unless she is too much pressed. She will be here at 9:30 for you.

Would either or two of these books do for Harry? And could you send it?

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

---

149 An allusion to Matt 13:46.

9 September 1891

10 A.M.

My books are only just come. I have written Ellin's name in one (*Waverley*) and the three others are also for her birthday if anybody wants to give them—if not give them to the dear soul from me—or from yourself.

Do you think Mother would be too tired to let me have a sight of her blessed face today? after tea perhaps. And perhaps I may ask her to look at a preface one of the India gentlemen compelled me to write for his book.<sup>150</sup> Her opinion is so good. But don't press her.

Aunt Florence's reverent love to her.

[c1891]

Have you looked at the books on the two tables in blue room? You can have the choice of any of them except two on the S.W. corner of the square table, which are yours. And you will yourselves know which are yours on the long table—you can have your choice of the others. But if you are not going to Johnny Co-op till afternoon, I could come out and show you.

I am so anxious to save your singing birds, of which you have left 1½. Please look in *What is a Bird?* if there is not a full account of the destruction of insects and saving of crops by birds.

29 October [1891]

I hope thou wilt be able out of these flowers to make up something for Mother or for anyone thou thinkest best.

Aunt Florence

[c1891]

The following is for Mother and you alone. I gave Grandpapa £50 toward a reading room. Forgetting this, he wished to send it me for something of ours. But I reminded him that it was toward a Steeple Claydon reading room. I only wish Mother to be aware of this—not that it should be spent for the present purpose, which she probably would not think wise.

17 February 1892

I commend your valour, my very dear Lettice, for screwing the bill out of mother. And I wish you to crown your valorous exertions by summoning the young man or the young lady, name of Parker ("you pays your money and you takes your choice") from Oxford whenever Mother will have either.

---

150 Nightingale's "Introduction" to Dayaram Gidumal, *Behramji M. Malabari: A Biographical Sketch*, 1892.

I enclose a “pund”—don’t send change—there shall be more to pay your next bill.

Thank you for going to Lizzie’s father, Coleman, and how is poor old King?

I am afraid Mother has had to go again to Rhianva—has not she?

Source: From six letters to Lettice Verney, Claydon House scrapbook of Dorothea Salmon and Wellcome 9014/57

11 April 1892

I send Lizzie Coleman, as agreed with Mother, to meet your - - and to bring you £1.1, which Mother left for your fee to Dr Semon.

Mother thought, if you were kept by Dr Semon, it would be better for you to *go on* (*with* Lizzie of course) to *Euston*, because she does not wish you to return to Claydon by a train later than the 2:45. I send you a little luncheon and you are to have the rest at Euston. But if you have time please come back *here* to luncheon—and you shall go with your maid and your man to 2:45 Euston (that is, Lizzie and Messenger). But if you are tired with Dr Semon’s operations and conundrums, Mother and I wish you to *sleep* here—and I will telegraph to Mother. Mind you do come in that event.

ever dearest Lettice  
your loving  
Aunt Florence

[c1892]

I suppose you have heard nothing of Mother yet? Would you kindly say to Father that I did not quite understand what Mother wished me to write in answer to the letter *they* received on Sunday, and *I* the night before, and that if he would be so very good as to give me half an hour this afternoon after 3, anytime he will kindly appoint, but daylight is best for me if one has to look at letters. I looked for him yesterday afternoon after Mother was gone but could not find him.

ever your loving  
Aunt F.

We think Grandpapa has gained so much ground the last fortnight.

21 October [1892?]

My dear Lettice, I am so glad Father has telegraphed for Dr De’Ath. I hope he will be at hand, but yesterday he wrote to me (about sanitary matters) and wrote as if he were scudding about the country.

You know that *Colonel and Mrs Hawthorn* are coming tomorrow. Would you ask Father if he would think well to put them off? Mother would be

very sorry, but last evening she could hardly speak without coughing and she was running downstairs like a two-year-old to ask or tell Grandpapa something, and running up again. We know how she would exert herself.

Are you going to have a Shakespearean reading *here* on Monday? I cannot fancy she will be ready for that—read or no read. I hope Mother will not think me interfering.

If Father has a return telegram from Dr De'Ath, would you kindly tell me?

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

I could not catch you yesterday. Ought the little Farmerine to be put off tomorrow? Or could you tackle them?

4 November 1892

Would you kindly show me in course of day the passages in *Henry IV* where Falstaff boasts of having killed thirty men in “Kendal Green” and of having killed *Hotspur*. Have you finished your *Henry V* and has dear Ellin finished hers? I should like to see her this afternoon.

Today and tomorrow (Battle of Inkermann) anniversaries in Crimean War I am overwhelmed with India.

7 March [1893]

With a heavy heart I write about Mr Higham.<sup>151</sup> It seems like bidding him adieu as minister to any of the Claydons. And I have never seen him so unhappy as when I saw him here last. But he was hardly more so than I was. I send you £3.3 toward his testimonial.

Would you tell Mother how much I thank her for her letter? and will you tell me a little more about Ellin, to whom my best love, when you write? and about Father? And will you tell Mr Morey how deeply grieved I am about Edith?<sup>152</sup> Perhaps he will write to me. My love to Miss Spring Rices.<sup>153</sup>

ever your affectionate

Aunt Florence

151 James Bellamy Higham, vicar at East Claydon from 1888, one of the priests who took communion to Florence Nightingale.

152 Edith Morey, daughter of Sir Harry Verney's butler. See *Life and Family* (1:802) for correspondence about her.

153 Hon Frederica and Hon Catherine Ellen Spring Rice, daughters of the 2nd Baron Monteagle; they assisted Margaret Verney with research for the *Memoirs of the Verney Family during the Civil War*, begun by Parthenope Verney.

I did not see Grandpapa the day he left London. I think he was depressed because he had been so sanguine about Mr Higham and he had not had a good night, because the room was not quite warm enough.

While he was with me I thought he was very well.

7 March 1893

My very dear Lettice, I am so glad that a reading room is at last begun in Steeple Claydon. I will gladly contribute Cassell's *The Strand*—the two mentioned and *The Daily Graphic* (which has superseded in St Thomas' the "penny dreadfuls"), *The Animal World*, *The Cottager and Artisan* (if they have not these already) and *Boys* which began only last November and is very cheerful. Also would they like *Punch*? I hope they will do something for the *boys*.

I send you £2 to begin with for the first quarter and if they would like to have some draughts and dominoes. But after this I advise you to order the periodicals by Johnny Co-op to tell him to send the account to me.

I hope also to send books. But I wish I had you to choose them from my store.

The following is for Mother and you alone. I gave Grandpapa £50 toward a reading room. Forgetting this, he wished to send it me for something of ours. But I reminded him that it was toward a Steeple Claydon Reading room. I only wish Mother to be aware of this—not that it should be spent for the present purpose, which she probably would not think wise.

Source: From a note probably to Margaret Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/15

4 February 1895

Might I telegraph to Maudie or to Lettice by the morning postman, if you have not written already, that Lettice *is to* take a *through* carriage to Claydon? Bletchley is the Land not of Cakes but of draughts, and it is so cold. Pray let me.

F.N.

Maudie is always on my side.

Source: From two letters to Lettice Verney, Claydon House scrapbook of Dorothea Salmon

[c1895]

If you go away without a cab today I withdraw my 10/. If dentist keeps you please come back here. I wish my half sovereigns were *new*.

13 February 1896

May each year be more happy and more blessed than the last, say the flowers better than I can. And Kitchin<sup>154</sup> I hope is the right edition. And though I disapprove of your beginning history earlier than the last week of last year, yet I would call thy attention to volume 1 p 1342, where the most extraordinary change perhaps in history was brought about by the most extraordinary *fiction* perhaps in history. So much for human wits. So much for loci [places] in history.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

If the flowers are not come would Ellin the great send to Claydon Station for them?

[24 December 1896]

I was very glad of your letter. I send £2.2 for your Lady Margaret Hall settlement<sup>155</sup>—I wish it were more but we are rather hard up.

I do think the quotation from the bishop of Rochester<sup>156</sup> is so good—I copied out the first paragraph and part of the second for our board schoolmaster at Lea Hurst, who is, in his way, a missionary of the best sort, and I am sure is anxious for the future lives of his scholars when they leave school. I think you ought to sell that sentence at 1/ apiece.

The only man I ever knew, whose whole life was bound up in the *whole* lives of his undergraduates and graduates, was Mr Jowett of Balliol.

Do you want a book? Please tell me what. Aunt Florence's best love to Ruth and Harry.

There is a redbreast with one foot feeding on the balcony. Some villainous leads cat must have caught him by the foot and he escaped, leaving his foot behind him. He manages very well, but he cannot clasp the rail of the balcony and sometimes he tumbles backwards. There are tomtits, tree creepers, fighting and swearing starlings—they never fought at Embley—and sparrows—all come to feed already.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

154 George William Kitchin, author of histories of France and England.

155 Lady Margaret Hall had a settlement house in the east end of London.

156 Edward Stuart Talbot (1844-1934), bishop of Rochester.

**Editor:** A letter presumably to Maude Verney, “Dearest,” asks “Is not next Monday Lettice’s birthday? What could I get for her? There is scant time.”<sup>157</sup> An undated note to an unspecified Verney states:

For the rheumatism from Aunt Florence I send the pine wool and the little bottle of oil for dear Lettice, if you or her mother like her to have it. Pine Wool should be put on *fresh* on going to bed and rising, I think. Oil is rather strong and should be used with care, if at all.<sup>158</sup>

Lettice Verney with other Verneys visited Nightingale in her old age, so that there are mentions of her after the correspondence ends.

Frederick Verney wrote Nightingale the day after her death, describing Lettice’s “peace at the end,” remembering her work for the poor of London, especially children, cottage homes at Claydon, and her work as librarian at the village library.<sup>159</sup> Edmund Verney also wrote Nightingale about this death.

### **Ellin and Ruth Florence Verney**

**Editor:** There were no letters to Ellin Verney (1873-1947), eldest daughter of Edmund and Margaret Verney, in *Life and Family*, although numerous letters about her and messages to her, as appear also here. One letter to her has turned up (not copied to the Wellcome Trust), on the birth of her daughter. Baby Dorothea Salmon was born in South Africa during the Boer War, where her father was serving. This child in turn kept the scrapbook which furnished many of the letters immediately above. Her birth at war prompted interesting comments by Nightingale about war and woman’s role in it.

Several letters to Ruth Florence Verney (1879-1968), the youngest daughter of Edmund and Margaret Verney and a namesake, appear in *Life and Family* (1:724-27). Here is one further, typical one. Nightingale gave her goddaughter a Book of Common Prayer on her confirmation, with a dedication that is reproduced on p 972.

Source: From a letter to Ruth Verney, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC3/SU222

3 May 1891

You sent Aunt Florence, my dearest little Ruth, such beautiful primroses and dear little primson buds the other day and a sweet little vio-

157 Letter 17 February 1898, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9015/112.

158 Note from Claydon House scrapbook of Dorothea Salmon.

159 Letter 8 June 1908, Claydon House Bundle 381.

let with a root. And Aunt Florence planted it in a little pot and watered it and immediately there came up another violet—did Grandpapa tell you? behind a green leaf as alive as possible. There is nothing like a little garden grown by oneself in London to give pleasure.

And I wonder whether now the spring is come you watch the bees and insects coming out of the flowers, where they have been occupied in taking a little honey, and bring out a little pollen on their backs or is it too early for that? Aristotle, an old, old Greek, who has taught us a great deal about morals, though he lived some hundreds of years before Christ, used to watch the bees, and he says that a bee on the same journey only visits the same kind of flowers. It is satisfied, unlike us, with the same kind of dish at one time. Now, you see, Aristotle<sup>160</sup> and little Harry both watched the bees.

I have counted the times (with a second-hand watch) that a moth put its proboscis in sucking the honey out of a common wild Scabions. And it was 150 times in a minute. Do you know the names of the birds yet? and are there still a good many singing birds after the very severe winter? A blackbird comes here every morning at 5 o'clock (the first time this has happened since I lived here—some twenty-six years) and sings. Perhaps it is one of the Claydon blackbirds which died.

Now give Aunt Florence's very dear love to dearest Ellin and Lettice and help in pleasing Grandpapa, as I know you do, and give my love to Miss Spring Rices, and tell Miss Frederica that I can't thank her enough for her letter and for what they are doing.

How is Nip? and how is the bird canary that says pf? God bless you all.  
ever your loving

Aunt Florence

If you see anything of Mrs [breaks off]

Source: From a letter to Ellin Verney, Claydon House Bundle 371

25 October 1899

Dearest Ellin, I am on the knees of my heart before you and Babs. It is so good of Babs to be born and so good of you to have her with so much trouble. Pray present my compliments to her with proper respect.

Everybody asks what is to be her name. I say "Balaclava," which is not at all an ugly word. You know it is a corruption of "bella chiave" and it is a lovely "key." I am so attached to the place where and in its envioning hospitals I spent many months. The "Castle Hospital" on

160 Aristotle, *The History of Animals*.



a cliff hundreds of feet high washed by the sea (and very healthy) among them. (The Balaclava Hospital where I also was on the Harbour is not at all healthy.)

People object to the name Balaclava, because she is not a man, and Balaclava is associated with war. But I say women have quite as much to do with War as men and with so much pain that it justifies their name of woe-man. For all that woman is a lovely creature and a glorious one. What greater glory can there be than ministering to the wants of God's creatures in pain and grief as in joy. "A ministering angel then."

Now I have bothered you enough—all hail to you and Babs.  
ever yours

F. Nightingale

### Rosalind (Smith) Nash

**Editor:** Some (mainly personal) correspondence with Rosalind Smith (1862-1952), daughter of Nightingale's beloved "Shore" and Louisa, has already been included in *Life and Family* (1:543-52). Letters on co-operatives, India and two historical items have appeared in *Society and Politics* (5:194-98, 324 and 817 respectively). The letters selected for this volume continue personal matters (notably her choice of a spouse, her father's illness, a family death and Rosie's own poor health, vegetarianism and the birth of a child) and deal with other social reform, public health and political issues, several specifically concerning women.

Rosalind Nash was perhaps the closest of the next generation of cousins to Nightingale. The correspondence shows (with occasional reservations) how much Nightingale approved of her social reform work, much of it done jointly with her progressive husband, whom Nightingale greatly liked, Vaughan Nash. His tombstone, in the graveyard at Wellow, where he was buried with his wife and the Nightingales, sums him up as: Writer Friend of Labour private secretary to the Rt. Hon. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Nightingale left some important works to "Rosie" in her will: her printed copies of *Suggestions for Thought* (which Rosalind Nash distributed to strategically selected libraries), her copies of Quetelet's works with annotations (given to University College, London), volumes of Dante (whereabouts unknown); also six books of her choosing and a bronze bust.

Rosalind Nash did a great deal of the work gathering and copying Nightingale's correspondence after her death (alas destroying some of

it). She published, with her own preface, Nightingale's public letters to her nurses, *Florence Nightingale to Her Nurses: A Selection from Miss Nightingale's Addresses to Probationers and Nurses of the Nightingale School at St Thomas's Hospital*; a thirty-four page pamphlet, *A Sketch of the Life of Florence Nightingale*, and she did the one-volume abridgement of E.T. Cook's two-volume official biography, *The Life of Florence Nightingale*, 1916.

Nightingale's letters to Rosalind are usually signed "ever your loving. . . ."

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff155-56

5 December 1881

Dearest Rosy, Today I am thinking of your "little go." Success await you. Go in and win, but think it winning either way.

I saw dear Papa last night. He had unluckily missed his train for Cambridge on Saturday. Mama is at Castle Harrison, but no doubt you hear from her. She writes delightful? accounts of the sea coming in to Ard-nashgel. I wish you could make Sam write to Papa. Is he reading steadily?

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 f158

14 March 1887

Dearest Rosy, Thank you very much for your note and the lovely, most lovely pink and white tulips. I did not hear till Thursday afternoon that you were in London and going to Barbara's on Friday till today, and that you were going to Florence and Rome this week. But now I must try and bring you here to see your dear face before you go.

Would *tomorrow* (Tuesday) at 5 or at 6 suit you?

[envelope] with two eggs, Egyptian lentils, rice shapes, cranberry and apple compote and a lampshade for Sir H. Verney

17 December 1887

Are you left alone in the flat? I hear that Mama is gone into Devonshire—Papa wrote to me. I am going on Tuesday. How I wish that I could see you, my darling, before I go. But alas! every day is occupied more than it will bear. Will you write to me and tell me what you are doing?

Do you think that you would come down and see me at Pine Acres, Sunningdale? It is only an hour from Waterloo. I can give you a bed, if you would be so good as to come. It is very easy to get to and fro. Do come, if only for one night.

ever thy loving

Aunt Florence

Or I would say, IF it were not for Christmas time, you might, please, come for the day only, if you can't come for more. But I think the rail would be too full.

My love to Sam and Louis.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Shore Smith, ADD Mss 45795 f172

6 December 1888

My note to thy mother was to ask thee to come here during her absence, on Saturday (or tomorrow, Friday, as she is gone).

Sam shall come and dine—only you know you are always wasting your substance on riotous living with your co-ops, instead of partaking of wines and spirits at home, which are vegetables or, if not, what *are* they? Come my dearest to

your loving

Aunt Florence

I am so sorry about "Aunt Ellen."

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Shore Smith, ADD Mss 45795 ff182-83

1 July 1892

I will say nothing about Papa [William Shore Smith], about whom all our hearts are full, as you have seen them all. I have seen good Sam, and am to see Dr Ord<sup>161</sup> later. All seem sure that there is improvement. It seems like months since Wednesday.

I send you a list of Holloway people, and a cheque as you are so good as to permit. And do enjoy Castle top and the smell of the bracken and the ferns and the birds. Give my love to Mr Nash.

Source: From three letters to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff184-85, 187-88, with replies, and 189-90

Claydon House

Winslow, Bucks

30 September 1892

Thank you so much for your letter and for your two articles on Dr Arlidge. I have ordered Dr Arlidge.<sup>162</sup> It is the most important inquiry. I

---

161 William Miller Ord (1834-1902), presumably Shore's physician, also Nightingale's.

162 John Thomas Arlidge published numerous statistical studies of mortality and its causes from the 1860s; this one is presumably *The Pottery Manufacture in its Sanitary Aspects*, 1892.

trust that a great deal will come of it. Hitherto the Home Office has been by no means remarkable for helping on any inquiries of this sort.

I will tell you what I should like to do: for you to reprint in a good type as a pamphlet your two articles and charge it to me. Wise men tell you that the best letters in the *Times* or any other paper make an impression only for a day or two and then are forgotten, unless somebody has time to go and look them out at the Index at the office. The paper and types of the *Daily Chronicle* are so abominable that it is doubly true. I want you to reprint it in good type. (I have constantly done this sort of thing for medical officers of health. Please look with a favourable eye on my proposition.)

Very great care will be required in nomination of your standing commission of experts if you carry it. "Doctors" are often the worst sanitarians and are now gone mad on bacteriology. I have known but one signal instance of success: the W.O. Sanitary Commission, attributable to Sidney Herbert's initiative by his two royal commissions, by his personal interest, to having one paid responsible permanent member, Dr Sutherland (he is dead) not because he was a doctor but because he was a real experienced sanitarian expert.

Douglas Galton, *engineer*, is the best sanitarian I know now. When I have looked at Dr Arlidge, I should like to say more. You cannot have a more important subject on hand. My love to Mr Nash, please.

12 January 1893

I am requested to take the "learned counsel's opinion" on the following: the women's trades' unions have held a meeting and are going to send a deputation to Mr Asquith<sup>163</sup> on 24 January to request *women* inspectors for the sanitary arrangements for women in workshops and factories. Frederick Verney accompanies the deputation. Mr Asquith is supposed to be favourable "if they will be reasonable."

The question I am to ask the two learned counsels, Mrs Nash and Mrs Rosalind, is: how do you recommend the women inspectors to be selected? what do you propose instead of examination? i.e., how get over the difficulties of examination? what should be the substitute?

**Reply:** Not at present. Might be announced that exam. in -- years' time. Influence. Go to Till's in Lancashire for nominations.

**FN:** how you would select? and how dismiss? Ought these women inspectors to work under men officials?

---

163 Herbert H. Asquith (1852-1928), then home secretary.

**Reply:** In trades rather than in [illeg] where women chiefly employed [illeg].

**FN:** If so in what position they should be? and whether they could work in factories or workshops where both men and women are employed?

**Reply:** Could, but not contemplated at present.

**FN:** (N.B. I come in as the “devil’s advocate.” I fear the women trades’ unions are much too much inclined to ask for all the women inspectors to be factory workers and entirely to overlook various dangers, one of which is that such women would be open to pressure, not to say corruption. And where are you to find the educated sanitarian among them, when you cannot find her even among lady doctors?)

12 January 1893

I wish to know whether you know a lady, Mrs R. Nash, engaged in an “unhealthy” and “unwholesome trade” and what you would do for her. Mr Llewellyn Smith has been so good as to write to me and to allow me to keep the volume you kindly sent of his “Record,” a great boon. I also received last night the current no. of “the Record” and Mr Louis, who was with me, immediately pounced on your article, for which we Bucks creatures return you many and heartfelt thanks.

I am going to write to Mr Llewellyn Smith properly.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

Louis goes today through his examination. Good speed to him. He seemed neither excited nor despondent.

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, with an enveloped marked “with some purée,” Add Mss 45795 ff191-92

2 August 1893

I send you some purée of beef, NOT, I am afraid that it is particularly nicely made. But I do think it is very necessary for you to have some meat in a form that you can take, i.e., in a purée with nothing else in it but pure beef gravy, or gravy of the meat it is of. Please have some at Embley. I am glad you like your gruel, but you know gruel is not of the same value as meat, though books say it is.

Please remember that I could not go to Embley for two or three weeks anyhow, and perhaps it may be let. And please tell Sam that he

must not cut me as he goes through London for Ardtornish, but give me a long notice beforehand.

ever your loving  
Aunt Florence  
Don't tire yourself.

Source: From a letter to Vaughan Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff194-95

My dear Mr Vaughan 23 March 1894

Thank you a thousand times for your news of young jackanapes and his mother. I have taken the liberty to order Sandeman to send up from me a bottle of the purest brandy that is made. Sir Andrew Clark<sup>164</sup> recommended it. I have given it in critical cases where the patient said "I won't" and the doctor said "you must," with good effect. Perhaps however you will ask your doctor.

I don't suppose that your small son, who probably belongs to the Church Temperance Society, will drink it at a draught. It is a great relief that dear Rosalind is so well. Aunt Florence's best love to *her* and *hers*. The little three-pounder is certainly a person, a person of spirit who will know how to get his own living. I hope he will walk down to see me soon. But perhaps I may give him a cab.

ever yours sincerely  
F. Nightingale  
A pleasant Easter be yours.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 f211

Claydon House  
Winslow, Bucks  
3 January 1895

Dearest Rosalind, I have a bone to pick with you, you know what it is, and you shan't lose by my delay. When I can get persons of weight and repute like Vaughan and the Princelet to engage on my side, I shall come down upon you. Meanwhile, I charge you, lay aside your *head*.

It is good that Sam is gone to Ardtornish, isn't it? and that Louis is going to the W. Indies.

Could you kindly give me *Louis' Barker's address*. It won't be a breach of confidence, for I have it in South St.

---

164 Sir Andrew Clark (1826-93), physician to Frances Nightingale.

I am sorry the Princelet wants “iron.” How is it to be administered? His grandfather took *gravy* instead at Embley.

And now I will spare you the rest, dearest, for the present, save to ask your kindness to forgive me for not writing sooner: (1) because at Christmas in these remote wilds of the earth there is no communication by post, rail or road, (2) because you have been bad (but I hear have been golfing) and I have been bad. I am sorry the “little comrade” did not come this time; (3) because there is a good deal to do here.

your  
F.N.

Source: From three letters to Rosalind Nash, Add Mss 45795 ff213-14, 215-16 and 217-18

Claydon  
3 March 1895

The Princelet! [her son] how grieved I am that he has been ill. I hope it is “has been,” and that you have not been too much tired out. Mother has been good in writing to me. She seems happy and occupied at Woodington, and much wanted there. Vaughan, I suppose it is Vaughan, has been very kind in sending me the *Daily Chronicle*, with his (I suppose they are his) articles on the County Council, the London Parliament. (Lord Rosebery<sup>165</sup> said to me: “It is impossible to say how it will turn out, this Parliament within a Parliament! But it is very certain that it will exercise a considerable power in the House of Commons.”)

I hear that Vaughan’s articles have done a great deal of good and I have ordered a truck full of them “in book form.” I am all agog collecting books of instruction, for schoolboys leaving school, for men, for free libraries, on the duties and responsibilities of parish councils and district councils, on the measures of past years *and their RESULTS*. But I have completely failed in getting any book of the last sixty-five years, beginning with the first Reform Bill and Poor Law reform, *and their results*, what has *failed*, what has *succeeded*. And the Oxford people tell me such a book does not exist—does it? (You remember what Sir John Herschel says about this, that *we* never learn from the *past*.)

3 May 1895

I am sorry not to hear a better account of you. I am afraid sitting up with the Princelet was not a sanitary measure. Is that gentleman still at Seaford?

---

165 Archibald Philip Primrose (1847-1929), 5th earl of Rosebery, Liberal prime minister.

Louis has just been here. When he was last here, he said he should like a Shakespeare. Can you and Mr Vaughan advise me as to a *good edition*? I know nothing between a diabolical bad print, cramming the “immortal” Shakespeare into one bulky volume, and Cassell’s little single plays, one play in each shabby little volume, with good notes, in a box. But it is not a library book, it is a box. We had a Shakespeare with good print and many volumes and Johnson’s notes, which were not good, at Embley, which I was fond of and my father used to read out of. But that is antiquated. I hear you are going to have rooms in London.

ever, dearest

your loving Aunt Florence

With compliments to the Princelet and kind regards to Vaughan. The mother enjoyed your visit on the week before Easter so much. She wrote to me: it was not only Good Friday but Good Thursday and so on and Good Saturday. When shall I see you?

14 June 1895

How are you? I am afraid you were very tired yesterday. And I tired you, especially by my crusade about milk for the poor people,<sup>166</sup> about the extraordinary superstitions as to food of poor mothers. But I don’t think you need apply these to the Princelet. Just do what the doctor at Hampstead, whom you like, says, and take Sam, who will be seeing the Princelet, into your counsels. I have great faith in Sam. As to the facts we were talking of about the harm to the infants of their mothers’ dieting, just see the difference between their cooking and yours, between the meat they get and yours, and see how little it applies to the Princelet. The frying pan is the only cooking they know. Or they do everything in one saucepan. Or the children drink out of the kettle.

But I will not go on for fear Mr Vaughan should call our poor “pigs.” A Derbyshire workingman once said to me: “We live on beef-steaks and mutton chops” (they eat or used to eat much more meat than we do) “not because we like it, nor because we don’t know that it’s extravagant, but because our wives don’t know how to do anything else.” Now the Princelet is an exceedingly sensible young man. And in his name I say “the moral of all this and a great deal more is don’t be

---

166 A theme in “Rural Hygiene,” 1894, a paper by Nightingale read by Maude Verney at the General Conference of Women Workers, Leeds, in *Public Health Care* (6:607-21).



so uneasy about me.” (They used to say of Sam at St Bartholomew’s that he was the only man or woman who knew how to wash a baby. I have great faith in the scoundrel of my heart, Sam, though he *will* say (all at once) something to the effect that the world is made to be ill and had much better die off at once. But you, get him to Hampstead, don’t be at him, but use him. God bless you both and the Princelet.

ever your loving

Aunt Florence

I will send Hodgkin<sup>167</sup> tomorrow with many thanks.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff222-27

[ca. December 1896]

I shall be delighted, I mean I shall be miserable to talk with you about Indian things. But you know a man who can call Lord Ripon an old woman “is fit for treason, stratagem and spoils.”<sup>168</sup> India is very badly off just now, I should like to tell you. We are more than usually busy and anxious now with our outlying hospitals. And Harry B.C. is of course sadly taken up with Hugh’s<sup>169</sup> almost sudden death. He is to be buried tomorrow.

Won’t you have some tea?

Yes, please, get those two Caldecotts for the Princelet.

I am dealing extensively in Caldecotts, etc., for Christmas in St Thomas’ wards.

Dearest, I left off yesterday compelled to do so almost abruptly. But you are never far from my thoughts. I should have added that the lady I spoke of had to do with an agent personally disagreeable and personally disagreeable to *her*. Yet she “gets on” with him. But the thing is: a wise man has said that we must choose between influence and the credit (the name) of this thing—we can’t have both. And he acts up to it. He never claims the formal authority, the name of anything. He says we ought to be all things to all men,<sup>170</sup> and he has more influence than anyone.

He always gives the name, the credit of the thing, to others. And, nobody knows that it is he who has done it. Yet there his influence is strong and constant. Whether political, social, in administration or in management in business. It is astonishing how enormous is the influ-

---

167 Probably Thomas Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*.

168 Possibly an allusion to the “dunce” in Gail Hamilton, “Camilla’s Concert,” in *Gala Days* 310.

169 Hugh Bonham Carter (1832-96), lieutenant colonel.

170 An allusion to 1 Cor 9:22.

ence of those. What great works have been accomplished by those who have been content to work in this way, turning no one out, working with anyone, disagreeable or agreeable.

It is indeed the secret of influence. And one must win one's spurs and prove oneself capable of a post before bargaining for it. I may give the name of a man, though I was not thinking of *him* in writing this. I may give his name, because he has been dead long years—he died in 1838, Hilary Bonham Carter's father,<sup>171</sup> who worked thus. He had more influence than anyone with ministers. Yet his name was never heard. When the Reform Bill was passed, he spent his life in the drudgery of going round himself and getting votes registered, because this was the only way of getting the uneducated to care about their votes or even to know that they had votes. He met his death in this way, by this drudgery. But if others had drudged too he need not have died. And perhaps no one can tell what a difference in history in the working of the Reform Bill his drudgery made. History does not tell these names.

Must not every life to be complete have the bread of life and the wine of life? Some people take all the wine and never think of the solid bread, the drudgery, literary or otherwise, of life? Others drudge away manfully or womanfully<sup>172</sup> at some literary or administrative work, and never think that they must have wine, the wine of associating sympathetically with their fellow creatures, especially the poor and the sick. I was almost sorry that G. was to give up, this by parenthesis, her one day a week at Hoxton. It is so very good for young women to work under the C.O.S., not setting up for themselves. This is the wine. The British Museum is the bread of life. But I am not venturing to advising. It may be that it was too much for her health. Now pardon my tediousness and remember only my love.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, Woodward Biomedical Library A.86

31 January 1898

Dearest Rosalind, May I send you two little angels which were to have reached you on New Year's Day? But I sent them to be framed and the man was so long in doing them that I growled and grunted, but he answered that he had so much to do that I ought to be thankful to get them at all. No, he did not quite say that—but I had to give in and retire meekly with my tail between my legs.

171 John Bonham Carter I, MP for Portsmouth for many years.

172 "At the British Museum" struck out.

I hope you are all in the highest state of prosperity.  
ever your loving  
Aunt Florence

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff228-29

July 1898  
6 A.M.

Dearest, What a delightful companion for some leisure compelled by weariness you have given me in Brandes's Shakespeare. I have not been able to read much yet, but the Italian part reminds me of old, old days when we read Tasso and Ariosto with my father and attempted some translations, and Alfieri who, Macaulay said, redeemed Italian from shepherdesses and affectation—for patriotism, as Cowper did English—for "Mrs Unwin's knitting needles."

My father was a good and always interested Italian scholar, never pedantic, never tiresome grammarian, but he spoke Italian like an Italian, and I took care of the verbs.

Shakespeare is for ever to be studied, has ever fresh mines to be explored and worked. And oh the depth of his tragedy in a few words. You remember Falstaff's death, Falstaff the prince of good fellows, as told by the "hostess" who alone stayed by him:

A' said "O God! O God" three times.

A' told him he should not think of God.

But you quoted that better than I do. That always seemed to me when I was a child too terrible to be written.

I had written so far this morning, thinking you were going today, when your letter came.

Source: From a letter to Rosalind Nash, ADD Mss 45795 ff230-31

16 February 1900

Thanks for your lovely flowers and for your kind note. I should be so glad to see Vaughan tomorrow (Saturday) at 5, if that would suit him. Or I could make it Sunday at 5, if it would suit him better. The "book about irrigation" by me was my evidence before the royal commission. It was afterwards reprinted by itself separately and, if I could find a copy, it would be very much at Vaughan's service. I am glad he is going to get introductions from Sir W. Wedderburn,<sup>173</sup> who knows

---

173 Sir William Wedderburn (1838-1918), earlier judge and civil servant in India, resigned in frustration, MP, supporter of the Indian National Congress and collaborator on reform; Nightingale left him £250 for Indian work.

everybody, and still more glad that he is going to India. Independent observers are so much wanted when they know so much as he does. Sir W. Wedderburn is one of the two who have really kept up their connection with India. All success to Vaughan.

### Charlotte Symonds Green

**Editor:** As well as the historian Alice Stopford Green (see p 818 above), Nightingale knew another “Mrs Green,” born Charlotte Byron Symonds (1842-1929), wife of the moral philosopher, T.H. Green, a close friend and colleague of Jowett’s. Both she and her husband are buried next to Jowett in St Sepulchre Cemetery, Oxford. This Mrs Green possessed a private fortune, wanted to become a nurse but did not. She was a benefactor of Balliol College and gave a great deal of help to Jowett in his last years, including acting as amanuensis. She was with him when he died. Nightingale was grateful to her for her kindness and practicality: “That Mrs T.H. Green was installed in the house at his own desire” was “an utterable relief” for he would be cared for.<sup>174</sup>

The friendship began when Jowett put Mrs Green in touch with Nightingale in 1884. Mrs Green, however, made the same mistake many others did in calling on Nightingale without an appointment, so that there are several letters about arranging a convenient rendezvous. Most of the correspondence pertinent to Jowett has been published with other correspondence to him in *Theology* (3:213-17); there is one about Nightingale’s owl Athena in *Society and Politics* (5:816). Three letters are given here, one when Green’s and Nightingale’s mutual friend was still alive, two remembering him after his death.

Source: From a letter to Charlotte Symonds Green, Wellcome Ms 5477/4

19 March 1885

I am most anxious to see you but grieved to think that till next week I shall not have a minute I can certainly call my own. We have been sending out trained nurses and are sending out things to the seat of war. You never think of going there do you? I do not mean as trained nurse, to deal, alas! with numbers of wounded and of fevers, but to go up, for instance, in one of the boats of the Princess of Wales’ Branch (of the National Aid Society) to fetch down cases to Cairo from up the

---

174 Letter to Margaret Verney 9 October 1891, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9013/201.

Nile, or in the yacht which is to ply from Suakim to Suez with patients?

God bless you. I hope you will be in London again.

ever yours most faithfully

F. Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Charlotte Symonds Green, Wellcome Ms 5477/18 and 19

11 November 1894

Thank you so very much for the picture as a younger man of our dear friend. It was like him to the last—for his face never grew old, though his breathlessness made his figure like that of an old man. His hair was, I believe, always white, which added, by contrast, to the youthfulness of his expression. Michelangelo said that the face of those who preserved their purity of life preserved their youthfulness to the end.

I cannot think what the “engraving” of me with the “owl” is, unless it be from a drawing by my sister, now dead, which I have never seen. The “owl” I assure you was a much more interesting person than I. He fell out of his nest on the Parthenon (a very small fluffy owl—the Athenian owl and was called Athena) and I rescued him from some boys who were tormenting him, for the sum of one parà. I brought him home to England in my pocket, where I regret to say he ate a live Athenian grasshopper, but failed to make any impression on two small tortoises which I was also bringing to England. When he was adopted at my old home in England he lived principally in a bookcase behind the books, where he made his presence known by uttering a peculiar cry, some 150 times, like a prayer. But with the extraordinary instinct of some animals—smile if you please—he dropped off his perch dead when he heard I was going to the Crimea, though he had not seen me for fifteen months (I was keeping a hospital in London for sick governesses).

My mother carried him about wherever she went, while he lived and had him stuffed when he died, where he still is at my old home (I am the sole survivor of my immediate family). Now, was he not an interesting character?

Thank you very much for giving me a notice of Miss Masson and also of Mr Abbott.<sup>175</sup> You are, I am sure, looking after his health as the

---

175 Flora Masson (c1857-?), matron of the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford; Evelyn Abbott, co-editor of *Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett*.

survivor of our dear old master—old man and master no more of Balliol alone but of many Balliols.

Excuse this scrambling note. I have come here for a short time (with my doctor's leave) because somehow wanted. But everything is forwarded to me from 10 South St.

ever your affectionate

F. Nightingale

rejoicing to have known and to know you

Claydon

11, 18-21 November 1894

I have begun this answer over and over again to your dear letter, and never found time or strength to finish it. (There is a good deal to do here, *not* revising other people's "nursing books," which I have discontinued for some time.) Now don't punish me by curtailing your letters, which are such a benefit to my old body, "Brother Ass,"<sup>176</sup> you know. You are too cruel when you say you will not write any more. (N.B. I won't offend Mr Jowett by saying my "old *mind*." He always said that our last years were (or ought to be) our best. It made him quite mad when anybody talked about this "poor life." He used to say, "Why it's a *splendid* gift, is *life*!" And so it is, isn't it? I think this ought to be brought out clearly in *his Life*, the immense *spirit* of *life* (not the "*pride* of life"<sup>177</sup>) of the man.

This it was which transmogrified Oxford, not his Plato,<sup>178</sup> though that too gave him a great influence and made a great part of the man. (But I always think Plato ought to be very much obliged to him, not he to Plato.) He had the "genius" of life.

And (1) for the most unimportant first: the owl—the sketch must have been undoubtedly by my sister—and "P.N." means Parthe Nightingale—before her marriage. (She was born at Naples—hence her name Parthenope—which our dear old nurse always called Parthe-noppy.) And "1855" was the second year of the Crimean War, when, having surmounted that terrible winter of 1854-55 and the frightful hospitals of Scutari, we were thought to be subjects for cheap prints and the like.

But I am quite sure my *sister* would not put "the beautiful young lady"—that must have been a trick of Colnaghi's, who was fond of our

176 Francis of Assisi's expression for his old body.

177 An allusion to 1 John 2:16.

178 Jowett's edition of the *Dialogues of Plato*, on which Nightingale gave him considerable advice; see *Society and Politics* (5:551-623).

family—or of Mr Hill. I learn for the first time from Lady Verney, the present Lady Verney [Margaret] that is, was she who gave the picture to Mr Jowett the very last time he was at Claydon, the very last time he ever was here, when we thought him so ill that he never would leave this house. But he *would* go to Lord Rosebery's about a tutor for his children and the next day was a Sunday, and he was obliged from illness to go straight back to Balliol, as you doubtless remember. Luckily he had his Swiss servant, Perroud, with him, whom, he told me, he could not afford to keep, or I believe he never would have got back to your care. He worried Lady Verney for this picture of the owl, which he had seen here, it seems. And she, not the owl, hunted out a copy in Sir Harry's receptacles, and mounted it and took it herself to Balliol and saw it in his study. As it was her gift I am bound to obey her and she says: Give it to the Ladies' College, Somerville College, you mention, "of which Sir W. Markby<sup>179</sup> is a director," "because Mr Jowett was very much interested "in that college," although her daughter is at Lady Margaret's Hall.

I am always prosy about Mr Jowett, which he never was, and you will excuse me. He had the oddest taste in art, as you know. He could not bear the glorious Michelangelo statues in the Medicean Chapel at Florence, the statue of "Lorenzo" (*not* the great Lorenzo) hanging his head, which he did, the heroic Michelangelo said, "perché, il pensieri de' tiranni senza rémorso [because the thoughts of tyrants are without remorse]" nor the "sonno [sleep]" of which he, Michelangelo, said, "Grato m'è il sonno e più l'essir di sasso. Mentre ch'è danno *e la vergogna* dura [I appreciate the sleep and even more to be made out of stone, while the damage and shame continues] of the Medicean rule, which you know better than I. And a thing of no value would catch his fancy like the owl picture—I mean Mr Jowett's fancy, not Michelangelo's *even when he was dying*. Excuse length:

Thoughts of joy and pain

Come wildering o'er my aged brain.<sup>180</sup>

I am so interrupted.

ever yours

F.N.

---

179 William Markby (1829-1914), in charge of India Civil Service students at Oxford University, based at Balliol College.

180 A paraphrase from Walter Scott, "Lay of the Last Minstrel."

[cont'd.] 21 November 1894

This is the only important thing: we like the text from 1 Corinthians 13:2<sup>181</sup> and the quotation from Crito immensely for the College Chapel. I will write again about this.<sup>182</sup>

### Caroline Werckner

**Editor:** Caroline (Mrs Frederick) Werckner (c1836-?) was an Englishwoman with whom Nightingale worked closely on relief in the Franco-Prussian War. Correspondence with her appears in the second war volume. In 1871 Nightingale described her as “small, young looking and elegant, although probably thirty-five.” She sent her a book in 1872 dedicated: “To Mrs Frederick Werckner, who has done such great things for the relief of such deep miseries among the French prisoners in Germany, this little book is offered by one who is proud to call herself countrywoman to such a true heroine.” Florence Nightingale March 1872, Columbia University.

The correspondence here deals with Caroline Werckner’s difficult circumstances several years after the Franco-Prussian War when her husband, a German who spoke no English, became mentally ill, lost both his and her money and was extremely difficult to deal with. That husbands had enormous rights over their wives and their money exacerbated everything. The letters, from 1877 to 1883, relate Nightingale’s attempts to raise money (a pension) for her, deal with her husband’s mental illness, find her paying positions and help with sums of cash herself. The whole situation was delicate, for Caroline Werckner had not been trained for any kind of paid work and was accustomed to the lifestyle and status of a lady. From the stress her own judgment became erratic. There is no surviving correspondence after 1883 but Mme Werckner does appear in Nightingale’s 1896 will, where she was left £100, noted as living “now at Lymington,” her sister’s home (see *Life and Family* 1:853).

181 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

182 Indeed there was much further correspondence on the choice of a text to commemorate Jowett in *Theology* (3:213-17). In fact the quotation used on the plaque in the college chapel is from the *Apology of Socrates* and the biblical quotation on the tombstone was “They that put their trust in him shall understand the truth and such as be faithful in love shall abide with him” (Wis 3:9).



Source: From three letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/88, 94 and 99

6 April 1877

*Mme Werckner and the French Prisoners.* I send you her sad history. I answered her letter, telling her how ill you were. She replied, a very feeling letter, which I will show you. She leaves England the middle of *this* month to return to Breslau to wind up affairs.

They are too poor to keep her husband where he is. I do not think she will come to London unless we ask her.

18 April 1877

Mme Werckner will come on the *24th* to *Vauxhall* Station, leaving Lymington by the *1:50*. I shall be very much obliged to you, dear Sir Harry, if you will desire your coachman *to order a carriage* (at Livery Stables) sending me the bill, to meet Mme Werckner, and *send your butler, Morey*, with the carriage as you kindly propose. (I will also send my Messenger by the carriage, who is a goose, to bring her luggage here on a cab.)

Mme W. will stay till the *26th*. And please let the same operation be repeated for taking her to Charing Cross on that day. As she stays till Thursday, I will not see her till Wednesday, best both for her and me.

25 April 1877

After hearing Mme Werckner's account, I entirely agree with you that to take her husband under her care would be to ensure *HIS getting worse* and to *kill her*, or more probably still, to send two to an asylum instead of one. But I earnestly hope that she will not remain at Berlin, even leaving him in the asylum. It would be a perpetual harass.

Source: From two letters to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/143 and 148

23 April 1878

*Mme Werckner.* Poor woman! Would you desire your coachman, dear P., to order a carriage to meet her at *Waterloo 2:21 P.M.* (and let me pay for it)? *tomorrow?* Shall she luncheon *here* or with you? Please say.

I am sorry to say I must see Sir William Wyatt tomorrow afternoon and shall not be able to see her till Thursday. But she will be well off.

18 May 1878

I am sure Mme Werckner is quite incapable of undertaking a crèche or anything at all like it. And, as her object is to help to maintain her husband, any salary much under £100 a year would not be worth her while.

I will gladly see you this afternoon, if you are coming, dear P., about 5 or 6? I have put off an Indian on purpose.

Source: From seven letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/151, 166-69, 172 and 175

28 May 1878

Have you kindly advised *Mme Werckner* as to how she had better proceed with the proposed companionship with the *Russian lady*?

6 September 1878

This terrible letter has just reached me, dear Sir Harry. I feel afraid she has left London today "Friday." I have telegraphed to her however to telegraph to me where she is (paying of course the return telegram).

This is all I could do for the moment. *Please advise me what to do next.* Indeed I think there never was a fate like hers, for I believe she wants care and rest quite as much as her husband, if not more. *His* case is hopeless.

Lea Hurst

6 September 1878

I send you this poor *Mme Werckner's* telegram, dear Sir Harry. What *will* become of them? The wife is really worse in *health* than the husband. What will become of them?

In my hurry I foolishly omitted to copy her address (on her letter which I sent you by this morning's post) thinking she would put her address on any answer to my telegram. Please telegraph it to me in time for Saturday *morning's* post, if possible. I shall send her £10.

But what advice can one give to such a desperate situation? For some reason, they would not take him in at Bethlehem<sup>183</sup> and he does not speak English, curiously enough. I dare say she cannot leave him a moment, and no servant! and no money! And she knowing no one in London and quite strange there, not even knowing her way, and he knowing no one in England, where he has never been till this. Probably he saw the telegram enclosed.

Lea Hurst

14 September 1878

*What CAN one do for this poor woman?* It makes one's heart sick. I should not wonder if she were to die before *him*.

---

183 Bethlehem Hospital, a psychiatric institution, from which "Bedlam."

I enclose her letter. (I have written to Gunter's to send her chicken panada and to take her orders. *But what can one do to relieve her necessities?* I send her £10 and had previously sent two £5.) She appears to have sold everything. *How are they to live?* O God, can nothing be done for her?

[September 1878]

Mme Werckner has been in constant correspondence with me. I have supplied her with money, without which her husband could not have been sent to Vienna. She has had £45 of me. She herself was too ill to go with him. (I think she is worse than he is) and now she is going to support him by giving lessons in Vienna!!

N.B. The letter you showed me—from Mr Hammersley, I believe, said that Mme Werckner's brother-in-law was a retired Lymington *grocer* (not a "solicitor"). . . . (I had a previous letter from her saying how ill she was, but she *must* take a place to support her husband, saying that the "*Guild*" was closed and out of town *for six weeks* and that she had got nothing and did not know how to wait.) From what I have seen of her I cannot fancy her capable of taking charge, any *responsible* charge.

Was ever fate like hers, I say indeed. *Please advise.*

Lea Hurst

Cromford, Derby

4 November 1878

Mme Werckner starts tomorrow for Vienna and will send us her address there. She will be deeply grateful to you *for a letter to Sir Henry or Lady Elliot*. I do not know either but you say you will kindly *get her* a letter of introduction. Poor woman: she has a sad campaign before her. Poor M Werckner has already been obliged to change his lodgings: the people refused to keep him, as well they might, without a servant or keeper.

14 December 1878

I know not whether you think this will do. If you think that I had better not allude at all to the French government but simply write a statement to you, I will rewrite it.

I hope you have sent her, Mme Werckner, a letter for the Vicomte d'Harcourt at Vienna.

Source: From three letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/238, 253 and 261

31 May 1879

*Mme Werckner.* Mme Hugelin, 17 Salesiann Gasse, Vienna.

I send you this terrible letter from our poor friend, which please return to me. I have sent her £5, the most I could afford, for she had £50 from me last year—I wish I could give her £50 this. If it would please God to take the poor husband --. But, when the reaction comes after his death, I expect she will sink into a state of hopeless exhaustion. No one seems to go near her of all those she has served and saved.

I shall write to M Mohl's niece Ida to go and see her. *Could you think of anyone at Vienna?*

Lea Hurst

Cromford, Derby

30 September 1879

Thank you a thousand times for all you have done for poor Mme Werckner. You have been good indeed.

Alas! the poor woman's situation becomes worse and worse. They have *stopped the pay* which her husband was receiving at that Bureau, because, mainly from illness but partly also from insanity, his work was so irregular. *She* has no lessons, but is hoping that, now the winter is coming and gentlefolks are returning to Vienna, she may get some—a poor dependence, I am afraid.

I have not dared to tell her of your kindness about M Waddington. It appears that some months ago she wrote to him herself, possibly at your suggestion, but had no answer. Lady Elliot was kind to her in sending partridge and the like, but has done little or nothing in the way of lessons. It is a miserable situation.

If, as you say, the French government could only give her 1000 fr. pension till the husband's death. The husband seems no nearer death, poor man.

Lea Hurst

Cromford, Derby

11 November 1879

I enclose poor Mme Werckner's letter, which please return. I hope the "1000 fr." is to be ANNUAL but fear not. And these letters? of hers --.

Source: From four letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/48, 50, 80 and 150

Seaforth Lodge  
Seaton

22 April 1880

Thanks, thanks for what you are doing with the French government about poor Mme Werckner's fr. 1000.

You will see by the enclosed letter (which please return to me) that it was never more wanted. A more terrible fate than hers one can scarcely conceive—her husband not insane enough, unfortunate man, to be put legally into confinement, yet too insane not to ruin her—with all her superhuman courage and exertions and patience.

(I heard much more of this from Miss Irby than I ever knew before: twice he had taken all she had, and once at least compelled her to have an execution in her poor one room, once by consulting a doctor without telling her and sending her in the bills and once by taking shares in some speculation without telling her, and making her pay for them. She parted with her wedding ring. By the enclosed you will see he is always under the delusion that he can make his, an immense, fortune in Vienna!)

Her deafness, so clearly a *head-deafness*, I thought against her, even when here, for lessons or situations. Now it must be, I should think, fatal to any employment. One knows not what to advise; it is clearly useless for her to remain at Vienna, "to spend," as she says, her "summer in a hospital." She should *come to her sister's* (the retired grocer's) near Lymington. But *what is she to do with the unfortunate man?* She cannot put him under legal restraint. He will follow her to England as he did before. And I suppose the sister exceedingly objects to this.

Then about her *going to Paris*: is it better or is it worse *for the success* of your kind efforts that *she should go there? Should I tell her what you are doing and what you advise her to do?*

(I am only astonished that her health has not utterly broken down before this. I thought when she left England that her husband would survive her. I think so much more now.)

*Miss Irby* only left England on Thursday last and will doubtless see Mme Werckner in Vienna. Perhaps a little money to bring her home is what she most *wants* from me, but *what to do with him?* Ida (Mohl) Schmidt-Zabierow is with Mme Mohl in Paris.

Seaforth Lodge  
Seaton, S. Devon  
26 April 1880

Miss Irby writes from Vienna: "She, Mme Werckner, will, I hope, go to Paris in May. Lady Elliot is interesting herself very much about her: I fear Mme Werckner's health is breaking down, and we urged her to go while she can." Go *where?*

This does not help one much as to how to best advise her what to do, especially about her husband.

24 August 1880  
Mme Werckner is back at Lymington!!! Her husband insisted on leaving Paris and going back to Vienna!!! She had no control over him and is come back to England, poor woman!! She has sent me a heap of letters, which I will send you.

2 May 1881  
Here is this poor Mme Werckner with a fresh and heavy blow. You kindly asked me whether you could do anything for me in London.

You see her counsellor in Vienna tells her to settle her husband's affairs and to remove him if possible from Vienna. Would you be so very kind as to write to Mme Werckner direct and advise her? She will attend to you more.

You see poor M Werckner, being unable from mental disease to discriminate, is involved with a scoundrel who has been arrested (which may have serious consequences for him) and owes money. *I* cannot help her about selling her bracelet. What would you advise!! Please tell her.

You see what she says about translations.

**Editor:** A letter to Parthenope and Harry Verney welcoming them home thanked them "for all the kind trouble you have taken for poor Mme W. She is on her way to or arrived at San Remo, where she has taken the post offered. But I have not heard from her yet. I believe her sister is leaving Lymington."<sup>184</sup> One to Harry Verney again thanks him: "Very many thanks for your great goodness to Mme Werckner. I enclose her note to me. I should address to her: Mme W., M (le Chevalier?) *Blanchi*, San Remo. The letter is better than I expected; I feared much worse, with her bad health."<sup>185</sup>

184 Letter 28 October 1881, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/179.

185 Letter 6 November 1881, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/180.

Another to the two states: “Misfortune and mistake seem to pursue this poor woman. Please read the enclosed about the *1000 fr.* you were so kind as to get her. *What* is to be done?”<sup>186</sup> A letter to her sister the next year encloses a distressing letter from M Werckner and asks “what shall I do?”<sup>187</sup> One to Harry Verney asks:

Have you heard anything of this poor woman? I am afraid her husband has caught her and brought her to England. I found on my table a card: “*Mrs and Mr Werckner-Columbus*” (this is one of his insanities) and a direction at Dalston: not a word from her. In the meantime I have this letter from your Mrs Boyce of Bordighera. Do you think any good can be done by an appeal, or by *this* appeal, to the crown princess? farther than what you did already.<sup>188</sup>

Correspondence moved on to obtaining a pension for her from the Prussian government. One asked Harry Verney:

Could you tell me whether you ever had any answer to that petition drawn up by Miss Whately in favour of Mme *Werckner* to the *crown princess* of Germany and forwarded to me by Mrs Boyce for transmission, which you kindly signed and forwarded to the Cr. Pr.? Mrs Boyce writes to me to ask its fate.

Mme Werckner is now in London.<sup>189</sup>

Source: From four letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/86, 90-91 and 93 (all written from Lea Hurst)

7 September 1882

I have to write to you about many things—poor Mme Werckner—with whom I had a long talk.

15 September 1882

I would also tell you about *Mme Werckner*, *not* to induce you to apply again at Paris for her, as you have so kindly done so often and as now appears to be useless, as you say, but because, by cross-questioning her in London, poor, poor soul! I for the first time have understood the real state of her affairs.

---

186 Letter to Parthenope and Harry Verney 26 November 1881, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9008/185.

187 Letter to Parthenope Verney 19 February 1882, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/12.

188 Letter 5 May 1882, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/40.

189 Letter 16 August 1882, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/85.

Their property is *gone!* There is not a thaler left, not one. It has been sold sometime since to a gentleman who undertook it on these terms, viz., that *he* was to undertake to pay all the fees, due for years, all the mortgages, etc., all the legal expenses incurred. And on these terms, considered very onerous for him, he took over the manufactory and all that was left of any kind, without paying a *sou*.

It is vain to talk of getting them back anything that is left of their property, for there *is* NOTHING *left*. It is vain also to talk of getting him into a poorhouse at Berlin. For neither do the poorhouses at Berlin undertake to ascertain whether their inmates have property. Nor would there be any of his to be found if they did.

M Werckner is now in Paris: he escaped from London where he had run up a debt of £10 at his lodgings, leaving behind him his port[e]manteau in payment—which however contained nothing worth that sum. He and *his wife have often been without bread to eat*. (He has been so lately at Paris.) She has paid his scores again and again and has nothing left.

Next, he has a fixed delusion—not perhaps *quite* a delusion—that if he returns to Berlin, Bismarck will get hold of him. The doctors say that if he were *forced* to return he would certainly become a raving lunatic.

*She* is still seeking a situation. But she is in that state, poor woman, that I cannot conceive any lady seeing her and taking her. I think *as she says* that it is like a miracle that *she* has not become insane. Her state is deplorable. *What is to be done?* I should have more to tell you, if you wished.

17 September 1882

Thank you a thousand times for thinking of an “almshouse” for poor Mme Werckner. But please not to trouble yourself, for of that it is not at all the question. You know she is now living with her sister at Lymington and, while she is there, though far from comfortable, yet certainly there is no need to canvass for an “almshouse” for her. *Her* care is how to maintain her husband who has now literally nothing, who often lacks bread (and she too when she is with him) and to whom she has now literally nothing to send, except what she makes by her poor little fancywork. Her sister will not let the husband live with her, nor give him anything: both things one cannot wonder at. *I* should feel more alarmed than even poor Mme Werckner lest he should commit suicide. She sometimes shows me his letters.



27 September 1882

You must forgive me that I did not forward your kind £5 note to Mme Werckner and I now return it to you by cheque. She has not been the loser by it. I do not think she has the slightest claim for money upon you who have been so kind to her. And if you did this—I could not consult you upon the poor woman's really overwhelming misfortunes, out of which I can see no way.

I will tell you more of what I with difficulty gathered from her when we meet.

Source: From six letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/175-76, 187, 198, 201-02

16 May [1883]

You see M Werckner *is* at the HOTEL—which is just what we always thought (*not* in the colony). I suppose the money must be sent nevertheless?

16 May [1883]

But what might be said, to Mme Werckner, if you think well is that you were entrusted with two £5 by Mrs Boyce, expressly on condition (as was all my £30) that he, M W., as to be in the colony and not in the hotel, that you must therefore return those two £5 to Mrs Boyce, that *I* will make it good, but that I cannot give any more—can I? What do you think? (*That* will be my giving £20 out of the £30 promised on condition.) . . . Mme Werckner will be sure to declare that it is *not* a hotel.

18 July 1883

I send you poor Mme Werckner's sad, sad letter. What can we do for her? But the idea of putting a poor would-be suicide into the Homeopathic Hospital, where they neither would nor ought to take him, and where they could do him no good! Dalston Hospital would not be a bad place—if only that it is now a case which *must* be under constraint—and they would probably pass him on to Bethlehem.

27 August 1883

If you are so good as to give me those three wild ducks, would *Mr Fred* have the kindness to take two to London and put them in the Parcel Delivery Co. (and if not too much trouble pay them) for Mme Werckner, who I really fear has not enough to eat. Mrs Wardroper might have the other bird, but as I sent to her three grouse Sir James Caird gave me I think if you liked to give all three wild ducks to *Mme Werckner* (altering the number on my label) it would be a good deed.

31 August 1883

I thank God every day for having given poor Mme Werckner *such* a friend as Mrs Boyce. As she asks the question, I will briefly say to you what I did offer Mme W. (a month ago—repeated sometimes three times a day since. She sometimes writes to me twice a day), viz., that if M Werckner would go to Gheel, for a year, for which I hold his written consent, and for which she has the necessary medical certificates, and information, I would be responsible for £25—£5 to be paid to make up the first or second quarter: the remaining £20 not to be paid till the end of the year of M Werckner's residence at Gheel, and then to be refunded to the persons whom Mme W. told me would kindly advance the money, on condition of being repaid by *her*, which she conscientiously said she could not promise. So I engaged *for her*.

(I made this condition of making *the end of year* the time of payment, of £20, in order to protect Mme W. against what has happened more than once, viz., that M Werckner has had journey and pension paid or advanced for him and in consequence of his mental alienation has got out of the train before he reached his destination, has lived on any money he had had advanced to him as long as it lasted, and then has run up debts for her to pay.)

To return, M Werckner has made so many difficulties about the small *amount* of the pension at Gheel that I have advised Mme W. to fix the "pension" at Gheel at £32 per annum (800 fr.) or £8 per quarter. Mrs Boyce has had the great kindness "to collect £10." I would make the £5 I promised into £6. That is £16, half the year. I have repeatedly counselled, nay entreated, Mme Werckner to set off at once for Gheel with her husband. (N.B. it is perfectly useless her sending him alone even IF he reached the place, he would leave at once on some delusion or other.)

Their two passages to Antwerp shall be paid, I told her (toward which I have already received 30/). There is nothing to wait for *to set off* but *to set off*. I doubt the advisability of paying *more than a quarter* in advance (which is all that is required at Gheel) for the reasons above stated. As to this, I would do of course exactly as Mrs Boyce thinks best. If she likes to give £5 out of her £10 *now*, I will give the £3 to make up the quarter at £8. Or as she likes. (It would be better, if possible, to pay the £8 by an order on Gheel, as M Werckner can always make his wife give him any money she has. She is not proof against him, small blame to her!) . . .

With regard to the second part of Mrs Boyce's most kind letter, viz., about *Mme Werckner* administering her poor husband's property (as

to which *you* have tried to do so much)—in the long conversation I had with Mme W. on the subject some time ago, I ascertained from her that *there was no property left*. He had had out the last remnant there was some time before. I wish somebody better than I could ascertain if this is correct from *her*.

[ca. 6 September 1883]

All our prayer is that M and Mme Werckner, as she well knows, should start immediately for Gheel. PRAY TELEGRAPH AT ONCE, AS YOU KINDLY PROPOSE. It is a Godsend to get them off—to Gheel—and in such good company. (I don't know what she means by my "decision." At all events I have sent them, as you know, ample money for both and it appears that this lady gives them a ticket besides. I thank God.

**Editor:** Further letters went out about the financial arrangements.<sup>190</sup>

Source: From three letters to Harry Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9009/211, 216 and 217

2 October 1883

I have thought now for years that Mme Werckner's mind was too much broken to give a connected account of her affair: as, e.g., I only elicited from her two years ago that the property at Breslau was gone!!

I have written (from her old accounts) a totally different story to Charity Organization Society from what she herself has given them. This is awkward. Still, I think this gentleman mistaken. She did not say "came to *England* but came to *London*." I am still entirely believe that she is no impostor, but simply from mental and bodily exhaustion unable to give her own account correctly and other people too have bad memories.

When you come back, I will, if you like, go through this letter with you, if it requires an answer.

Mme Werckner never touched a franc "from the French government." The 1000 fr. you so kindly procured her was taken by her *husband* and B. St. Hilaire gave *him* 500 fr. out of his own pocket. These are the "two payments."

8 October 1883

I am rather anxious about Mme Werckner because her husband's month at the Gheel Hotel expires this week. She must make the fresh

---

190 Letters 14 September, 29 October, 1 and 12 November 1883, Wellcome (Claydon copies) Mss 9009/204, 223, 224 and 228.

arrangements at Gheel in the *colony* for him *at once* for a quarter. I promised £4 to make up Mrs Boyce's contribution for a quarter, besides the £20 at the end of the year (and besides what I gave her before). I did not see the last letter you were so very kind as to write to Mme Werckner, but I am extremely anxious to know that she *is* arranging for him for the coming quarter as Gheel. I have not been asked for my contribution. Forgive my troubling you. . . .

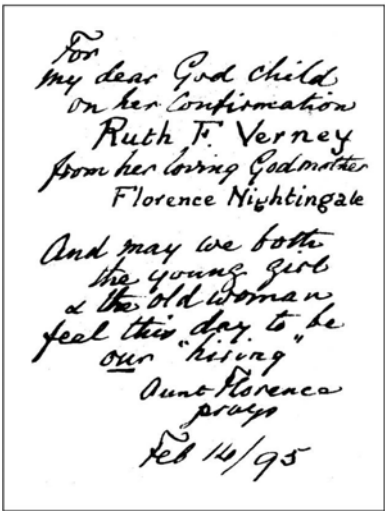
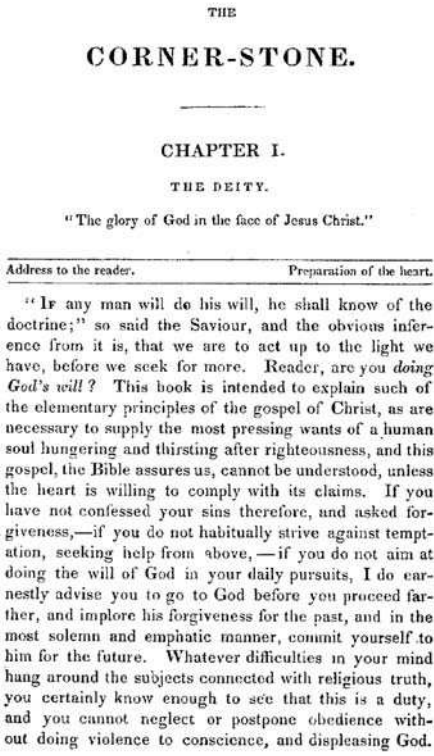
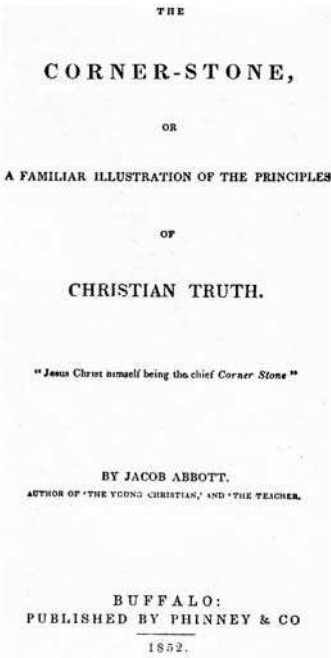
Again, if I have promised too much for Mrs Boyce, I will pay the money, of course. I also suggested to Mme W. that her sister might *advance* the money, on the certainty of repayment, as M W. has now come to his senses.

16 October 1883

Again, I can scarcely understand poor Mme Werckner's letters, poor, poor woman! God bless her! In answer to a telegram of inquiry from me she answered that he was going to leave Gheel the next day, viz., 10 October. I immediately telegraphed again that I would "guarantee an annual sum" of "£50 or even £60" provided he would "remain in a family at Gheel one year" and begged her "to telegraph this to Gheel at once."

I had a strange letter from her in answer, dated 10 October, treating Gheel as a fancy of ours, saying "rest assured any wish dictated by you is if possible always fulfilled with great pleasure," but that she had not telegraphed my "request"!! to Gheel, that her husband had left Gheel a day before she intended him to leave and that she was "quite ignorant of his present abode." If this is true, I am more anxious about the poor man than she is.

As for her "obtaining a position of trust," she is scarcely less unfit for one than her husband is. As for any further advances that I might be induced to make to her, I would promise that, if M Werckner remains a year in the Gheel colony, or other such place approved by us, I would pay £20 *into the hands of some* banker or trustworthy person *at the end of* the year—not into hers, and not before. But with M Werckner's written (and broken) promise "to remain a year at Gheel" at this moment before me and with Mrs Boyce's, alas! too true words that she, Mme Werckner, is as unable to manage her husband's affairs as he is, I should not, as at present advised, think it right to do more.



Above: Title and first page of Jacob Abbott, *The Corner-stone*, the book that “converted me in 1836,” as Nightingale wrote Maude Verney in 1895 (p 927).

Left: Dedication on a Book of Common Prayer given to Ruth Verney, 1895.

## WOMEN SERVANTS AND VILLAGERS

---

We begin with letters about various servants or issues about hiring and managing them, organized chronologically, and then go on to sets of letters to particular women employees, including a governess to the Shore Smith family, who became a friend, and cottagers or villagers at Lea, Embley and Claydon.

Source: From two letters to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9000/58 and 60

10 July 1862

My dear, I think Fletcher the very person to keep your house at South St. because she is very clever, very sharp and somewhat “uppish,” to use Walker’s word. And you know you want a very clever woman there. There is such an immense deal of to-ing and fro-ing, things to forward, parcels to carry and to make up. All this Fletcher would do *remarkably* well. I have known Mrs Williamson have as many as five parcels in a morning to go out for, to make up and then to despatch for you. She was so scatterbrained that, when this happened, she would actually forget her roast at the fire, her saucepan on the fire. And everybody but herself would have to go without dinner. Now Fletcher would manage.

But it is quite unsafe for that house to be kept by one woman alone, for two reasons: (1) the very beauty of the house, which is its standing on so large an area (for a London house) makes it impossible for one person to keep. You know the back and the front are farther off from each other than either is from the adjoining house. I am as certain as I can be (of anything that I have not seen) that Mrs Williamson kept the whole livery stable in that house. Fletcher would not do this. But the livery stable might keep itself in the front while she was in the back and vice versa.

(2) There is really so much to do in parcels, etc., for you, which *compels* your servant to be out of the house, that the house *must* be left

to itself for many hours of most days if there is but one woman. I should say Fletcher ought to have a sister with her. She has sisters, one now in London, staying with an aunt.

You know the autumn is just the time of the year when there are the roughest men about. And almost all the horrid crimes which are committed are done in this way: a man rings after dusk with a parcel or other pretence at a house known to be kept by a lone woman. How is she to get him out of the house again?

It is a thing I would not do: to put a lone woman to keep a London house. And if you have a married woman with a husband over whom you have no hold, then happens what happened with Williamson. But Fletcher is a *VERY much* fitter person to keep your house than Williamson. However, again in a compact horrid little house, like this, which is built like a pack of cards, where I, in the drawing [page torn] protection) from No 1 Chesterfield St. to No. 9, than from the back of South St. to its own front.

You might go farther and fare a great deal worse than my "boy." He is the son of very respectable people, in the coach-building line. He is extraordinarily [page torn] (He *was* bound apprentice, but taken away again because the master got drunk. So that the parents are very careful people.) I believe the "boy" does all the work of my house. I know he peels the potatoes and scours the floors.

I have had a conversation with Fletcher since I wrote this. (I told her repeatedly and expressly that I had no authority from you.) She would evidently like exceedingly to keep your house, and did not feel afraid of being alone in it. It was I who threw out hints of its not being desirable to be alone in a house. I asked her about her sisters. There is one, next to her in age, now in London, who generally keeps her father's house, who could come to her for a time, and who could then be replaced by the *next* sister, a strong steady girl of nineteen, who was in place, but was "had home" to nurse the mother (of whom Fletcher spoke with tears) who is now keeping the father's house, but would come to Fletcher when the sister, now in London, and who, being older, is more fit to keep the father's house, returns home.

I gave Fletcher no positive hopes but said I would write to you. I think it very desirable for both sides. And women who have been obliged to keep themselves on their guards (in a public house) are more likely to keep themselves on their guards in such a situation as yours.

16 July 1862

Fletcher does not think that she can keep herself and sister (and with no washing money for herself and sister) at South St. for 10/ a week and coals. And, what is more to the purpose, I don't think so either. You see it is not like a married woman who is saving house rent by keeping your house. At the same time I see no fairness in your being obliged to raise your wages because Fletcher is Fletcher.

I therefore propose, unless you know of anyone else who would suit you, to continue Fletcher's wages (£14) for which, in addition to your 10/ a week, it *would* be worth her while for her to keep South St. *with* her sister. I shall wait to hear from you whether you know of anybody else, before settling with Fletcher.

At all events, I shall keep her at Hampstead, where I go on 1 August, till your tenants go out 7 August. (?)

F.N.

Source: Letter, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9001/44

22 July 1864

Dearest Mother

If the cook (whose name you do not tell me) will come to me on 30 July for three months *on trial* to go to Hampstead, *if* you will be so good as to take Mrs Hume and Mrs Stirling's characters *and they prove good, if* she will consent to receive orders through my own maid, I will take her. I will give her £22, beer, washing, everything found, no beer *money* or other allowance; if she suits, I will raise wages.

I consider characters from persons I do not know as absolutely the same *as no character at all*. I consider that, being what I am, I have absolutely no means of knowing that a servant does not be drunk on the kitchen floor, or does not admit all sorts of men into the house.

I consider that Muff, the cat, would make a better head servant than my present maid (and he does not break things, which she does). I therefore look upon this cook as merely a "*trial*." But you must not cry down my maid to the cook because I cannot undertake (not anything like every day) to see her, perhaps not every week. And she *must* take orders through my maid, however "*inane*."

If the cook prove trustworthy, I shall exalt her to the grade of *house-keeper* (of my very small household) with corresponding increase of wages. Would you explain to her that to come "*on trial*" will not at all throw any reflection on her character, if she does not suit? I may not suit her, as well as she not suit me. Mine is a VERY quiet place, but also a very *strict* place, owing to my invalid life.



N.B. The “Custs” are worse than no character at all. She must neither go out nor receive anyone in the house, *without asking me* through my maid. *I am sure* I allow my servants reasonable liberty, MORE than is *usually allowed*, a great deal. In return (would you explain that I am such an invalid that) I must require of *them* the most absolute quiet and trustworthiness. If she prove trustworthy, she will have to order the dinners and keep the accounts herself, ultimately, and will be treated as a housekeeper.

ever dearest mum

your loving child

F.

Source: From a letter to Miss Thornton, Wellcome Ms 5482/62

Hampstead, N.W.

21 September 1864

Dear Miss Thornton

I was a little puzzled at receiving a note to Ann Woollett enclosed to me from you this morning—on the ground that I might be parting with her. So far from being about to part with her, I retained her for six months (from January till August) this year in a hotel where I had nothing for her to do, because I did not wish, and she did not wish, to part. And it is not a fortnight since I have reorganized my tiny household—no small addition to the trouble of a very busy invalid—on the very ground that *she wished* to remain with me.

When Mrs Forster returned in the spring of '63 (?), I gave Ann Woollett the option of returning to her. And again I did so, when I was compelled to go into a hotel in January of this year. Ann Woollett has uniformly refused to part with me. She is a very good girl. I have twice raised her wages—once quite recently. But her desire to remain with me was her own.

I shall, of course, make her an arbiter of her own fate—it would be very unfair to do otherwise. And it may be that she has herself written to you, announcing her wish to return to Mrs Forster. But I shall wait two days, before giving her Mrs Forster's note, in case you may wish to answer this. Believe me,

ever yours full of

the deepest regard

Florence Nightingale

Source: Letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/23

10 April [1876]

Are your servants going to the *Crystal Palace* on *Easter Monday* or *Tuesday*? And *may my Alice go with them*? (My cook has just asked for leave from Saturday till Tuesday.) If your servants were going on *Easter Tuesday*, it would be very convenient for Alice.

I did not know that you had been so good as to send in “about stewed beef” “over and over again.” I have been too ill to eat it, but the message only reached me *once*, and then, I *think*, (having two matrons in the house) I had ordered stewed beef of our own hot for their dinner.

Source: Letter probably to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/98

24 April 1877

I was very sorry not to be able to see you last night, but I was exhausted beyond the power of speech or thought. On the principle of not changing horses in a ford, I quite agree that “Willy” should not be changed for a new boy *while the master is away*. (I have had conversation with Willy at different times and he declared—and I approved—that he was quite determined to join his brother, who is a tiny trader between Paris and Southampton. I even gave him books for the purpose.)

I should be quite prepared to pay something myself to keep Willy at least while master and mistress are away with Mother, and if the other boy is actually engaged and worth keeping to pay him to wait till master and mistress come back. “Willy” does well in helping Mother out of the carriage and so on and so on.

About my going in charge of Mother to Lea Hurst, I must, I am afraid, refer you to my former letter as to the uncertainty of my being able ever again to go anywhere in charge or indeed at all.

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9007/210

Easter Monday

[14 April 1879]

I understand that four of our youngest things are going by boat to *Hampton Court*. May my youngest thing join on to them? It is a very young party—I believe mine is the oldest after all.

I hope you will lay your commands upon them to come home in good time.

your F.

Source: From a letter to Mrs Swann,<sup>1</sup> Wellcome Ms 5483/27

1 January 1881

I am hoping to hear that you are going to Mrs Limb and how she is. And I should like to know how my poor Independent, the cat, is, and whether he is quite happy. If Thulè, the cat, at Mr Booth's, is not happy, now Mrs Booth is dead, or if they do not want to keep her, I can very well find her another home. I don't want them to have her if they don't want her.

Mr Dunn<sup>2</sup> may perhaps tell you of another patient, Mr Bratby, you may be wanted to nurse for me.

I trust that your daughter is pretty well again. God grant you all the blessings of the New Year and many New Years, and believe me,

sincerely yours

F. Nightingale

Source: Letter, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C142

[printed address] 10 South Street  
Park Lane, W.

27 February 1882

*Mrs Outram.* Miss Cusden has mentioned you to me as looking out for a cook's situation, and says that she has described mine to you. If you would like to come here tomorrow (Tuesday) at 1:30, I would be glad to see if you could suit my place. Take a cab if it is wet.

faithfully yours

Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** In July 1886 Nightingale gave Juliana Horatia Ewing's *The Story of a Short Life* to the daughter of her former servant, Temperance Hatcher (who married W.E. Nightingale's servant Peter Grillage), dedicated to "Lilian Grillage, with Florence Nightingale's kindest wishes for her success in this world and the next. And may we all take example by Leonard in his 'short life.' London July 1886."<sup>3</sup>

---

1 Mrs Swann, a nurse Nightingale employed for home care for various people in Lea Holloway. There are several letters to her from 1877 on in Wellcome Ms 5483.

2 C.B.N. Dunn, doctor at Lea; see *Public Health Care* for much correspondence over cases.

3 At Wayne State University.

Source: Letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9013/31

Easter Monday  
[10 April 1890?]

Your two maids have been in here half an hour waiting to carry off mine. I can't let mine go till I know that you approve of yours going. They now say that they are going not to Hampton Court but to Crystal Palace. You told me you did not approve of so small and young a party going to Crystal Palace.

Please, one word.

F.N.

**Editor:** Numerous Colemans appear in this *Collected Works*, an association from Claydon House, where Joseph and Mrs Coleman were tenants of Harry Verney (there is much about needed repairs to their cottage and their medical problems). Their daughter Elizabeth, "Lizzie," became Nightingale's employee and her medical problems appear in *Public Health Care* (6:663-65). This Lizzie Coleman was, for eleven or more years, fiancée of Leonard Wiggins, whom she finally married. She was left £175 in Nightingale's will if she were still with her on her death (which she was not).

A cousin also named Elizabeth, or "Lizzie Minima," became a maid on the recommendation of Margaret Verney. She was aged twenty-two in 1901 when she was listed in the census as resident at South St. This Lizzie Coleman was confirmed by the bishop in 1894 and took communion with Nightingale in her old age. She was left £20 and her cats in Nightingale's will.

Source: From a letter to Margaret Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9014/150

26 March 1894  
Easter Monday

Dearest blessed Margaret (and government appointment to the Council of the Welsh University, I am very glad).

You were so good as to write to me about *Lizzie Coleman* of Middle Claydon (cousin to my maid Lizzie Coleman of Steeple Claydon) as a *kitchenmaid*, age sixteen, who wants to be in the kitchen. If she is "strong enough" for the place, I should so like to have her, but as I have a new cook coming this day fortnight 9 April, and for both their sakes I don't want to have two *new* ones in the kitchen together, what had I better do, O thou of good counsel? But how I dislike troubling you!

(Your Kate Jones wishes to go the day the new cook comes. I don't blame her. My charwoman's daughter, a poor half-starved creature, whom I have had by the week as kitchenmaid under Kate, and who looks quite strong now, does not wish to engage as permanent kitchenmaid.)

It occurred to me: *should you advise her (Lizzie) and could your Lizzie Coleman come, say this next Saturday or Monday, 2 April and learn a little of the mysteries of cleaning the coppers and prove how strong she is, before either Kate or the Charwoman's daughter go away. I am stupida, stupidior, stupidissima [stupid, stupider, stupidest], cannot devise anything else. What will you kindly say?*

Forgive this, written under constant interruptions.

N.B. I don't think the new cook at all one who will help a *raw* kitchenmaid in her work, but will be kind. I am such a poor mistress. You see I am in a fix. Everyone comes to *you*. We will take every care of the new kitchenmaid, the other Lizzie.

ever your loving

F.N.

### Jane, Fanny and Mary Dowding

**Editor:** Nightingale at various times employed three Dowdings from Hampshire, either three sisters or a mother and two daughters: Jane, "Jenny" (c1849-?), a housemaid in 1868 and 1872, listed as resident in the 1871 census and in Nightingale's will; Fanny (who married a McCarthy), to whom Nightingale left a legacy of £100 as a former servant; and Mary, under housemaid in 1884 for whom Nightingale gave a character reference. Jenny Dowding at least had previously worked for Mrs Nightingale at Embley, for a letter to her reported: "Jenny Dowding desires me to tell you that she is 'happy. . . .' I send an account of her to Mrs Watson, and also a request that you will take back Mr Bismark, the white cat, at least for the present." Another letter said: "I take Temperance with me to Lea Hurst and Papa tells me that you wish me to take Jenny too and that you will bring a housemaid with you here. This is, of course, as you like." A letter the next year reports: Temperance and Jenny do the most perfect credit to their good training.<sup>4</sup>

---

4 Letters to Frances Nightingale 30 January, 2 July 1868 and 4 May 1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/3, 40 and 100.

Again to her mother Nightingale wrote: What shall you say if I bring *three* maids? It is after this wise:

Temperance must come, of course. Jenny, if I were so much as to “even to” her that she was not to come “home” (as she always calls it) would really, I think, break her heart—otherwise I should be very glad if she would stay here and keep Burch company—the third is Elizabeth Hill, a young cook whom I have just taken, sister to the excellent temporary cook, Mrs A’Court’s, whom I had. Elizabeth Hill seems to be a good girl, quite a girl, but not to know much. I engaged her only on trial. And Beatrice—Mrs Sutherland and I all thought that it was out of the question my engaging her at all unless she could come and be tested at Embley and have also a little of Mrs Watson’s good teaching, I having no one to look after her. I shall bring only a cat and a half, both very clean and healthy.<sup>5</sup>

However there were complications when Parthenope Verney was to be in London and Mrs Nightingale permitted only Temperance to come initially, the others later.<sup>6</sup> Yet further complications arose delaying the maids’ trip to Embley.<sup>7</sup> Letters to Jane Dowding were styled “Mrs Jane Dowding” by 1872.

Source: From a letter to Dr Sutherland, ADD Mss 45757 f202

24 October 1873

*My little maid Jenny: Pills.* Could you tell me what the enclosed pills are? or could you have them *analyzed*? Would you believe it that the maids of the mistress of supposed greatest authority on nursing take quack medicines? This for a pain described as filling the whole bust inside and catching the breath.

Her mother died early of consumption, her father early and suddenly of heart disease. This makes me very uneasy. *What should you do?*

**Editor:** In 1874 “my little maid, Jenny,” travelled with Nightingale when going to Lea Hurst to look after her mother.<sup>8</sup> By 1881 Fanny

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Frances Nightingale 7 July 1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/111.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Alice Bonham Carter 9 July 1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/112.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Parthenope Verney 15 July [1869], Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/115.

<sup>8</sup> Letter to Mrs Turnham 24 August 1874, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9006/118.

Dowding was a trusted employee who suffered from serious illnesses for which Nightingale made many referrals in 1880 (in *Public Health Care*). These difficulties, and convalescent measures continued the next year. In 1881 Nightingale reported that she was “away now for change of air” after her illness.<sup>9</sup> Again in 1883 she reported to another employee, “You will be sorry to hear that our Fanny is still ill in bed here.”<sup>10</sup>

Source: From a letter to Dr Ord and a note to the Resident Assistant Physician to be left in Charity Ward, St Thomas’ Hospital, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/83/7 and 83/8

1 December 1883

*Immediate.* Dr Ord has been so very good as to admit my maid, Fanny Dowding, to a bed in Charity Ward. And he kindly said that she had better enter this afternoon. Dr Armitage who has been attending her almost daily is afraid of the hurry to her of moving her (somewhat unexpectedly) today, as from fear of hemorrhage she has been kept absolutely quiet in body and mind, though she is anxious to go into St Thomas’.

I will send her, if you will allow me, on Monday and will send to know what hour is best. Commending her to your kind care, I beg to remain, Sir,

your obedient servant  
Florence Nightingale

2 December 1883

By Dr Ord’s orders the patient for Charity Ward, Fanny Dowding, will be at St Thomas’ at 11 tomorrow (*Monday*) morning. Might I venture to request that she may be carried up to the ward, as she has been kept perfectly quiet here, for fear of hemorrhage?

I know that I need not bespeak your kind care for her.

---

9 Letter to Charles 24 February 1881, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C132.

10 Letter to Bratby 3 October 1883, Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing C156.

Source: From an incomplete letter, National Archives of Scotland GD433/2/297/1

2 June 1884

Florence Nightingale begs to acknowledge Lady Frances Balfour's inquiry after the character as a housemaid of Mary Dowding who was in F.N.'s service as under housemaid. She was remarkably clean and active. In answer to Lady Frances Balfour's questions, she is sober, honest, steady and good-tempered, with the good temper not of pliability but of capacity. She would be much liked by a mistress who interested herself in her (Mary Dowding).

### Alice Mochler

**Editor:** Alice L. Mochler (d. c1887) was governess to the children of William Shore and Louisa Smith. She also gave considerable assistance to Mrs Nightingale, who lived with them in her old age, and became a friend to Nightingale through these connections. Nightingale had a high opinion of her judgment and they shared faith and general values. Miss Mochler was entrusted with managing the "caseload" at Lea Hurst on Nightingale's behalf, seeing needy and ill tenants and former employees, getting them medical assistance and other help (paid for by Nightingale). Clearly the two women had a much closer relationship than would normally occur with one's relatives' employee.

Source: Letter to Alice Mochler, Boston University 2/2/7

Lea Hurst

12 November 1879

7 A.M.

My dear Miss Mochler

Thank you (you know how deep a meaning lies in that one little word, strongly felt: Thank you) for all your care of my dear mother and for your letters. I am afraid that you see some change in her. I am sure that she has much comfort in Thornton's prayers and in what is read or, still more, repeated to her, even if she misplaces her words, as when she said to you that Thornton's prayer<sup>11</sup> was a "nice letter."

I have been more struck than ever before, if possible, this year by how much she feels and knows and thinks and even remembers than she can express. You know the power of expression goes first in old and

---

11 Possibly Robert John Thornton, trans., *The Lord's Prayer, Newly Translated from the Original Greek*.



weak and sick people. I am sure that she has thoughts about God and death and thoughts of tenderness and fears and anxieties that she is painfully conscious of her inability to express. In that attack which she had here she told me so much. As in the two years before I was so struck with the activity of heart and conscience, even when mind was almost gone, which led her so painfully to search out the *truth* of the religious words she had used so devoutly all her life. It seemed that there was truer religion there than in all the words we so unctuously and deftly repeat. I wished I could always hit off the mood of her mind or rather conscience. Sometimes she told me herself I *did*. Let us pray for her.

Mr Shore's tenderness for her is beyond all thanks. I hope his Thames Bank affairs are going on well. I return my mother's three prescriptions, which I ought to have done before. . . .

Source: From two letters to Alice Mochler, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/80/2 and 3

20 March 1880

I am sorry that you are going on Wednesday. So many are the chances of my not meeting you again in this world that I will ask you, if you have nothing better to do, to be so kind as to come and see me on *Monday* at 5. I have put off Miss Machin<sup>12</sup> on purpose. I have found the little dirty bag.

ever yours affectionately  
with love to Sam and Rosalind  
F. Nightingale

Does Mrs Shore know that Miss Irby is laid up with a bad foot?

15 May 1880

Thank you very much for your very kind letter of 22 April. I immediately wrote to Lea Hurst to know what Adam Prince was about in not answering your letter. He had mentioned to a friend of mine how very much delighted he was at receiving it. Afterwards I heard that he had lost your address and was distressed at not being able to write to you. (I have not heard that he has been doing wrong lately.) Pray write to him again and tell him to write to you, as I have done. Old Sister Allen has been very ill and better again.

Mrs Limb and Mrs Broomhead: the same, worse and better again. Rebecca Buxton, the carpenter's daughter, is dead, a great release.

---

12 Maria M. Machin (1843-1905), later Redpath, a nurse variously at the Montreal General Hospital, St Bartholomew's and in South Africa.

Jane Allison's sister has been for several months at Manchester. The children are thriving. I hear from Mr Dunn pretty regularly, but the news is all variable in this way. Mrs Dunn's mother is dead. Lizzie Holmes has been ill but is well again and at work. I shall leave Adam Prince to tell you the news about his mother.

Thank you, thank you and thank Miss Rabe too for your charming cards for my poor old birthday. My love to her. No doubt you hear from York Place. They are much exercised about their plans, I am afraid. Thank you very much for the capital lessons on St Paul., etc.

I cannot get better (you kindly ask). I think I get worse but it is too soon to look for betterness is it not?

I hope you are "all right." Excuse so short a note now. I was anxious about Adam Prince. With best love,

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

I have asked my sister for you about the photograph and will remind her.

Source: From three letters to Alice Mochler, Boston University 2/2/8, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/80/7 and Florence Nightingale Museum LDFNM 0559

19 August 1880

Seldom was letter more welcome than yours from Lea Hurst. I had been longing to hear and too ill and overworked to write. I am very sorry indeed that you are going on the 26th—I was in hopes that you would stay till after I come. And when that will be I can hardly say. But I hoped to find you there.

I take the liberty of enclosing £5 and of asking you to be so good as to spend it on the flannel you speak of for dear Mrs Limb and in anything else either at Lea Hurst or elsewhere that you wish for.

*Lyddy Prince.* I was very glad you sent Mr Dunn to her. He says she has only dyspepsia, but that is a bad "only."

Words cannot say how I grieve about Adam, nor how disappointed I am. And how much more must our Lord grieve and be disappointed in him. I still hope that He may give you a message to him.

*Jane Allison:* I was going to ask you to be so good as to see particularly after. She has gone through a great deal. But I have only just learnt of her return from Manchester. I do not think it is at all pauperizing to help her much.

I am so glad of your account of the little Platts. Should you think any of the *milk* recipients had better be *taken off*, or any of the *meat's*, would you be so good as to let me know?

I wish I could offer you a bed in this house, but alas, I cannot.

And now for little Lee; he is called the “little miracle.” You know it was thought that he would never leave St Thomas’ again (Psoas abscess). But they have nursed him up so well there that he is now able to wear his new splint—a much better one than he has ever been able to wear before. He can walk a little and there is very little discharge now. And this very week he was “presented” and I wrote to Ascot that he might return there. I have now sent to St Thomas’ to know if they think a visit (his mother’s) would do him harm (it is sure to discompose him and he is so happy) and if they could keep him till over the 26th. (They were going to keep him *this* week, because there has been a case of scarlet fever.)

I am afraid we must not, however, raise his mother’s hopes about his future progress. *She* will probably think him looking worse than when he left her. It is only by comparison with what he was when he last came from Ascot, when the doctors at St Thomas’ thought that “he *might* last for a few months,” owing to the “Psoas abscess” that we speak of his being a “little miracle.” He is not better and never will be, as compared with his former past and his future. And you see how necessary unremitting first-class medical advice is to him. He came back to us from Ascot worse than he went, although the doctors at St T.’s do *not in the least* impute it to Ascot. Now I have given you all the details I can till I have an answer from St T.’s about his mother.

My love to all the dear old people you mention in the village: s[isters] Allens, Mrs Broomhead, Mrs Limb, Lizzie Holmes, and thank her mother for her letter. I am afraid Lizzie Holmes’s not going to the mill makes a difference—I hope the mother does not work harder. Could you kindly ascertain about this?

You do not mention about our own childer four, nor whether they ride. How I wish I were with them. Aunt Florence’s lovingest love to them all and to their dear father and mother. And pray tell their dear mother that I have been longing to write to her and will, but have not been able.

I *hope* what they call “my rooms” at Lea Hurst are *occupied*. Tell her I am afraid I am not coming just yet. God bless you and all the place “on and on” as the Germans say.

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

How is Mrs Bratby? And could you see old Mrs Peach at Critchley? And how is Mr Haywood and the penny school savings’ bank? And does Mr Wildgoose *show*?

20 August 1880

*Mrs Lee.* I have not a moment but send you the answer from St Thomas'. I do not like to venture an opinion. So much depends on the mother being a capable woman, which I suppose she is not.

I return you poor Adam's letters to you. God save him. Love to all six at the dear Hurst, the dear ones. In great haste.

ever yours affectionately

F.N.

Who has my mother's eiderdown quilt? Please ask Mrs Shore.

24 August 1880

So very sorry for your illness, and sorry you are coming away. If you stay over Friday at York Place, may I here see you on *Friday* about 5 and hear all about the dear Lea Hurst people? Bring me some lavender, please, from the dear place.

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Alice Mochler, Wellcome Ms 5483/26

Christmas Day 1880

As soon as I received your welcome letter I answered it, but alas! my answer was never destined to be sent. Our troubles were so great: Shore's illness—he was at Lea Hurst unable to move—when his father died at Embley; poor Mrs Shore's Irish afflictions,<sup>13</sup> and many others, too sad to tell.

I will therefore try and recapitulate now (I have only been back three days from Lea Hurst, where I had to crowd weeks of parish business into the last fortnight) about the people you care most to hear of and have been so kind to.

I have no good news to tell you of *Adam Prince*, though I beseech you to go on writing to him. He drank for a whole week at Crich Wakes.<sup>14</sup> At Holloway Wakes Mr Wildgoose or I gave an entertainment every night but one, and much drinking was prevented. But Adam Prince was too sick to come. What his mother calls "labourer's wages" are 19/ or 20/ a week, but he rarely makes up the whole week. He is either too ill or too drunk or pretends that he does not go to work in order not to pay his mother. She looks broken down. I saw her of course. Mr Dunn has been attending her again.

13 Louisa Smith's older brother, Emmanuel Hutchins, was shot at but not killed in the agrarian murders in Ireland in 1880.

14 Wakes were local autumn holidays celebrated with much drinking.

I am afraid Adam is getting radically unsteady and of broken health, through drink. He will not now belong to the institute. He might easily earn 28/ or 30/ as quarry man during this open weather. But he does not. I fear he blackguards his mother sometimes. He will not pay her rent. I know not what to do.

My account of *Alfred Peach* is still worse: he has drunk 10/ out of 20/ sometimes. And his wife has left him! and gone with her baby to live with her mother, still working at the mill. He was found by Mr Rendell, the preacher, dead drunk in the road at night and had to be dragged out of the road by Mr R. *His* mother is quite broken down; I believe he does not pay her (his wife earns as much as himself).

Louis is so much better that Mr Dunn is able to pass her to go on the Women's Club, but she is still on meat and milk. Or she would starve.

I don't know what you will say to me, but instead of taking any off the *milk list*, as I fully intended, I have actually had to put more on. It is a misery and humiliation to me but, while the men are drinking and smoking (smoking is immensely increased) the mothers and sisters are starving and working to the bone. No good comes of the high wages.

The two poor little *Platts*, with their father and stepmother, had had scarlet fever—and Beatrice, the younger, after everything had been done to save her and we thought she would pull through—died. (I wrote this to you at the time, but never sent my letter.)

*Jane Allison* remained at Lea Hurst till the day I came away, 21st, and looks quite another woman. But she is terribly on my mind. She is quite unfit to live alone. She has consented to give up her father's house (lodgers will not stay with her) and I have tried to get the Manchester nephew and the Sheffield brother to take her, hitherto in vain. This is now pending. She is no more fit than a child to take care of her money. I have commended her to the care of Mr Dunn, who however thinks her well, and Mr Yeomans. Her only idea is that she will be taken back again to Lea Hurst when (if) we come back. So she does nothing.

Mrs *Henstock* is gone to live with her son, Charles, at Matlock, a very good move; daughter remains at Holloway. The "nice little rascal"<sup>15</sup> at Derby I am inquiring about.

---

15 Presumably the Henstock boy who was "a thief and a forger" (copy of a letter to Alice Mochler 12 November 1879, Chiddingstone Castle).

*Emily* (Mrs Shore's) was married end of last month, Barbara her bridesmaid. *Nisbet* is come out strong. *Charles* has not yet become a coffee room manager. *Arthur Coltie* is steady and permanent as a footman.

Would you kindly answer this question at once? I have taken *Ellen Foot* on trial to be my cook. I fear it will not succeed (not cookingly; she may improve, but) morally. *Would you tell me what it was you saw in her you so disapproved?* (I meant to have asked you this long ago, but had no time.) And what you do tell me must I *not* tell to her?

*Mrs Broomhead* is sinking, but not fast. I saw her, of course, still patient and cheerful and cheers up when she talks of her good son, Sam, but I thought her much altered, not only in body but in mind.

*Mrs Limb*, still the same, like a saint. I saw the daughter-in-law and did not much like her. She keeps Mrs Limb so dirty. I have appointed Mrs Swann to go once a week to clean her.

We are trying to establish a *coffee room* at Whatstandwell for the quarry men, where Messrs Colishew [?] and Sims, the two quarry masters, will PAY their men.

*Lizzie Holmes* has been very ailing for months. Dear Mrs Holmes, as good as ever, paid me a visit of course. I fear Lizzie will never go to work again.

*Sisters Allen* much better and bravely came to Lea, would not lay down their carpet till now, have books from the Institute.

*Mrs Thompson* has been our constant charwoman and latterly housemaid at Lea Hurst: foolish but good, now on milk, doctor's attendance and other things, but two girls to pay into Women's Club and boy to save, me to double. Does she cant? I don't know.

Poor little *Harry Lee* is gone back to Ascot Convalescent Home. He does not get materially weaker but he lies now kept *in bed* entirely.

*Martha Sheldon* accuses Mrs Yeomans of adultering the milk (one quart) she had there. Yeomans will have nothing more to do with her. Put on milk at Mrs Homes, on blankets, 4/ a week for thirteen weeks, etc., on condition she will save. Mrs Bratby manages it.

*Bratby* has had a sad fit of the gout. *She*, poor woman, is much aged, but so fond of Rosy, who really made a part of her life. Rosy stayed with me all the while I was at Lea Hurst, till a week [portion removed]

Shore is come back from Embley not very well. He does not regain his strength. All four children at home. Bonny Louis has done very well at Rugby. Mrs Shore very tired; one can scarcely expect otherwise—she has been so tried. Sam went to his grandfather's funeral at Embley, his father could not.

I saw Dr Webb; he said your attack at Lea Hurst was rheumatic and feverish. [portion removed]

Mr Haywood, the schoolmaster, is staying here till next week.

I think I shall send you a list of the *milks* for YOU to CRITICIZE, but cannot today. All Christmas and New Year's blessings be yours, the best and highest. About Ireland I can only pray.

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Hughes, they say, will turn out in *April!* of the Holloway Institute!! And *Mrs Higton* will have it.

### Mrs Holmes and Lizzie Holmes

**Editor:** Mrs Holmes, who has already been mentioned with great approval, appears as well in other volumes (6:657, 662-63, 668, 670), as does her daughter Elizabeth, "Lizzie" (6:629, 633-34, 636, 655-56). A letter to each has already appeared, one in *Life and Family* (1:824) and one in *Public Health Care* (6:634). Exactly what the connection between Mrs Holmes and Nightingale was is not clear. Evidently the family lived in Lea Holloway and several (it seems, probably including Mrs Holmes at some point) worked in Smedley's mill. There was much sickness in the family (other daughters had already died when this correspondence occurs). Mrs Holmes was sent cooked foods from South St., as a note referring to her appreciation later shows.

Mrs Holmes obviously shared Nightingale's faith, in its fullest evangelical expression. Descendants more than a century later were still attending the local dissenting chapel, originally built by an earlier Nightingale.

Source: Inscription on a gift Bible, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire Elizabeth Holmes, with Florence Nightingale's prayers. Lea Hurst 1877.

Source: From a copy of a letter, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire

Dear Mrs Holmes Whitsun Eve 1881

Thank you very much for your most interesting letter. I am thankful to God that your Lizzie is going on so well.

Yes, please, let Widow *Barton* have the milk up to the *18th* of this month at least. I will write again.

yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Source: From a copy of a letter to Mrs Holmes, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire

9 March 1887

Thank you so much for your letter about dear Mrs Barton and for the good news that she had accepted the salvation so freely offered to us sinners. She was not a self-righteous woman, I think, but, as she said, she “did not know how to express herself.” I am sure you were the means of great use to her. I heard of you at her deathbed whispering words of comfort into her ear which she seemed to understand.

I think of her in the words my dear father used to make me repeat to him:

O change! O wondrous change!  
 Burst are the prison bars:  
 One moment here, so low,  
 So agonized,  
 And now beyond the stars!  
 O change! stupendous change!  
 There lies the soul-less clod,  
 The Sun eternal breaks:  
 The young Immortal wakes,  
 Wakes with his God.<sup>16</sup>

O when shall we all be gathered in and His kingdom have come?

I should like to hear anything that you will be so kind as to tell me about Mrs Barton. May *we* be faithful!

As regards the milk, please be so good as to let that daughter-in-law—who was so good to her, and who is a delicate woman—I believe *she* is *John*’s wife—have it till Lady Day—and then stop. I had already written to Mr Yeomans that her milk, her meat and eggs should go to the daughter-in-law who was kind to her till Lady Day and then stop. I fear the other daughter-in-law was the contrary of kind.

Your letters are very dear to me. I am glad you have your married daughter with you. Perhaps she can sometimes let you have half a night’s rest. Give my kind regards to your husband who I know is so helpful. He must put more cocoa in than the “directions” say when he makes it for Lizzie. And you can add a little boiled milk, but no sugar.

And now, dear friends, I pray God for you, as you do, I know, for me—and I bid you not farewell but meet you in His all-loving presence.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

16 From Caroline Bowles Southey, “The Deathbed.”



Source: From a copy of a letter to Mrs Holmes, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire

23 September 1889

I have not been able to write, but you know I am always thinking of you and my dear friend Lizzie. Our loving Saviour tries her sorely, and you too. But He also makes her the bravest of the brave—and you too. And if sometimes temptations come, Christ Himself was tempted—and He knows how to succour them that are tempted. He never forgets us—Christ Himself had to be made perfect through suffering.<sup>17</sup> We are never told that temptations are a sign of God having forgotten us, but just the contrary. As the hymn says (after “the evils” we have to bear):

The trials we endure,  
The manifold temptations  
That death alone can cure,  
What are they but His jewels  
Of right celestial worth?  
What are they but the ladder  
Set up to heaven from earth?<sup>18</sup>

A dear good woman said: “I know that I am in the valley of the shadow of death. But there is no shadow—it is all light.” It is not in our own mood or assurance but in

The greatness of redeeming love  
The love of Christ to *us*.<sup>19</sup>

that we trust. So will Lizzie say soon, “it is all light”:

The King of Love my shepherd is  
Whose goodness faileth never  
I nothing lack if I am His  
And He is mine forever.<sup>20</sup>

God bless, in His everlasting Love, you and dear Lizzie.

I am so glad Miss Lee sent the large pillow. Did you ask Dr Graves for something to allay the irritation of the rash? If it is more expensive than they generally give, I will gladly pay it.

---

17 An allusion to Heb 2:10.

18 John Mason Neale’s hymn, “O Happy Band of Pilgrims.”

19 A paraphrase from the hymn by Charles Wesley, “O Love Divine,” which has “the love of Christ to me.”

20 Henry W. Baker’s hymn, “The King of Love My Shepherd Is.”

Source: From a letter to Mrs Neild, ADD Mss 45809 ff221-22

26 September 1889

Yes, I think you had better send another bottle of lemon jelly to Lizzie Holmes this week. You must not call her “poor.” In the midst of terrible suffering she and her mother are the richest persons I know. I will tell you why another day. She hardly sleeps two minutes together, nor her mother either, who sits up every night with her. Yet they are always comforting each other. God is *one* with them.

Source: From a copy of a letter to Mrs Holmes, Private Collection of Cyril Leafé, Derbyshire

24 July 1891

My dear friend Mrs Holmes, I am indeed grieved that your dear Nellie has such a trouble to bear, and yours for her sake is perhaps the worst of the two. Now let us think what is best to be done: if Nellie’s doctor will be so good as to write to me (so that I can show it to the senior doctors of St Thomas’ Hospital) her case and the particulars of her case, and whether he thinks she will derive good from coming to St Thomas’ Hospital, this would be the best way, and the sooner it is done the better. Could I have it early next week?

The doctor must also say whether it is a case requiring immediate admission. She ought to bring with her two or three suits of under-clothing, brush, comb and toothbrush. If she has a flannel dressing gown or cape to sit up in bed with, so much the better. If I think of anything else, I will write.

With regard to the expense, I will charge myself gladly with that. And I will send her money for her journey up and back. I should think she ought to go first-class. And pray God to bless all that is done for her and to keep her mind in His own keeping—and yours too. “I will keep thee with mine eye.”<sup>21</sup> I don’t know that I can say any more till I receive Nellie’s doctor’s letter regarding her case.

Don’t feel downhearted about your Polly. There are so many things which might prevent her writing. She will write soon, please God. “The Lord is at the helm,” as you once reminded me. I am very anxious too, but that is impertinent to God, as if we could govern better than He. He does so love to bear our burdens.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

---

21 A paraphrase of Ps 32:8.

Source: From a copy of a letter to Mrs Holmes, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire

10 December 1891

*Private.* Thank you very, very much for your letter. I have heard from Dr McIntosh a few hours after I received yours.

The operation your dear brave daughter has had was one for the purpose of exploring—and was successfully carried out, as you know. It was found that the case was one of floating kidney and that there was no tumour or other ailment—that she will probably recover very quickly from this operation, but she will then have to undergo another, in order that the kidney may be fixed in its proper place, which could not be done under the first operation, that *there is every hope that she will completely recover*, that in any case it is very satisfactory to have found out that the affection she is suffering from is not one dangerous to life as a rule, though it causes much suffering.

I grieve not to be able to think, as much as you grieve, that there is no more operation to go through. I am sure that you will not tell your daughter of this other operation. She has put herself, as you [page cut] entirely in the han[d of] God, and only wishes to [do His] will. And she pray [page cut] may be refined in [page cut] till she is made [page cut]. . . .

I thank you for a[ll] you have written to me. I hope she is comfortable in the infirmary and takes her food. I like to hear of their singing hymns in the ward. Pray give my kind regards to your husband and her husband. What a blessing she has a good husband.

I [page cut] you, and hope that you pray for me that I may care for nothing but to know and to do God's will—for the Father's sake and His children's.

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

I shall send you the money 10/ for the telegram and other little expenses.

Source: From an incomplete copy of a letter to Mrs Holmes, Private Collection of Cyril Leafe, Derbyshire

20 February 1892

Thank you very much for your letter and I do hope that your husband's eyes are going on well.

I had good accounts of your dear daughter from Manchester and from the Blackpool doctor and from herself. She is so brave and patient. They think she will make a perfect recovery, but the [breaks off]

## Ellen “Nelly” Owen

**Editor:** Ellen “Nelly” Owen had been an employee of Margaret Verney when Nightingale hired her in 1886 and she reported back to her that she was doing well.<sup>22</sup> In 1887 Nightingale asked Margaret Verney if Nelly Owen could “come to see Miss Ellin and Miss Lettice for a few minutes some time?” that it would make her “so happy.”<sup>23</sup> But even in coming to see them, “I am afraid Nelly Owen was rather late this morning—you know she is a little stolid—I could not get her off though she had a cab.”<sup>24</sup>

Concerns about Nelly Owen’s health and stolidness have already appeared in *Life and Family* (1:799), while more cheerful references appear in letters to other servants and to Maude Verney (see p 912 above). Nightingale was obviously very fond of this young Welsh girl, pleased that her health improved with her, but troubled about her unresponsiveness and eventually about her not writing when she should have. She was no longer in Nightingale’s employ in 1891 when the census was taken but came back again in 1892 as cook (she had started as kitchenmaid).

Nightingale finally got her to visit her family in Wales, but reported “a long rigamarole about her” to Margaret Verney “because I thought Mrs Thomas (Evans) might help me. She is certainly very willful—but *so* steady—she never wants to go anywhere. She has so much less religious advantages with me than at home that I tried hard to find a weekly class and a church she would like, but she likes nothing except a church I left because none of them liked it. Then she never read. Yet she generally brightens up when we have our little talks. But she looks like a woman of forty.”<sup>25</sup>

Source: Letter, Anglesey County Record Office WM/545/1

Claydon

28 September 1886

Dear Nelly [Owen]

I have no time to write as I had hoped, but will not put off longer sending you your quarter [wages]. I am so glad that you had a nice time

22 Letters to Margaret Verney 12 April and 27 November 1886, Wellcome (Claydon copies) Ms 9011/14 and 66.

23 Letter 15 March 1887, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9011/110.

24 Letter 16 March 1887 Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9011/111.

25 Letter 4 August 1887, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9011/156.

with your mother and sorry not to have seen her myself. Please send me her address. I hope you take a little run in the park every day. You see your health is now established and you must keep it so. I send your quarter's wages and £1 besides for the savings' bank, hoping that you will be able to put something to it; and when you write to acknowledge this that you will tell me what and that you will mention about your health.

God bless you. Did you ask your mother to send me a Welsh prayer book and Bible for you? I am,

ever your friend

F. Nightingale

Source: From two letters and an undated incomplete letter to Nelly Owen, Anglesey County Record Office WM/545/2, 3 and 12 (all written from Claydon House)

25 January 1888

I am sure that you are very glad to be able to do something for Mr and Mrs Verney. And how thankful we must be that he is so much better. And I am sure that it must be a great pleasure to you to have a talk from Mrs Verney in Welsh.

I hope you are able to help Frances in carrying up to the sick room some of the things which I know you help in preparing and in preparing nicely and punctually. God bless you, dear Nelly.

yours faithfully and affectionately

Florence Nightingale

20 September 1889

I have received your note and am very glad you are enjoying yourself. Would you not like to stay another week, that is, till Monday week 30 September? I shall be very glad for you to do so if you like it.

And now will you not write me a nice little letter and tell me how your brother is getting on with the new schoolmaster? I hope however you had him at home for a part of your holiday. And tell me what you are doing and how your mother is. And tell me when you put the money into the P.O. Savings' Bank which was given you now three months ago. And say what is doing at your church.

You will not find anyone at Rhoscolyn, for Captain and Mrs Verney have taken a house near here at Bletchley and they and all their four children came over here the day before yesterday for the day to help to amuse thirty-two of my nurses, while I was in London, who were invited by Sir Harry and Lady Verney to spend the day here. And everything was done to make the day delightful to them. And Master

Harry was so important and did the honours. "Father gave the nurses in charge to me and I must not leave them or do anything else." Ellin and Lettice both look better and were very busy with the nurses too. There were forty to dinner and quite a grand dinner. And Ruth went in to dinner with Sir Harry.

Mr Fred was here too and Mrs Fred and her three children came up by sea from Scotland to London yesterday. Ralph goes to school today.

Now I must not write any more for I have been very ill ever since I was here, having been quite broken down before I came.

And, my dear child, why did you not write and send me your address before? It was a pity, for, as you see, I was obliged to telegraph to you to make sure of your having it in time. Give my kind regards to your mother. God bless you, and believe me,

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

Take pains with your spelling and send me your accounts.

15 October 1889

I believe that Lizzie and I shall be at home on Saturday. You can make ready for us, as I want Mrs Neild to be as much set free for the sad duties about her son's death as possible. And it will be a good exercise for you. And will you choose a good couple of fowls, trussed as I said, that is, the breastbone not broken, and send them in a basket which you will receive from Mr Allen (with lamb) to Euston Station the last thing on Wednesday night, by Parcels Delivery, addressed to Sir Harry Verney, Claydon Station, per L. and N.W. Rail Bucks? That too is a good thing for you to do.

Mr and Mrs Fred have had a good voyage to America and Captain Verney has won his election here. God bless you, dear.

yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter and a copy of a letter to Ellen Owen, Anglesey County Record Office WM/545/5 and 8 (both written from Claydon House)

18 October 1889

I was rather disappointed not to hear from you, in answer to mine. Now, you must put the best foot foremost, and order in things like a little housekeeper. We shall be back, please God, about 3 on Monday and I shall want a *very little* luncheon and dinner at 7:30 and Lizzie will want some dinner at 3. I shall not tell you what to get for me. You shall order what things you think I shall like best.

We shall bring with us eggs but no chicken. We may *perhaps* bring cream. You may begin housekeeping for yourselves on Monday. Or if Mrs Neild should call in and prefers it, you may begin on Sunday. That is, order in what is wanted for yourselves on Saturday for Sunday.

Give my kind regards to Frances and Elizabeth and Mrs Codlin. Mrs Neild will have had a sore day at her son's funeral today. I hope she will stay at Ashmore Road as long as she wishes and if she comes, she will say, Now, Nelly, go on with your housekeeping and cooking—it is a good thing for you to think for yourself what is best. God bless you, my dear child.

[c1889]

I want to know what you each of you wish. Shall I take them or not? Is there any church you would like better? I took those seats because you all chose that church. But you very seldom have anything to tell me about the sermon, which I like so much to hear. And, though you might go out every day in the week, you will take your walks on a Sunday, and you will let me bring Mrs Codlin from her home on a Sunday, *not* to enable you to go to church but to take walks which you might take every day in your life, or on another part of the Sunday.

Now, my dear Ellen, tell me what you would like done about St Thomas' Church.<sup>26</sup> God bless you. I am not able to write much, for I am not getting better. I hope you have your morning readings. I send your quarter. Was it you who told me that you put "the *sovering*" into the savings bank?

yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Do the twelve eggs and coffee go every Saturday to Miss Pringle and the twelve eggs to Miss Crossland at St Thomas' Hospital?

Source: From two letters and a copy of a letter to Nelly Owen, Anglesey County Record Office WM/545/6-7 and 9 (all written from Claydon House)

7 January 1892

I believe Mrs Verney has kindly given you messages from me asking you if you would like to come to me as cook for a time at 10 South St. I should like you to come to me on the -- or as soon as Mrs Verney can spare you. And I shall be glad to see my little Nelly again.

faithfully yours

F. Nightingale

---

<sup>26</sup> Nightingale paid for a pew for her employees to attend the local Church of England church, St Thomas's, Portman Sq., destroyed in World War II.

29 August 1892

Not one word, Nelly, not even a line with your books, which I have only just received. Not one word, even to give me your address in Anglesey.

1. I enclose a cheque for the whole £9.13.10. You will see that that leaves you £1.2.3 in hand, which you will hand over to Mrs Broome, who comes tomorrow (Tuesday).

2. You will, of course, show her all your places in kitchen, scullery, larder and housekeeper's room. And I know you will show them her *clean* and *tidy*.

3. You will leave all the books, when paid, with the tradesmen. But *your* book you will return *me*, please, by Tuesday's (tomorrow's) post.

4. Ask Frances for a packet of envelopes to replace those you sent me.

And 5. ask her for your and Kate's cab money to the station—I suppose you go together—and for what it will cost you from the Anglesey Station to reach your home. Kate, please tell her, may take hers out of the overplus of board wages three weeks' gave her and she must keep an account for me.

Kind regards to Kate and tell her to write to me from home, and give me her address. God bless you both.

F. Nightingale  
I will write again.

18 October 1892

Mrs Frederick Verney and I suppose that you are still in want of a place. Please answer by return of post. Mrs Fred did write to a good many friends but this seems to have failed. If you are still seeking a place, Mrs Verney knows an agency which she says might be helpful—she has been there and thinks they would take trouble for a “servant well recommended.” They now have kitchenmaids wanted but, she says, not high wages.

Tell me what you wish for then while you are waiting. Mrs Fred is at Onslow Gardens. If we know what you wish and situations appear to be offering, would you like to come to South St. (for ladies will wish to see anyone before engaging them) while you are waiting upon ladies? In haste.

yours sincerely  
F. Nightingale  
I hope you and your family are well.



## Frances Groundsell

**Editor:** Frances Groundsell was an employee of Nightingale's at least from 1884. One letter has an envelope addressed to Frances Magee with it, but whether she married this male employee of Nightingale's or it was a slip is not clear. In 1901 Frances Groundsell married Nightingale's messenger, Messenger. There are several letters to her and Messenger also in *Life and Family* (1:791-95).

Source: From three letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/87/51, 87/52 and 88/1 (all written from Pine Acre, Sunningdale, Berks)

23 December 1887

I send you your quarter's wages, which I have much pleasure in raising to £20. What shall you be able to put by this Christmas?

I wish you with my whole heart all the best and choicest Christmas and New Year's blessing which our Heavenly Father in His infinite Love can give, and to Mrs Neild with my kindest regards the same.

Will you thank her for her letter, which I will answer, and write. Of the four rabbits, ask her to keep one for yourselves and to send me two, but they must come the very first thing in the morning by rail or they will not be here 'till Monday or Tuesday. The other rabbit, ask her to give to Mrs Thomason. If rabbits come next week, she may send them all on here.

I return Messenger's paper, because it is not right. Only one *cock* pheasant went to Dr Sutherland and *no* hen. Someone must have had two *hens* for the brace. Ask Mrs Neild to ask him to make it right.

Christmas Day 1887

With heartiest Christmas greetings to you and Mrs Neild, to whom I will write. Pray send on the Christmas cards to Miss Fanny Dowding, with the Hon Mrs Bagot, Mereworth Castle, Maidstone, Kent. If you put a piece of cardboard to prevent the cards from being bent, fold back my envelope to make it small enough to go into another envelope *without* bending the cards, which you can feel through the envelope, pray do.

7 January 1888

I am too ill to return home, as I had hoped, just yet. And I am going, with Lizzie, across by Oxford to Claydon on Monday, for two or three weeks. You would like to come to Claydon for a fortnight—that would enable Lizzie to have a complete holiday at home. If Mrs Neild can

spare you you might come on Wednesday—write me word by what train. Please bring with you my old black skirt—*not* the satin new one—the pair of big lamb’s wool knitted stockings and the book *Like Christ* (stuffed with papers) on the top of the large Revised Bible in my bedroom.

I hope you and Mrs Neild are well.

Nelly will return to South St. on Monday by train to Waterloo Station at 6:37 P.M. Ask Mrs Neild to have her met at 6:37 at the *Windsor* entrance, Waterloo, and brought home. I send you a cheque of £2.2. God bless you.

Source: From two letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/88/8 and 88/9 (both written from Claydon House)

24 September 1888

Thank you for your letters. I am so glad you enjoyed your holiday and the Irish Exhibition.

Can you find a large, fat book, called *The Book of Health*, on the top of the little tall bookcase in my bedroom close to the dressing room door? If you can, I will tell you where to send it.

I enclose a cheque for three weeks’ board wages, though I am not likely to stay away so long, for you to pay Mrs Neild.

God bless you.

Claydon House

Winslow, Bucks

25 September 1888

I have great pleasure in sending you your quarter and hope you will tell me how much you can put in the savings’ bank. How much did you put in last quarter? [cut off]

Sir Harry’s brother, Mr Calvert, is also here and quite an invalid. There are only we four—but still I don’t think we are an uncheerful *four*. Praise God for it. I hope you too are a cheerful four. [cut off] I am glad the cats are so much cleaner, but I hope they will soon be *quite* clean.

F.N.

I should like to hear anything you can tell me about the house and what Mr Vare’s men have done.<sup>27</sup> I hope you all go out every day.

---

<sup>27</sup> Nightingale’s extensive problems with drainage in her own home are related in *Public Health Care* (6:560-65).

Source: From three letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/89/13-15 (all written from Claydon House)

12 September 1889

I have just received your note and I shall be very glad that you should have a *three weeks'* holiday and not return to South St. before Monday 23 September, which I think completes the three weeks. Elizabeth left here last Monday and Nelly started home on the same day. Elizabeth took the sacrament here and I am sure took it as Christ's guest. She did very well here. I have scarcely been out of my room since I came, from illness.

Lizzie's ankle seems pretty well.

Pray give my kind regards to your father and mother. God bless you and don't let Him grieve that you are no longer so much Christ's guest. Sir Harry seems aged but as active as ever and yet more anxious to do good. Lady Verney, I hope, is less suffering.

ever sincerely but

a little anxiously yours

F. Nightingale

15 October 1889

I believe I shall come home, and Lizzie, on *Saturday*. I am so very sorry for Mrs Neild, and anxious to save her so that she can be [4 lines blanked out] My kind regards to Elizabeth who, I suppose, came home yesterday. If Messenger comes, tell him that we shall want him on Saturday to meet us.

God bless you all. Give my kind regards to Mrs Codlin.

17 October 1889

Thank you for your letter. I think, if you can wipe and dust the green curtains so as to make them quite clean, they had better be hung up. You can go on preparing, but I think we shall not come till Monday and shall be with you, please God, about 3.

Pray give my kind regards to Nelly, and tell her the same, who will have to order in things, and to Elizabeth. God bless you all.

sincerely yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From four letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/91/17, 20, 23 and 24 (all written from Claydon House)

28 September 1891

I shake hands with you and welcome you back, and enclose your quarter's wages. I also send tomorrow your board wages for three weeks

which you will give to Mrs Burge. I am glad to think you find Kate looking brighter; I will write to her tomorrow if I have not time today. We are so pressed for time here.

Would you be so good as to look on the top of the low bookcase nearest door of the large drawing room which goes out on the landing for some pamphlets of mine which have been lying there for several years, called "The Dumb Shall Speak and the Deaf Shall Hear,"<sup>28</sup> etc., and choose six of the cleanest and tidiest, and send them down here, well packed, so as not to rumple them.

Also, will you ask Mrs Burge to send to Mrs Zanelli (whose address she knows) a packet of "Leisure Hours" to read. You know where to find them. If you are reading a story in the last two or three, you need not send those till the story is finished. Make up the numbers you send for Mrs Zanelli as well as you can to be consecutive.

16 November 1891

Thank you for your note. I am very glad that Mrs Burge is so much better. But I have written to her to say that she cannot come back to South St. till I have made up my mind after hearing a full account that she is fit to return. Have you heard of Mrs Codlin the mother? Kindest regards to Kate.

affectionately yours

F. Nightingale

23 December 1891

I send you £5. Please if Mrs Burge asks you for money, tell her to write to me not you. I had not forgotten Mrs Hancock, but we did not keep her address. She is very welcome to some meat if you know her address. Lizzie thinks it is somewhere near Hammersmith. With every kind Christmas wish to you both,

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

28 December 1891

Thank you for your very nice letter. Yes, you can give the Christmas boxes. We give them now all in stamps. The tradesmen's list is in the cook's book, but where Mrs Burge's book is of course I cannot say—Lizzie will make out for you as far as she can her list.

---

28 "The Dumb Shall Speak, and the Deaf Shall Hear, or the Ryot, the Zemindar and the Government," *Journal of the East India Association*, 1883.

I will send you some more money. With every good New Year's wish  
to you and Kate,  
ever affectionately yours  
F. Nightingale

Source: From nine letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/92/1-2, 13-18 and 20 (all written from Claydon House)

3 January 1892

We have put off returning for a day or two, partly because Sir Harry is so poorly and there is so much to do, and partly because I am so poorly. Mrs Verney and her four children have had to go to Rhianva for a fortnight. Mrs Fred is here with her three, taking her place with "Grandpapa." Mr Fred is gone to India for some months, to escort the Siamese prince.

I am glad Messenger is pretty well again. I am very sorry that Kate's teeth are still decaying. It is evident from what the doctor says that she must be *far more careful* in cleaning them, if she would keep, as is so desirable, her remaining teeth.

May God bless you both.

affectionately yours

F. Nightingale

I conclude the pink and white curtains in the drawing rooms were taken down and the green curtains must be carefully wiped and hung up after the windows are cleaned. I am sure you will do all things nicely, you and Kate, and the charwoman when necessary. My kindest regards to Kate.

7 January 1892

We shall be home, please God, on *Tuesday* next, *12 January*. Very likely Mrs Verney and Miss Ellin will come on Wednesday 13th for one or two nights. They will have the green room—make it look cheerful for them—and Lizzie's room. Of course the room that was Mrs Burge's will be [letter torn]

26 August 1892

I send you a cheque as you will have some more payments to make and to pay Messenger. I hope to hear from you tomorrow morning and I will write.

My love to Nelly. I expected to have the Tradesmen's Week from her this morning. But it has not come. My love to Kate. Remember me to Messenger. Pray do all of you what you can for poor Quiz and kittens.

I have had much to do here. God bless you all. In haste,  
yours affectionately  
F. Nightingale

28 August 1892

Thank you for your letter. Mrs Broome will come on Tuesday and I am sure you will try to make her comfortable, and show her everything as far as you can and make her room nice, and get a few flowers to put in it. You will be glad to be relieved of the linen, which Mrs Broome will undertake, and I am glad to relieve you of it. And partially of the furniture.

I have received neither books nor letter from Nelly, for which I am very sorry. Yes, you may charge me four days' board wages for Messenger's food.

I forget whether you understood that the rug which was always crumpled up, close to the books on the floor at the bottom of my sofa in the drawing room, was to go to be cleaned. As you know, it wants it.

God bless you. I have been so pressed with business here. There is no one here but Mrs Fred and I and the children. Sir Harry varies from day to day. Mr Fred is away for his health.

My love to Nelly and Kate and say a good word for me to Quiz, poor Quiz. Give her plenty to eat and drink and plenty of good words and balcony.

yours sincerely  
F. Nightingale

10 September 1892

Thank you for your letter. I was very glad that your own family were so much better than could have been expected. I enclose a cheque: 3 weeks' board wages £2.2 from 13 September, for your "card" 10.6. [total] 2.12.6. But if you remember I particularly desired you to get the 10/ from LIZZIE, to whom I had given that and other monies.

Nelly has not written to me—rude little Nelly! Mrs Fred Verney and I have had much communication about her future. I shall not be able to write to her unless she writes to me.

We are rather overdone here. Sir Harry is, thank God, rather better. If you can find the two large volumes of the *Boys' Own Book*, in the drawing room, one on the table in the window, one on the long table nearest the door, would you kindly take them to St Thomas' for LEOPOLD Ward?

I hope you have been so good as to do up those letters and papers on the floor in the corner of the small drawing room between the armchair and the folding door.

My kindest regards to Mrs Broome. God bless you both. I hope you have prayers.

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

I am obliged to have some of Ellen's teeth drawn and others stopped.

26 September 1892

I send you your quarter. And I hope your family are pretty well. Would you, if I do not come back by, say, this day week, like to take your holiday without waiting for me—that is, almost immediately? Are the things put back in their places so that Mrs Broome could manage, and Kate? Write and tell me what you should like. I do not mean that I shall be late this year as I was the two last years—nothing like it. But I may not be back quite so soon as I expected.

I hope you all of you go out every day. And I hope you read prayers. I have heard from Nelly. Mr Fred Verney, I am sorry to say, is not quite well yet. Mrs Fred is with him at the sea. God bless you.

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

I shall write to Mrs Broome tomorrow.

3 October 1892

I wrote yesterday to Mrs Broome to say that I should not be back till the beginning or more likely middle of next week—that Miss Irby *might* come a day or two later—for a very few nights—and that I hoped you would do what you liked about your fortnight's holiday. If you liked to go *immediately*, that you would.

Did she think she could manage, if you told her where she could find the things? I had not time to write to you, for the post went early, but I asked her to read this letter to you.

Sir Harry was delighted with his stay at South St. and all the better for it. Thank you all. So was Mr Morey. God bless you.

yours, hoping that you will do what you like best

F. Nightingale

21 October 1892

I am glad that you have come back all right but sorry that you had such bad weather at home. I send you (in great haste) some money, £2.2 for three weeks' board wages, £1 which I had put up in a regis-

tered envelope for you to make a present to your parents, but it was too late. So now I send it to you.

Dear Sir Harry has been ill, though now much better. But Mrs Verney is ill in her room with a very bad cold. Altogether we have been much pressed.

Kind regards to Kate. God bless you all.

14 November 1892

I daresay you will be so good as to tell me how the dentist told Kate to clean her artificial teeth. She tells me that he said they were so dirty he was obliged to take them all out of the frame to clean them, but she does not tell me *with what* he told her to clean them—was it simply with *soap and water*? One very good plan is to put them in very hot water for a little when taken off at night. But this can only be done if there is no gutta percha in them. Is there gold or gutta percha? Please tell me when I come home, which will be, please God, on Wednesday.

You will, I know, be Mrs Broome's helper about the furniture—about which you know all—and also about the tradesmen, as she did not come till after I was gone. I shall depend upon you. And so will she, with my love.

I am so very anxious to have the drawing room sweet and fresh, which it has not been, that I am not going to have the curtains put up in either drawing room and am going to move the middle round table out, as you know, from the large drawing room. I hope all the floors are nice.

I want Mr Vare to make some little contrivance to each drawer of the new tallboy in my bedroom, to hold a card for me to write upon what is in each drawer, but he cannot have the drawers out till I come home and unlock them.

With kind regards to all,  
yours sincerely  
F. Nightingale

Source: Note on printed card [My Web of Life], Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/93/1

Offered to Frances with Florence Nightingale's best wishes for a good New Year 1893 and many good New Years.



Source: From two letters to Frances Groundsell, the first addressed to Miss Frances Groundsell, Thornham Green, near Lynn, Norfolk, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/93/4 and 5

14 June 1893

I was very glad to have your letter and we shall be very glad if you like to stay at home till Tuesday, returning here by Tuesday night. My kind regards to your parents and aunt, who I hope will continue better, all three.

Pickle sends you his duty and he was very much concerned when you went away.

Sir Harry has been to Pleasley in Derbyshire and went down two coalpits, giving Mr Morey the slip. We were horrified enough at his going to Pleasley. God bless you.

faithfully yours

F. Nightingale

9 July 1893

Would you do me a favour? It is to go with Mrs Bowler this morning to church at St Thomas's, not to let her go alone for the first time.

Source: From four letters to Frances Groundsell, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/94/7, 10, and 12-13 (all written from Claydon House)

29 October 1894

A parcel of bound books, Macaulay's *History of England*, five volumes,<sup>29</sup> which has not been opened, is lying on the floor in my bedroom close to the dressing room door. I think it had better be unpacked and the books taken down into the drawing room and carefully covered up from the dust.

There is also the parcel of Mr Jowett's *Plato*,<sup>30</sup> also I think five volumes, which now, I believe, lies on the floor in my bedroom under the large round table. Those I think had better be unpacked and taken down to the drawing room and covered up. The books on the *little* round table in my bedroom might form a separate parcel for the drawing room.

Remember me kindly to Mrs Reynolds and Bessie and speak to poor Barglar and tell him he ought to write me a letter. He did look so miserable when we set off.

---

29 There are many editions of this work of Thomas Babington Macaulay, two of them five volumes.

30 Both the 1875 and 1892 editions of Jowett's translations of *The Dialogues of Plato* were five volumes.

We got through our journey very well. The people at Euston were so kind and attentive, for Sir Harry's sake, whom they all remember. But I was very ill yesterday. God bless you all.

29 November 1894

Thank you for your letter. We shall not at all events come home this week, so that you will have plenty of time. I hope Bessie is helping you. Give her my love. Please tell Mrs Reynolds, with my kind regards, that we shall not come back this week and that I hope to write to herself tomorrow. God bless you all. In great haste,

yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

I hope your aunt continues better. Does she wear flannel next the skin?

21 December 1894

I send you the list of Christmas boxes generally given by Lizzie. Also a cheque for £4.15.6. You had better buy that number of stamps. I told Mrs Reynolds that I generally laid in £3 worth of stamps for Christmas boxes. If she has done so, you had better buy your stamps of her and give her £1.10, which I think will more than cover what she will want for the tradesmen's boys. Then there will be £2 left for your board wages: £1.5.6 [+] 1.10 [+] 2. [=] £4.15.6. I do this, because I have almost finished my chequebook and cannot afford *two* cheques till I have another.

I wish you all a happy Christmas.

27 December 1894

I am very glad indeed that your aunt is somewhat better and trust that the improvement will continue. You may, if you please, go to Day's or to any stationer he recommends you to and get three pocketbooks for 1895 about 2/6 each (I am afraid it is rather late in the year to have much choice):

one for yourself,

one for Mrs Reynolds,

one for Bessie,

with a good calendar with leaves for *accounts* at the end, space for each day in the year for a diary and plenty of useful information. I generally ask for a "gentleman's pocketbook" for myself, because they are so much better and have no stories or pictures which are so much better in the periodicals. Give one to each with my love. God bless you all. I am sorry to be so long away. I enclose your quarter with my best wishes.

Source: From three letters to Frances Groundsell/Magee, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/95/1-3 (all written from Claydon House)

4 January 1895

Please pay the enclosed account from Miller, if correct—Lizzie says the “20 October” part is.

Mrs Reynolds will give you £1. Please feed the *birds* in any place where they will be quite free from the cats and remember that crumbs will only multiply the *sparrows*. What a nuisance the house next door was! If we want to save the robins, to hear them sing in the winter, and the blackbirds, to hear them sing in the spring, we must have *meat-y* things to feed them with, for only sparrows will eat bread. We have a robin here which comes in and out of my dressing room and has its own plate and chair to sit on the bar.

In haste. . . . Give my love to Bessie and ask her to write me another letter. How is your aunt?

7 January 1895

Would you be so good as to go to *Massey's* and get me 2 doz. of the largest (outside) envelopes, 50 of the next size, but I should prefer the inner flap reaching as far as my pencil mark, 25 of the smallest size (yours). Would Massey also send me a packet (5 quires) of the rough “Old English Paper” of which I enclose a pattern? Please ask him to be so good as to send them all down by return of post, that is, tomorrow (Tuesday, the day you go to him) to me Claydon House, Winslow, Bucks, put up so as not to crumple. (If you cannot get the *middle* size at Massey's, probably [paper cut off] you could get it at Henni [cut off].

2. If tickets come in an envelope from the Dental Hospital, please forward them at once. Thank Bessie for her letter. . . .

If you cannot match the envelopes I want, let him send a few of the nearest match he can *by return of post* and send the rest later.

11 January 1895

I do not quite understand why you could not change your cheque. You had better go to the bank and change it there. If you go tomorrow (Saturday) it must be before 12. Did you write your name on the back?

I send a cheque for board wages, etc. We have severe frost and snow here. The trees all white with rime, the birds are starving, the sparrows and starlings fight for food and drive away the blackbirds and the small birds—two sparrows will drive away a jackdaw. God bless you.

ever faithfully yours

F.N.

I hope your aunt is better again. If you like Mrs Reynolds to send her some soup in the form of jelly, I am sure she would. Shall I send her some more whiskey?

F.N.

I am very sorry that Pickle is lost, but I had rather he was lost than killed by a dog. He was the only cat worth a mouse.

Source: From four letters to Frances Groundsell Magee, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/95/6, 9 and 11-12 (from Claydon House)

1 February 1895

I send you this cheque for bills (which I will send) and board wages. It is just possible that Mrs Shore Nightingale may come to South St. for a few days. I am sure you will make her comfortable.

15 February 1895

I think we may return on Tuesday or Wednesday, but I cannot yet tell. I should like when I come to go into the drawing room first, which I have not seen for more than a year, and to have the small drawing room well warmed. God bless you.

1 MARCH 1895

Will you be so good as to pay these bills for me (you need not send the receipts): Blackburn £1.17.7, Dickson 1.4.0 [total] £3.1.7.

(It has just occurred to me) that this is your BIRTHDAY. May God's blessing be upon it and may He always lead you by the hand. We cannot go far wrong if we go no further than where He leads us. And will you accept this present of a sovereign, which you will find in this cheque?

I should like to know whether the water supply is all right now, as I was told it was frozen, but that would not affect my coming home. I hope to be back on Tuesday at latest and will write again.

3 March 1895

We have another fall of snow here and severe frost. Lady Verney is ill in bed. I am afraid I shall not come back till late in the week. I will write. Pray tell Mrs Reynolds, Bessie and Burglar. God bless you.

yours sincerely

F.N.

Please ask Mrs Reynolds to make and send a jar of very nice jelly to Mrs Joseph Coleman, Steeple Claydon, Bucks.

F.N.

Please tell Mrs Reynolds, Mrs Holmes always thanks for what is sent her.

Source: From two letters to Frances Groundsell Magee, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/95/11 and 96/5

*10 South St.*

1 September 1895

If you are uneasy about your mother, to whom my kind regards, and if she feels unwilling to part with you, you might stay till Friday. I will telegraph this to you in the morning. God bless you.

8 May 1896

If, as I suppose, the “real leather” will last longer than the “leather,” and if the sofa is a “*comfortable*” one for *your mother*, and good and strong, you may order at Harrod’s the one in “real leather” for “£4.4 and carriage paid to Hunstanton about 3/6” and I hope it will be a comfort to her.

yours faithfully

F. Nightingale

Harrod had better send his account to me.

## NUNS

---

### (Roman Catholic) Sisters of Mercy

#### Mary Clare Moore

A long and warm correspondence with Mary Clare Moore (1814-74), mother superior of the Convent of Mercy, Bermondsey, and a much-esteemed nursing colleague in the Crimean War, is reported in *Theology* (3:276-98), with a biographical sketch (3:648-49). Further correspondence will appear in the Crimean War volume. One item only is given here, a published letter (the original unavailable) on a memorial to Moore. Following that is correspondence with two other women of the same community, both of whom also served with Nightingale in the Crimean War, then correspondence with several Anglican nuns.

Source: From a published letter to Mother Mary Aloysius Booker, in Mary C. Sullivan, ed., *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* 178-79

5 January 1875

I don't know if I should have the heart to wish you a blessed New Year, but that I have a duty to fulfill. My aunt, Mrs Smyth [Smith], whom you may remember at Bermondsey, and who was with dear Rev Mother at Scutari, has written to me sending £5, which she wishes me to lay out in any manner that would be most satisfactory to dear Rev Mother. I thought of it as a contribution to her monument at Kensal Green. Then I thought her heart was very full of the children at Eltham, and that a contribution to them would be most satisfactory to her. I don't think she cared about monuments—you are all her monuments. But you will know best—please tell me.

May "God bless you all," as she said.

yours ever in Him

F. Nightingale

## Sister Mary Gonzaga Barrie

**Editor:** There are only a few surviving letters to the “Cardinal,” her name in the Crimean War, Sister Mary Gonzaga in the Convent of Mercy, born Georgiana Ffarington Barrie (1825-73).<sup>1</sup> Sister Gonzaga was a Roman Catholic convert, her father a governor of Upper Canada. Some of her correspondence (but none with Nightingale) is held at the Woodward Biomedical Library, University of British Columbia. Sister Gonzaga was a favourite of the Nightingale family (known originally through Uncle Sam and Aunt Mai Smith, during the war). She and Nightingale kept in touch after the war until her death.

There is no direct correspondence with Sister Gonzaga on the complicated machinations with Cardinal Manning, who wanted the Sisters of Mercy to be replaced at their Great Ormond St. hospital by an order more in line with the papal policy on political matters.<sup>2</sup> Nightingale enlisted the aid of Elizabeth Herbert, herself a Catholic convert, to work against Manning on behalf of the sisters. Sister Gonzaga was even “deposed” to conciliate him, but the nuns were reinstated at the hospital.<sup>3</sup> A letter Nightingale wrote her family referred to “Manning’s persecution of the nuns,” which had “passed all bounds. *But Sister Gonzaga has been got back to Bermondsey under Rev Mother.* The relief is quite beyond description. (Latterly I had been contributing to buy food for the Ormond St. sisters!!) Of course you will burn this.”<sup>4</sup> A letter to her mother confirmed: “Sister Gonzaga has been received back to Bermondsey. There is one provided for. God be thanked for it. It was a great relief.”<sup>5</sup> Nightingale routinely sent Sister Gonzaga’s convent, as she did Moore’s, gifts of food, greenery for Christmas and small donations.

Nightingale and Sister Gonzaga had dealings together with a drinking commissioner, a Roman Catholic, they were both trying to help (and his family). Nightingale asked her brother-in-law for advice when “this wretched commissioner” had confessed to her maid that he had never taken the pledge he had said he had:

---

1 On her life see Mary C. Sullivan, ed., *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* 198-99.

2 There are numerous references to these difficulties in correspondence with Moore in *Theology* (3:277-78, 282-84, 287).

3 Undated letter to Parthenope Verney, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/160.

4 Letter 21 November 1867, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/187.

5 Undated letter to Frances Nightingale, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9002/196.

You see, he is nothing but a tissue of lies. And I have no doubt now, putting together what Sister Gonzaga has told me, with the fact that, while he was earning excellent wages with me, his family always seemed in such abject poverty, although the two eldest children always gave *all* their little wages to clothe the mother and the little ones. I have no doubt now that the man has constantly been taking rum all this time. (In Christmas week he had from me eleven good meals here besides a round of beef and a large plum pudding to take home to his family and 18/ in money. And then he always alleges they are starving!!! Yet the wife, poor thing, is an excellent manager and the little girls are patterns.) *What shall I do?*

Sister Gonzaga wrote to Nightingale about the matter “in her outspoken way”: “If you are *fool enough* to keep that man,” etc.).<sup>6</sup> Only three, quite unrelated, letters from Nightingale to Gonzaga Barrie are available.

Source: From a letter, Convent of Mercy, Birmingham

Lea Hurst  
Matlock

19 October 1856

My dear Cardinal [Sister Mary Gonzaga Barrie]

It was a great relief to me to send Mr John Ryder, M.S.C., his £7, which I have done, and which I trust will not redound to the benefit of the nearest public house.

I am looking out for a situation for poor Mrs Orton and hope to find one in a reformatory for young boys, which will do for her. Please give my love to Sister M. Stanislaus. I am so sorry to hear about her knee. I hope that she will be made to take great care of it and not be laid up long.

Do you remember Sister Sarah Anne<sup>7</sup> at Scutari who went home after fever and used to go with you to the General Hospital? I saw her at Edinburgh and she asked very much after you and begged me to remember her to you particularly. And last, but not least, thank my dear Rev Mother for her letter of this morning, tell her how much I think about her, and, dear Cardinal, do tell me something about her when you can, for your accounts make me very uneasy. I cannot help wishing she could go to Madeira for a winter, but, of course, your doc-

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Harry Verney 5 January 1869, Wellcome (Claydon copy) Ms 9003/71.

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Anne Terrot, daughter of the bishop of Edinburgh, left Scutari to nurse her mother; Terrot was later for a time an Anglican nun.



tor and your bishop think of all these things. I trust your new hospital will prosper. Believe me ever my dear Rev Mother's (now yours)  
faithfully, lovingly and gratefully  
F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter to Sister Mary Gonzaga Barrie, Convent of Mercy, Bermondsey

[20 August 1868]

Indeed I *was* "expecting a letter," not because you are bad to me (in writing) but because you are very good to me. I wish I could hear that Rev Mother was better, but indeed I don't expect it. I believe nothing but a complete change and rest would do her any good. I wish she would go away somewhere (as a duty) with you. I had some faint hopes that she might be better for the retreat, but I suppose that, really (to a Rev Mother) that is only another charge added to her many others. I never believe Rev Mother about herself, but only you. I wish she could go to Walthamstow where Sister Helen is, if there is accommodation there.

I feel sick of expecting the reopening of the hospital in Great Ormond St. It is a dreadful trial to Mother Stanislaus. But, as Blessed Jean d'Avila<sup>8</sup> says, how are we to prove the "modération et tranquillité de notre esprit" except under "contrariétés"?

I think men are the same all over the world, of every profession and condition—War Office ministers, Poor Law ministers, boards of guardians, archbishops, bishops and generals. But this is a sentiment which will not meet Rev Mother's approval, so I will hold my tongue. Men don't think first of the good of the poor, of the sick, and frame their business first and foremost to meet it. But the poor are there to make them an office, *not*, their office is there for the poor.

[line missing] given me something to do for the military hospitals, which it ought to have given me a full year's notice of, and now when every soul of a man of business is out of London and one is gone away ill, it gives it to be done at once.

However this kind of thing is so frequent in my business that I really don't complain of it, but am very thankful that God allows me to do His work at all. But I *can* sympathize with Mother Stanislaus, although very unworthy.

---

8 Blessed John of Avila (1500-69), Spanish mystic, apostle of Andalusia and counsellor of Teresa of Avila.

I am sure Rev Mother prays for me, and so do you. May God's best blessings be always hers and yours. And they *will* be.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Source: From a letter/draft/copy to Sister Mary Gonzaga Barrie, ADD Mss 45753 f170

30 December 1868

Dearest Sister Gonzaga

I send three bottles of sherry (is any brandy wanted?) and a hare. And I hope you will get a good place in heaven for not drinking all the brandy yourself.

### **Sister Mary Stanislaus Jones**

**Editor:** Another Sister of Mercy with whom Nightingale kept in touch, indeed until very late in both their lives, was Sister, later Mother, Mary Stanislaus Jones (1822-1913).<sup>9</sup> Jones was one of the Crimean nurses who continued to nurse on her return. Indeed she founded the Hospital of St Elizabeth of Hungary, later Hospital of Saint John and Saint Elizabeth (originally in Great Ormond St., later moved to St John's Wood). The correspondence here is from their old age. One other letter to her, in which Nightingale makes observations on churches in Rome, is excerpted in *European Travels* (7:346). Nightingale left her friend £250 for her objects (*Life and Family* 1:853).

Source: From a letter to Sister Mary Stanislaus Jones, Convent of Mercy, Birmingham

Christmas Day 1888

I was so glad to hear from you and to hear about your workhouse children. Happy they to be with you! I send you a mite—I wish it were twenty times as much—but hope to send another mite farther on.

I do so think of our dear old Rev Mother [Moore]. The choicest Christmas and New Year's blessings be yours. And I am sure you pray for me as I do for you. You do not say how you are in health—I hope well. I like your photograph so much. Thank you for sending it. You look just as you did thirty-three years ago. Fare you very well, dearest S. Stanislaus. God bless you.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

---

9 On her life see Mary C. Sullivan, ed., *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore* 199.

I hope you will like the Christmas card I send with much, much Christmas love.

Source: From two letters to Sister Mary Stanislaus Jones, Convent of Mercy, Birmingham

29 December [1888]

I would so like to hear about your workhouse children. At what age you take them? and up to what age you keep them? and whether you train them to be domestic servants? whether they are meant to be emigrated to Canada, when old enough, or whether they are meant for domestic servants in England? When you have a moment's time, it would interest me so very much if I knew your purposes for them. In the meantime I can but give them joy, poor little things, at being under your care.

8 [January] 1889

You will see by the date, dearest Sister, how many days ago this was written; and you will know that only the pressure of work and illness would have prevented my sending my very best New Year's wishes to you, my dear old comrade, and also to your little charges, and a few New Year's cards for them. May God bless and prosper your New Year and your work. May you see of the "travail of your soul"! These are your Epiphany gifts to our Lord:

Love is your gold: your service a gem:  
Bring these to the Babe of Bethlehem!

[I a]m sure *you* do.  
ever, dear Mother Stanislaus  
yours sincerely and gratefully  
Florence Nightingale

**Editor:** Notes to the Rev Mother Prioress (Sister M. Stanislaus), St Elizabeth's Hospital, 45 or 46 Great Ormond St., were sent at Christmas 1895 and 1896: "With Christmas greeneries, with flowers," Christmas eve 1895; and *With a parcel. With care.* The Rev Mother Prioress (Sister M. Stanislaus), St Elizabeth's Hospital, 45 or 46 Great Ormond St.

Source: From five letters to Sister Mary Stanislaus Jones, Convent of Mercy, Birmingham

24 December 1895

How long it is since I have heard of you and now I can only send you a greeting, and beg you kindly to accept in love which always remembers

you this little sum for your poor people. God bless you this Christmas-tide. How are you?

ever yours

F.N.

21 October 1896

I was so glad to hear from you and I send my best love to S. Anastasia<sup>10</sup> and some flowers. The flowers are the colours of the old, old churches in Rome: Red = the love of God; White = Purity; Green = everlasting life.

I always remember our dear, dear Rev Mother, now a saint in heaven. And I remember you and your gallant, duty-loving spirit in the Crimea besides Scutari. With love to all who remember me,

ever yours as in old days

F. Nightingale

Will you allow me to send the enclosed for you to keep S. Anastasia's Golden Jubilee?

F.N.

I had your kind note by last post last night. Excuse pencil.

26 April 1897

It is so long since I have heard from you. And I hear with sorrow that you are on the sick list and are at Bournemouth for change. May the Almighty Father restore you. You and dear Rev Mother are always in my grateful heart and often in my mind. Work increases for me every year—and I am thankful for it. But I have been a prisoner to my room for long from illness. Pray for me that the Easter Christ may indeed have risen again in me.

I have not time to write a letter. Pray excuse the smallness of my (subsidy) cheque. I am poorer than I was.

ever, dear M. Stanislaus

your loving

F. Nightingale

7 July 1897

So glad, dearest Mother Stanislaus, of your good news about going to Windsor<sup>11</sup> and most glad of all that you are well again.

<sup>10</sup> Sister Mary Anastasia Kelly (1827-1911).

<sup>11</sup> Queen Victoria invited the surviving nurses from the Crimean War to Windsor Castle to receive the Royal Red Cross, July 1897, the first public recognition the Roman Catholic nuns received.

Thank you, thank you for your letter.  
ever yours  
F. Nightingale

7 March 1899

Dearest Mother Stanislaus, May I send this, though late, as a small token, very small, of love and gratitude. Your “golden jubilee” is past, but our love and gratitude to you can never pass. This has been delayed because I could not find anywhere your address in London—and also by my own increased illness.

God bless you, dearest friend. I hope you are prosperous in every way that you think—prosperous and in good health.

ever yours  
F. Nightingale

## Anglican Nuns

### Elizabeth Bertha Turnbull

**Editor:** Elizabeth Bertha Turnbull was a sister in the Anglican Devonport Sisters of Mercy, founded by Priscilla Lydia Sellon, and one of Nightingale’s most esteemed nurses in the Crimean War. Turnbull evidently visited Nightingale when in London and they were in touch over the convalescent hospital the order ran, to which Nightingale subscribed. But Turnbull herself took up educational work after the war and told Nightingale how much she missed nursing. The letter below, to Aunt Mai Smith, who also knew her in the war, brings her up to date on Sister Bertha’s life. Turnbull ran her order’s mission schools in Honolulu for years. On Sellon’s death Turnbull inherited her money and returned to England to become abbess of the community. The letter has interesting observations about the Nightingale Fund—the money raised in her honour at the end of the war and given to be spent entirely at her discretion.

Source: From a letter to Mary Shore Smith, Private Collection of Hugh Small, copy Balliol College

30 July 1888

You will remember, dearest Aunt Mai, Sister Bertha, one of Miss Sellon’s sisters—she came to see me two days ago. You will perhaps remember that, after the Crimea, she went to Honolulu and conducted large mission schools for years. On the death of Miss Sellon,

who left her everything, she came to England to undertake the whole sisterhood, often in straits for money. I often think, or rather do not like to think, how all the people with “*works*” who were with me in the Crimea must feel how unjust it is that all the “testimonial” went to me. I don’t think S Bertha is without this feeling. How can she? though she never expresses it.

She lives chiefly at their Devonport Penitentiary or at their Ascot Convalescent Hospital, where I often have patients—and when she comes to London, to their little Bethnal Green Mission House, generally comes to see me. We are always good friends—though I always feel as if I had injured her.

She looks very handsome in her lady abbess dress—scarcely a day older. But she does not improve—such a flood of talk—and though she sees so much that is interesting, not interesting talk—narrow talk. The last few years have done this. When she came home to take up all Miss Sellon’s difficulties, then she was really interesting.

You remember Miss Sellon at Malvern?

I think S. Bertha’s struggle through the difficulties must be very admirable.

### **Sister Frances Wylde**

**Editor:** When the correspondence here took place, Sister Frances Wylde (d. 1909) was a nun of the Anglican St Mary’s Convent, 39 Kensington Sq., W., the successor organization to St John’s House, the community which nursed King’s College Hospital. She had left it with Mary Jones in 1868 and succeeded her as lady superior of the new community on Jones’s death. She served in Paris at the English hospital there, as noted in a plea for her continued service but Dr Shrimpton (see p 178 above). Nightingale’s correspondence with Sister Frances on the last illness and death of Jones is reported in *Theology* (3:217-23). Here there are other subjects, including the connection with Jones and midwifery training.

Sister Frances’s request for help, in effect for endorsement of a small hospital, caused Nightingale much anxiety, as her asking for advice about the matter from Henry Bonham Carter shows (see p 1026 below). Evidently none of the sisters had hospital experience or adequate nurse training. The resolution was a compromise, support so long as they kept to care of the dying, not regular hospital work.

Another Anglican nun is referred to in several places, Laura Girdlestone, to whom there is one letter below.

Source: From a letter to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/88/3

Claydon House  
Winslow, Bucks

1 February 1888

I have not lost sight for a moment of your wish for a thoroughly hospital-trained lady for your incurables and to train the sisters, but among our people have not found one who would suit you who was not fully engaged.

There *is* a lady, Sister Airy, who was years at St Thomas' as ward sister, then elsewhere, the last five years in the Egypt war hospitals—a devoted religious woman, as nurse quite of the highest order, fully versed in “hospital routine,” whom I could recommend as sure to do a good work among you, a lovely temper, but who was appointed to India to a military hospital there, only the India Office doctor will not “pass” her *for India*. This was only settled yesterday. It is to me the most grievous disappointment, for they will not find her equal. But I wrote to her immediately, mentioning your want. There has not been time to hear from her. She is Miss Sybil Airy, till tomorrow (Thursday) at the Nightingale Home, St Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge, S.E. If you would like to see her and talk over the matter with her, would you write to her at once? or even telegraph to her?

I write to her again today, mentioning this, and asking her, if possible, to delay her departure another day, in case you should wish to see her, but at all events to write to you saying if anything prevents her from entertaining the idea. Her (home) address is 51 Ashburnham Road, Bedford. If she would undertake your incurables even for a time, I know no one who would do your work so well. (She is a true lady in the highest sense also.)

You kindly ask after me. I was sent out of London bodily by my doctors to rest after extreme exhaustion which affects even my eyes. But though I did my best I have not had one day's rest and am returning to London 10 South St.

How can I thank you for the plant so kindly sent twice? and for your letters? I trust *you* are pretty well. God bless you.

ever yours sincerely  
in *her* dear memory  
F.N.

Source: From a letter to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/88/7

4 July 1888

I am so grateful to you for lovely flowers from a place so dear. I trust things are going well with you and your training of sisters.

You were so good as to write to me about a lady for the Gordon Boys' matron. I could not recommend the post to one who wanted "a better appointment," or who wanted to be "near London." We are going to spare one who had been with us in different posts for nearly eleven years rather reluctantly—for love of the work. The work is hard; the conditions are not good; the salary is not good. It would not have suited that lady. Pray for us that this may turn out well.

Thanks, I am not much better. I should so like to see you but I am so driven now especially. Give me a better report of yourself.

ever yours

F.N.

Source: From a letter to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/89/6

24 May 1889

Indeed I did at Easter pray that Christ might rise again in all our hearts, as I am sure you did for me. She who is gone to the Immediate Presence always wrote to me at Easter as you are kind enough to do. Yes, I dare say some, those who were so far advanced as she was, "know our affairs," *in God* as it were. We *say* we believe that God or Christ dwells in us and we in Him.<sup>12</sup> That must become, must it not? more and more perfect hereafter. But "seeing *in God*" must include seeing *as God sees*, that is, with the peace that passeth understanding.<sup>13</sup> Otherwise there are things here that would grieve them so much. I am sure Sister Laura's absence would grieve her.

Thank you so very much for your letter. I am so very sorry for your health being such a source of anxiety. We are all anxious for it. And I am so glad that your worldly affairs which I will *not* call worldly—those for the hospital and yourselves, which are heavenly—are in a way prospering and less of an anxiety to you. I hope your hospital nursing is prospering. That is indeed an "envious" little strip between you and the hospital.

<sup>12</sup> An allusion to 1 John 4:13.

<sup>13</sup> An allusion to Phil 4:7.



Should it come in your way to know a Roman Catholic lady with the high *practical* qualities of a nurse (*not* a “vert” [convert]—verts are too much under the priest, are not they?) who would not object to have some months’ training as a district nurse in a non-Roman London training school, such a one is wanted in Dublin. She must understand cleanliness and all sanitary things and *not* almsgiving. Do not look out for her. But if someone should come in your way (not a nun or sister), whom you know, would you kindly let me know?

Excuse pencil. You are very kind to ask after me. I have had a very bad winter, and one unusually full of anxieties—both public and private—both Indian sanitary and London hospital anxieties.

She who is gone would like to know that military hospitals in India have now begun with their nursing staffs. These have won their spurs already in outbreaks of cholera and in nursing the sick and wounded in war expeditions. Also, that supplying the millions of Hindu women who die rather than see a man doctor with women doctors, midwives and nurses, *and* training Hindu women to be such, has made a good start under Lady Dufferin, both in our states and in native states.

London hospital nursing a great anxiety, and the movement called the “British Nurses’ Association” a very big anxiety indeed and how to oppose it? Humiliation is better than fashion, more fruitful every way. Nursing is getting far too much a fashion. God bless you ever.

ever yours affectionately

F. Nightingale

Source: From two letters to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/89/16 and 17

20 October 1889

I will make inquiries and answer your question. The thing is that it is a VERY difficult question to answer. I should say, for a training hospital “*not* in London,” unhesitatingly Edinburgh, but you want a county hospital. I entirely agree with you that lectures and examinations instead of practical work are the object of the majority now swarming into what they call nursing. That is why we are obliged to be so strict in sticking to a year’s training. Give me a few days to answer and inquire. I am on the move.

Can you tell me if Sister Laura, now of Warminster, who has been at University College Hospital (would that do for you?) is gone to India?

6 November 1889

It is not for want of thinking and inquiring that I am so late in answering your question about the best place for a year's training for your "girl of twenty-three." May she prosper in all ways!

The matron of St Thomas' reminds me that we have had two good nurses trained from a place close to you: the *Buchanan Cottage Hospital*, St Leonards on Sea. Both the matron and our home sister (mistress of probationers) combine in thinking Miss Tatham, Cheltenham General Hospital, Cheltenham would be a good place for you. (Miss Tatham was one of ours.) They ask, *Would* the "drill of a large hospital" be good for a "girl of twenty-three"? They doubt it, but if you think so our matron would recommend Leeds. But Leeds is almost as much of a big town as Liverpool.

There is another difficulty. All the hospitals are poor nowadays. The matrons are often compelled to take in more probationers (who pay) than they can manage, for the sake of funds. They can only give particular attention to those whom they are training for themselves. This is a real difficulty in making a choice. I am going to see one of our great lady authorities tomorrow. I have been waiting to see her, but I fear I shall not have much more to tell you.

I grieve to hear of your health. May you be better for the winter! I hope still to see you in this world. Fare you very well.

ever yours

F. Nightingale

Am I too late?

Source: From a dictated letter, ending in Nightingale's hand, to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/19

10 December 1889

I am so very sorry that I have not been able yet to find time to ascertain Sister Laura's exact destination in India, but I will. I was waiting to write to you till I could. I believe I know how it is, because I was shown some papers from the India Office some time ago. It is not very reassuring. I believe that the trained sisters under Miss Lock who were sent out, and who did such signal good service at Rawalpindi and the Black Mountain and in two choleras, have been moved by Lady Roberts's<sup>14</sup> desire to another immense district containing sixteen sta-

---

14 Lady Norah Henrietta Roberts (1838-1920), wife of the commander-in-chief of the British Army in India, baron and 1st earl Roberts, who introduced female nursing into the military hospitals of India.

tions, so that each will have half a nurse apiece. Sister Laura has been appointed to the Rawalpindi district with untrained sisters under her. This is only conjecture, and I will obtain exact information for you and myself. (Sister Laura wrote to me before she went, very kindly, but entirely about training, and not saying precisely what she was going to undertake—only that she believed that she was to go to the Punjab.)

I wrote to her, as you may suppose, telling her of the great change in the minds of military doctors and what infinitely higher ideas of the knowledge and training essential to nurses, whether sisters or not, they had now. She replied very kindly, but I heard no more. I too feel very uneasy.

May He whose love is infinite pour upon you and yours the choicest Christmas blessings is the fervent prayer of  
yours ever for the dear “Mother’s” sake

Source: From a letter to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD MSS 47724 ff72-73

2 June 1892

*Sister Frances*—successor to *Miss Jones*, Kensington Sq. They are, as I understand, going to build a small hospital and she wants me to bear witness that they can *nurse*. I feel it almost impossible to decline—but I do not like to do it without your sanction.

You know I have always considered *Miss Jones* and *Miss Pringle* the best nurses, gentle or simple—how strange they should both have done the same thing.<sup>15</sup>

Two trained sisters only accompanied *Miss Jones* from K.C.H., this *Sister Frances* and *Sister Laura*, who went a year or two ago to India as a trained sister (*Mrs Girdlestone*). Then they found what they had done (but we with all our wisdom have not escaped a B.N.A.<sup>16</sup>). Sick and dying have always been their care—since K.C.H.—but I should think nothing like hospital nursing—for you know they asked me to give them a trained and training nurse. I tried to persuade *Miss Airy*, who was then out of work, to go for a year. But nothing would induce her. I believe they did find someone afterwards, but I don’t know who.

So it stands. What shall I do? I *can’t* decline.

---

15 Both resigned precipitously, *Jones* over a disagreement with her council, *Pringle* on conversion to Roman Catholicism.

16 A reference to the registration struggle with the British Nurses’ Association.

Source: From a letter to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/92/7

9 June 1892

My dear friend, I feel most deeply interested in your plans. Might I know a little more about them? Might I know about what medical attendance the hospital is to be under? Have you any of the sisters or nurses other than yourself who have had any hospital training?

I rejoice beyond measure that you have so wonderfully paid off the last of the mortgage debt. Need I say that I wish you the highest success in everything? you and yours. Pardon my writing in pencil. Pardon my delay in answering. I *know* your kindness will. May God bless you in every way.

ever yours sincerely

F. Nightingale

Have you a lay sister? still with you who was good enough to come and see me once when the dearest Mother lay dying? My kind regards to her, please, if you have.

Source: From a note to Henry Bonham Carter, ADD Mss 47724 ff89-92

20 June 1892

Appeal from Sister Frances: I enclose with your leave her two letters. (1) The only one of her three doctors I know (and I dare say you do) is Kingston Barton, a good man and a good doctor. (2) *Sisters*—I think it is quite evident that there is no real hospital training. But I don't think the children and the incurables are at all to be despised.

At Ascot Convalescent Home (Devonport Sisters of Mercy) I know it is a complaint that the incurables *will* get well and I know children die very comfortably there (I have a bed there and sometimes send children outside from St Thomas'). But I have a great fear of multiplying my responsibilities. At this moment, just as you said, I have an appeal from a sister I don't know, but can hardly bear to refuse, for a home for the dying, partly similar to Sister Frances's. . . .

I think it is evident that this "convent" is like the *very* old-fashioned French convents who did a little amateur hospital nursing, aided by "seculars," and spent their time in religious exercises and other things. But I declare it was not so in my day. The Augustinians and the Soeurs de Ste-Marthe were admirable hospital nurses, and now they are all turned out. . . .

Sister Frances's second letter. No objection to that sentence about me, but she must not give me as a *reference*. . . . In every instance where

I have been given as a reference I have been deluged with applicants, and some I thought fraudulent.

F.N.

2 envelopes enclosed: *answers my questions*. What shall I do, please? I cannot shirk her, for my old friend, Miss Jones's sake.

Source: From two letters to Sister Frances Wylde, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/92/9 and 10

3 July 1892

You know how deeply interested I am in your enterprise. God bless it! I think with you that scarcely anything is more difficult than the question of these poor incurables, whether they linger on for years, or whether under good care they recover. There is perhaps nothing sadder in the whole world than to have cured an incurable child and to find that there is nobody who wants it back.

Then, the other question you propose. Scarcely any doctor will give a certificate that a patient is dying. At one time we might have filled St Thomas' with dying patients, certificated by doctors that they were "cases" "to be benefited by hospital treatment." The reverse is also the case. Dying men at St Thomas' have left all the luxuries of the hospital to go (with the consent of the "doctor") to *die at home*. Very few of the homes which admit incurables admit men, only women and children. The "Hostel of God" is to admit men, I believe. They wrote to me, but with many pangs I was compelled by stress of business not to answer.

As you say, how little one can do generally to impress the dying. Yet I don't think this is quite true. Night or evening is the best time—a few words recalling words they once knew. How often one is reminded of the parable of the highways and "hedges."<sup>17</sup> Those who have never heard good words or not for years come in, while we who have been taught from infancy are busy and therefore we "cannot come."

4 July 1892

I know I shall never finish my letter unless I rush brutally into the midst. I think there can be no harm in that sentence about me. You know I feel that interest in every morsel of me. But I am afraid I must protest against that word "also." As it is, people will find out my address and *make* me a reference. If my address were put down, *as* a reference, people would come merely to gossip.

---

17 An allusion to Luke 14:23.

I wish you all the highest success and hope to hear more. We have had much more than usually painful occupation lately. This has made me sadly a delinquent in correspondence. Forgive me and God bless you and yours.

### Laura Girdlestone

**Editor:** The “Sister Laura” in correspondence with Mary Jones and St John’s House was Laura Girdlestone, widow of a major who had served in India. She later trained at St Thomas’ and became a nun, first of all at St John’s House, which brought her into nursing at King’s College Hospital. When there, in 1865, she became “dangerously ill and not expected to live.” Nightingale asked her mother to have Mrs Girdlestone, Jones and another nurse to the country for a couple of weeks for recuperation; see *Life and Family* (1:179).

Girdlestone left St John’s House with Jones and Wylde in 1868. Henry Bonham Carter told Nightingale in 1870 that he had called on the former St John’s nuns at their new address (27 Percy Circus, W.C.), but had only seen a “Sister Laura” habited like a nun, who told him their mission was then only at St Paul’s Knightsbridge, and that they had nothing to do with nursing.<sup>18</sup>

Laura Girdlestone left that community for another order, Warminster, which she also left (Nightingale had difficulty keeping up with her changes of address and some of her letters to Nightingale are from hotels). Girdlestone later served in a secular position in India. There are concerned references to her in being “*dangerously*” hurt in a railway crash in 1878 (in *Life and Family* 1:587).

Source: Draft letter, Add Mss 45809 ff212-13

[1889]

Strictly Private

Dear Sister Laura

Thank you for coming to see me. I was very glad to hear of you again if for *her* [Mary Jones’s] sake. With regard to your request, I regret to have to say that we could not admit anyone to St T.’s “for a fortnight” for the purpose named, “picking up,” because more and more our experience leads us to deprecate it/convince us of its futility as yours would too. It is a request so often made us, though not for quite so short a period. We are obliged to adhere to our principle of a year’s training, more especially for persons going out to foreign posts,

18 Letter to Nightingale 13 January 1870, Add Mss 47716 f114.

except in rare instances where the candidate being just out of a competent training elsewhere, and having a post assured her, wished to qualify, generally for not less than six months, in London hospital methods.

We were consulted when the first India military hospital sisters were sent out, and the conditions we submitted and which were adhered to would I am sure have met with your approval. You would have seen what our experience in these matters leads us to consider essential and which these I believe would have met with your approval.

Might I ask whether the Warminster sisters desired for the work are all London hospital trained? I conclude that those who are sent out to India will pass/undergo some kind of medical examination by authority. And I need not ask! for I am sure you will insist upon it for yourself and others. Also that they have had a thorough recent hospital training. Has the Warminster sisterhood a training hospital of its own?

Yes indeed I remember very well, the twenty-five years ago, wishing you would train for India. Nursing practice has enormously developed since then and with the great expansion of the nursing profession our difficulties [illeg]. Success to you in the highest sense.

yours ever sincerely

F.N.

## **APPENDIXES**

---





## APPENDIX A: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

---

### Harriet Martineau

**H**arriet Martineau (1802-76)<sup>1</sup> was born in Norwich to a large, then prosperous, manufacturing family of Huguenot origins. Its religion was Unitarian (brother James, a prominent minister was known to the Unitarians in the Nightingale family). Martineau became deaf young and had to use an ear trumpet from then. She was educated at home but of course could not go on to university as her brothers did. She was once engaged, but her fiancé died and she remained single. For some years her niece Maria acted as companion and lived with her.

At age twenty-four Martineau's father died and she had to earn her own living. She had begun publishing articles young, now her writing career began in earnest. She published more than 1600 leading articles for the *Daily News* and some fifty books, including histories and novels; some of her books were collections of earlier articles. Her first commercial success was a popular presentation of the principles of laissez-faire economic doctrine, *Illustrations of Political Economy*, 1832. This financed

---

1 Recommended biographies are Vera Wheatley, *The Life and Work of Harriet Martineau*; R.K. Webb, *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian*; Susan Hoecker-Drysdale, *Harriet Martineau: First Woman Sociologist*; Gillian Thomas, *Harriet Martineau*; Valerie Kossew Pichanick, *Harriet Martineau*; Martineau's own *Autobiography* ends in 1855 although it was published posthumously. Short introductions to her life and work are in Lynn McDonald, *Early Origins of the Social Sciences* 251-54, *Women Founders of the Social Sciences* 164-67 and *Women Theorists on Society and Politics* 138-40; on the collaboration see Lynn McDonald, "The Florence Nightingale-Harriet Martineau Collaboration," in Michael R. Hill and Susan Hoecker-Drysdale, eds., *Harriet Martineau: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives*. A 21-volume *Collected Works*, edited by Deborah A. Logan, began publication in 2004.

her research trip to the United States, the basis for her pioneering sociological works, *Society in America*, 1837, a sociological study of American society, and *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, 1838, on the methodology of social science research. Martineau made a good living from her writing, permitting her to build a fine home in the Lake District.

Martineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy* reveals her as an extreme laissez-faire liberal. She opposed protective factory legislation, for example, but her views moderated over time. She was a strong supporter of the movement to abolish the slave trade and a feminist, supporting the full range of causes from the vote to education, access to employment and other rights.

When Nightingale first approached her in 1858 for help in publicizing the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Sanitary Condition of the Army, Martineau was a well-known author and journalist, Nightingale's senior by eighteen years. Martineau had already written on the Crimean War, in a somewhat jingoistic fashion. She responded favourably, producing for the progressive *Daily News* a number of leaders calling for implementation and action. These were not so vigorous as Nightingale might have liked so she drafted a stronger leader and sent it to Martineau, but this was not used. Martineau also wrote a popular account of the royal commission results in book form, *England and her Soldiers*, which reproduced Nightingale's pioneering graphs.<sup>2</sup>

Nightingale in 1859 enlisted Martineau's support on the Indian royal commission, again a subject on which Martineau was already well versed—indeed she had published on India before Nightingale ever did. The third major subject of their collaboration was the Contagious Diseases Acts. Again Nightingale took the initiative, arousing her friend's interest as before by sending actual statistics. The two were unsuccessful in stopping the legislation but Martineau continued to be active in the early movement for repeal. (Nightingale gave the subject only scattered attention from this point on.)

Martineau, for her part, tried to interest Nightingale in *her* causes, notably on “mesmerism” or hypnotism as a form of therapy, and the treatment of the mentally ill. Nightingale did not respond. She did, however, join her friend's initiative regarding sending sanitary information and advice to the United States government in the Civil War.

It is not clear whether the two women ever met in person—certainly they did not after the collaboration begun, for Martineau was

---

2 Martineau, *England and Her Soldiers*, 1859.

then living in Ambleside. References to meeting “Miss Martineau” earlier might have been to her, or might have been to a sister (one ran a school for girls and Nightingale’s aunts and uncles knew various members of the family). The two women worked together amicably from 1858 to Martineau’s death in 1876. They commiserated on their respective illnesses; both expected to die long before they did. Nightingale sent presents and was always scrupulous in inquiring about family and friends. The correspondence itself shows much warmth. Martineau’s salutation moved from “Dear Madam” to “Dear Friend,” while Nightingale’s sign-offs rose from “yours faithfully” through “yours truly and gratefully” to, in a draft at least, “believe me, ever yours overflowingly.”<sup>3</sup>

There were major differences between the two women on religion—Martineau had been raised Unitarian and became an agnostic while Nightingale was a lifelong, if often unhappy, member of the Church of England. These differences become clear in *Suggestions for Thought*.

The foremost woman journalist in England, Martineau was so well known that Nightingale feared being identified as her “disciple.” When arrangements for the publication of *England and Her Soldiers* were being made Nightingale insisted that she be referred to only in connection with her published work for the royal commission. In a letter to Arthur Hugh Clough she expostulated: “If the *Times* publishes that John Stuart Mill is a disciple of Comte, I shall be put in as an apostle of H. Martineau. What will the Commander-in-Chief say? . . . What is the regimental punishment for it?”<sup>4</sup>

### (Dr) Elizabeth Blackwell

Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910)<sup>5</sup> was British born, the daughter of a Bristol merchant. The family emigrated to the United States when she was a child. She studied medicine at Geneva, New York (after applying at numerous universities for entrance) and midwifery at *La Maternité* in Paris. She was the first woman doctor on the English Medical Register, in 1858. Blackwell became an American citizen but returned to England to live and practise for most of her life.

3 Draft letter 8 January 1859, ADD Mss 45788 f15.

4 Letter to A.H. Clough 10 January 1859, Balliol College Archives.

5 On Blackwell’s life see Mary St. J. Fancourt, *They Dared to Be Doctors: Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson*.

Blackwell was already a well-known person (on visiting terms with such eminent scientists as the chemist Michael Faraday and astronomer Sir John Herschel) when Nightingale met her in London in 1849. The link was through the Herberts; Blackwell attended Elizabeth Herbert on the birth of her second child, at Wilton. Nightingale then took Blackwell for a visit to her home at nearby Embley. She in turn became a frequent visitor to Blackwell's rooms in London. She assisted Blackwell with an introduction to Dr Paget at St Bartholomew's Hospital. She influenced her on the importance of health promotion and preventive medicine. Blackwell acknowledged Nightingale's leading: "To her chiefly I owe the awakening to the fact that sanitation is the chief goal of medicine, its foundation and its crown."<sup>6</sup>

Back in the United States Blackwell, with her surgeon sister, Emily, established a hospital conducted entirely by women, the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. In 1859 Blackwell returned to England, where she gave a series of lectures advocating the entry of women into medicine. Nightingale did not attend but gave tickets "for Mrs Dr Blackwell's lectures" to William Farr for his wife and daughter.<sup>7</sup> Nightingale also in 1859 tried to recruit Blackwell to be the superintendent of nurses at the new training school of St Thomas'.<sup>8</sup> Blackwell declined and returned to the United States. During the American Civil War, Blackwell helped organize medical/nursing relief services for the North.

Blackwell sought Nightingale's support of her scheme for a women's hospital in London. The latter saw too many practical obstacles, including objections from the medical profession, apart from the fact that her main concern was to get women into nursing and midwifery rather than medicine.<sup>9</sup>

Nightingale owned a copy of Blackwell's first book, 1852, on the physical care of girls.<sup>10</sup> She gave her an edition of *Notes on Nursing*.

---

6 Cited in Mary St. J. Fancourt, *They Dared to Be Doctors: Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson* 61.

7 Typed copy of letter to Dr Farr 26 February 1859, ADD Mss 43398 f118.

8 Letter to Sidney Herbert 24 May 1859, Wiltshire County Record Office 2057/F4/68.

9 Lois A. Monteiro, "On Separate Roads: Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Blackwell," *Signs* 9,3 (Spring 1984):520-33.

10 Elizabeth Blackwell, *The Laws of Life, with Special Reference to the Physical Education of Girls*. The book, at the Royal College of Nursing Library in London, is inscribed "Miss Florence Nightingale, Embley."

The two remained on friendly terms although Nightingale continued to promote nursing as the profession for women while Blackwell encouraged women to enter medicine. They both opposed the Contagious Diseases Acts, exchanged information on the issue and plotted to get material from their point of view into the press. Blackwell also worked with Josephine Butler. As evident in the correspondence above, Nightingale's views on public policy on the regulation of prostitution differed widely from Blackwell's, as they did on a medical school for women.

Blackwell practised for many years in England but the friendship, in terms of visiting, was not renewed. Blackwell was university educated and a trained doctor and only a year Nightingale's junior in age, but Nightingale was always clearly the leader in ideas and policy. Nightingale was sometimes not only not impressed with Blackwell's ideas but even felt they were badly mistaken. Blackwell asked advice of Nightingale, never the reverse. She provided information to Nightingale on midwifery training in Paris, but it seems that Nightingale never consulted her on what direction training should take.

Nightingale and Blackwell shared a religious philosophy of faith informing practical service. Blackwell wrote an essay on Christian socialism, published in the two-volume edition of her first book, retitled *Essays in Medical Sociology*.<sup>11</sup>

### Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland

Sarah Elizabeth Sutherland, née Cowie (c1808-95), always "Mrs Sutherland" on Nightingale's part, S.E. Sutherland in her signature, became a devoted friend and helper in many practical respects. Mrs Sutherland took charge of renting rooms for Nightingale and would drop by to check on her rooms when she was in the country. In a letter to her Uncle Samuel Smith, Nightingale acknowledged that Mrs Sutherland had viewed forty-one houses before settling on the one chosen.<sup>12</sup> Mrs Sutherland was often an intermediary between her husband and Nightingale, helping to resolve logistical problems. Nightingale returned practical favours, for example, sending a "rheocline bedstead, complete with hair mattress and bolster," costing £10 to 12.<sup>13</sup>

11 Blackwell, "Christian Socialism," in *Essays in Medical Sociology* 2:151-71.

12 Letter 18 January 1863, Add Mss 45793 f14.

13 Letter to Dr Sutherland 23 October 1872, Florence Nightingale Museum (LMA) H1/ST/NC1/72/31.

Nightingale from time to time inveigled her parents into inviting the Sutherlands to Embley for much-needed holidays. Sometimes it was Dr Sutherland who needed the break, sometimes Mrs Sutherland. Nightingale felt that her colleague was tyrannical with his wife and plotted to get around his wishes on her behalf.

The small amount of surviving correspondence with Mrs Sutherland shows strong feelings of affection on both sides. Because Mrs Sutherland often came in person on business, there was little need for writing in the early years. There is, however, much reference to her in correspondence with others. Thus her health and deaths in her family are remarked on and concern shown. By late in life letters were addressed "Dearest, kindest friend" and signed "ever your affectionate and grateful." Others say "My darling," or "Dearest," a title exchanged with few, and who but Mrs Sutherland wrote Nightingale as "Dearie"?

Nightingale's memorial note on her friend's death (in ADD Mss 45758 f326) said: In holiest most loving remembrance of the dearest of old friends, Mrs Sutherland. She was the friend of God. She has crossed the dark river and is with her Lord. Who follows in her train? 17 September 1895. Florence Nightingale offers these flowers.

## APPENDIX B: SECONDARY SOURCES ON NIGHTINGALE AND WOMEN

---

Negative portrayals of Nightingale's views on and relationships with women go back a long time, as indeed do negative portrayals of her person and work in general. The number and hostility of these criticisms, however, have increased in recent decades, both for her work relating to women and more generally. References to Nightingale in her lifetime were overwhelmingly positive, even going over the top with gushy praise. But even before her death the attacks in print had begun (of course she always had opposition over matters of her nursing and other reform work).

A 1906 biography of Sidney Herbert gave Nightingale the obligatory praise, crediting her with "great qualities and equally great work." But, the author went on:

These great capacities were accompanied, as they often are, especially in women, by a jealous impatience of any rival authority and an undue intolerance of all opposition or difference of opinion. . . . She gave full rein to the promptings of a somewhat censorious spirit.<sup>1</sup>

These faults, however, Stanmore magnanimously described as "blemishes" and "trifles," again reverting to the weakness of the female sex and attributing her shortcomings to "nervous tension due to the strain on the overtaxed brain," which, he said, "engendered irritability" (1:405).

There are sexist denunciations of Nightingale by women as well, often accompanying misinformation such as that she opposed the vote for women, their advancement or entry into medicine. These statements are often presented as unquestionable fact and then "explained" by psychological or personality faults. Commentators

---

1 Lord Stanmore, *Sidney Herbert: Lord Herbert of Lea, A Memoir* 1:404.



tend to be confident in their assertions of motive on Nightingale's part.

Margaret Goldsmith, in her 1937 biography *Florence Nightingale*, praises her accomplishments but thoroughly condemns her for personal faults, beginning with her relationship with her mother. Nightingale, routinely referred to by her first name, was apparently, according to Goldsmith, never able to get over the disappointment of her mother's opposition to her nursing: "Despite her assumed cheerfulness, Florence's inarticulate bitterness, her repressed resentment towards her mother were so intense that, psychologically, she never overcame this shock" (67).

Although Nightingale's support for women's suffrage was used by leaders of the movement to counter the queen's opposition to it,<sup>2</sup> Goldsmith linked the two women as anti-woman:

In common with many outstanding women, such as Queen Victoria and Maria Theresa of Austria, who both opposed the advancement of women, Florence Nightingale was not entirely free from vanity. She considered herself, and quite rightly so, a most exceptional woman, and she had no desire to help less gifted women to develop such gifts as they had. She had made her own career. . . . To put it bluntly, Florence did not like women because she was never able to subject them to her wishes as she dominated men. (210)

The power hungry, manipulation theme continues with the assertion that "As she grew older her power over other individuals was the source of the greatest satisfaction to her. Men like Sidney Herbert and Dr Sutherland were completely under her intellectual domination" (210). Further, Nightingale (again called by her first name) "was aware that any woman intelligent enough to work with her would have been too shrewd not to see through her autocratic behaviour" (211).

Goldsmith criticized Nightingale's contribution to workhouse reform, attributing it to a failure of personal character: "It seems strange that she did not accomplish more than she did for the improvement of the Poor Law in England." But Goldsmith found a simple explanation:

It would seem that to do their best work, social reformers must have personal experience; they must see for themselves the distress they hope to relieve. Florence's knowledge of the workhouse infirmaries

---

2 See Laurence Housman, "Florence Nightingale," in *The Great Victorians* 367.

was purely theoretical. She had never visited a workhouse, but their statistics told a dreadful tale. (264)

Yet, as is clear in *Public Health Care*, Nightingale formed the resolution to reform workhouses from her visiting in the 1840s, although she could not act on it practically until the 1860s. Goldsmith attributed her failure to get stronger legislation on Poor Law reform to a lack of concern, conveniently ignoring the fact that the Liberal government with which Nightingale had been working fell and was replaced by a Conservative one, so that her most progressive allies were out of office. Moreover, “Her comments on Poor Law reform show a bitterness, an antagonism towards the officials responsible, rather than a purely human pity for the pathetic creatures involved” (265). Oddly, Goldsmith contrasted what she considered failure on workhouse reform with “persistent devotion to Indian public health,” although Nightingale certainly never went to India and never saw famine or distress there directly.

As did so many commentators, Goldsmith quite misrepresented Nightingale’s complex position on the vote for women. Nightingale, she says, at first “refused to join” the suffrage society, then only “half-heartedly” agreed. “But she never did anything for the society chiefly because she never really believed in it or its aim” (279). Yet Marian Ramelson stated that Nightingale “sent an annual donation to the Women’s Suffrage Society from its beginning to her death in 1910, she supported every effort to get the legal recognition of the separate identity of a female, for mother’s rights in regard to the custody of children, and for women separated from their husbands to keep their own earnings.”<sup>3</sup>

Cecil Woodham-Smith’s influential prize-winning 1950 biography *Florence Nightingale 1820-1910* has been the source of much misinformation<sup>4</sup> and some misogyny (although the treatment in this long work is largely positive). Woodham-Smith seems to be the source for the often-repeated accusation that Nightingale refused to speak to her Aunt Mai Smith for twenty years. She is also the likely source for more innocent misinformation, such as calling the institution on Harley St.,

3 Marian Ramelson, *The Petticoat Rebellion: A Century of Struggle for Women’s Rights* 40. The statement about sending annual dues may be true, but I have seen no such evidence beyond the first few years.

4 For an account of errors in transcription and bias in the Crimean War period see W.H. Greenleaf, “Biography and the ‘Amateur’ Historian: Mrs Woodham-Smith’s ‘Florence Nightingale,’” *Victorian Studies* (December 1959): 190-202.

correctly the “Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness,” the “Institution for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances” (110).

In relating Nightingale’s efforts to find a replacement for Agnes Jones at the Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary, Woodham-Smith described Nightingale as becoming “frantic: Her bitterness against women, her distrust of women, her resentment of their pretensions flared up again” (477).

Elizabeth Burton in a book on Victorian England gives Nightingale great credit for her accomplishments, but is fierce in her condemnation of her person as “dictatorial, neurotic, demanding, obsessed, morbid.” She is said to have used “every possible influential friend” to press her views, and even that she “drove poor Sidney Herbert nearly demented.” And although the book cites no original sources it still comes to firm conclusions about Nightingale’s illnesses.<sup>5</sup>

F.B. Smith’s *Florence Nightingale: Reputation and Power*, 1982, is hostile about virtually every aspect of her life and work.<sup>6</sup> The book is also sexist, disparaging and demeaning to many of the women with whom Nightingale worked. It is especially virulent on Nightingale’s work on women and relations with women (often, according to Smith, seen as competitors). Thus Smith dismisses Nightingale’s extensive material related above on the Contagious Diseases Acts: she “abandoned the issue in 1864 when she realized that the first bill could not be stopped” (164). He simply ignores her later, lengthy work on the treatment of syphilitic prostitutes.

Despite Nightingale’s enormous amount of work on midwifery, Smith again minimizes it, lacing his comments with accusations of malfeasance, even stating that she had known about the high maternal death rate and done nothing about it (160). The material reported in this volume shows nothing of the sort.

That *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions* was not published until 1871, Smith attributes to “lethargy” and “nonchalance” on Nightingale’s part (164). In fact her research and writing was interrupted by work on workhouse infirmaries, famine in India and then the Franco-Prussian War, and was exacerbated by the lack of comparative statistics. To Smith the book was “a cover-up for her blundering

---

5 Elizabeth Burton, *The Early Victorians at Home* 197-98.

6 For a (partial) exposé of Smith’s blatant errors see Lynn McDonald, “Florence Nightingale Revealed in Her Own Writings,” *Times Literary Supplement* No. 5907 (6 December 2000):14-15; Smith never replied.

connection with King's College Hospital" and even a "screen" for the real reason for breaking with the hospital (164). Here he blames Nightingale for the departure of the superintendent over an internal row on religious matters, when the evidence shows she made strenuous efforts to get her to stay.

To Smith Nightingale was slow in closing the midwifery ward, yet he faulted her for not promptly supporting another training project as early as 1869, although we have no reason to believe that its mortality rate would have been any lower (163). Even after thirty years' more experience, as we have seen, Nightingale was not confident that a training program could be conducted in an institution without causing unnecessary maternal deaths. The problem, to him, lay in Nightingale's personality or character: her "failure with midwives' training impelled her to thwart the plans of others" (162).

Smith's misstatement of Nightingale's work on women includes the charge that she began to "swing against women's suffrage" (189). Later, in a television broadcast, he even had Nightingale signing a petition against the vote for women<sup>7</sup> when in fact she signed numerous petitions for it. According to Smith, Nightingale's "procedures aped the standard reform tactics of male parliamentarians" (191), apparently a fault, although women's organizations generally then used similar methods.

Smith also repeated the accusation, which first appeared in Woodham-Smith's biography, that Nightingale's aunt returned to her family in 1860 and that "thereafter Miss N. refused to speak to her for almost twenty years" (90). But this is simply untrue (see the letters in *Life and Family*). Smith did not use the two largest archives of family correspondence (Claydon House and the Wellcome Trust), but this did not stop him from making numerous other misstatements about Nightingale's family relations. Her family's opposition to her becoming a nurse is well known, but Smith turns the tables, accusing her of a "monstrously unfair depreciation of her family" and "ingratitude for the support they lavished" on her (201).

F.B. Smith's book then became the source for many negative statements about Nightingale. Mary Poovey, for example, cited it on apparent failures in nursing, notably on workhouse nursing, when, Poovey claims, her efforts resulted in "only a cruel parody of her original

---

7 "Florence Nightingale: Iron Maiden," BBC 2, 17 July 2001.

grandiose scheme.”<sup>8</sup> The initial *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry on Nightingale cites Smith fifteen times!, with approval, and then adds many other errors of its own—this in a source one would expect to be of high standard.<sup>9</sup> An on-line revision only slightly reduces the errors.

Margaret Forster, although crediting Nightingale with wanting a distinctive sphere for women, quite misrepresented her views on women in medicine: “Florence Nightingale rejected absolutely any suggestion that women should enter men’s spheres and compete to be as good as they were. . . . Therefore she was not interested in women becoming doctors and would do nothing to help them along.” She described Nightingale as having been friendly at first to Elizabeth Blackwell, but then having “sneered at her in private and said she had ‘only tried to be a man.’”<sup>10</sup> Yet as the material above has shown, this is not at all Nightingale’s point, and completely misses her concern about the failures of the medical profession as then practised. Forster, as with so many others, referred to “Nightingale’s equally famous refusal to become a member of the first Committee of the London National Society for Women’s Suffrage” as a fact (94).

Martha Vicinus argued in 1985 that, while Nightingale was “said to have inspired” many women to enter nursing, she failed to help “the average poorly educated” woman and generally had a “low” opinion of women.<sup>11</sup> Yet virtually all the women who entered nursing training for most of Nightingale’s working life were poorly educated. The Nightingale School itself had no minimum educational requirement, insisting only on literacy. Even then it (and other) institutions gave remedial reading instruction.

An article Vicinus wrote for girls calls Nightingale’s legacy “at best mixed,” reporting that feminist historians have also found Nightingale to be a “generally unattractive figure.” Vicinus granted her “administrative expertise,” but accused her of “flagrant use of class privilege” and “consistent refusal to recognize the capacities of other women.”<sup>12</sup>

8 Mary Poovey, “A Housewifely Woman: The Social Construction of Florence Nightingale” 197, see *Life and Family* (1:845).

9 Monica E. Baly and H.C.G. Matthews, “Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* 40:904-12 and 2005 on-line.

10 Margaret Forster, “Florence Nightingale 1829-1910” 94.

11 Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920* 21 and 72.

12 Martha Vicinus, “‘Tactful Organizing and Executive Power’: Biographies of Florence Nightingale for Girls,” in Michael Shortland and Richard Yeo, eds., *Telling Lives in Science* 211.

Further, Vicinus claimed, without giving examples, the British Library collection has “over 13,000 combative letters [which] remind us of her manipulative, aggressive ways” (210). I doubt that the British Library has 13,000 letters of Nightingale of any kind (neither they nor I have done a count). Nor do the letters in the fine edition put out by Vicinus and Nergaard qualify as “combative, manipulative, aggressive” although the editors give as criteria for selection “conflicts” and “painful” material in her relationships.<sup>13</sup>

In the introduction to that edition Vicinus and Nergaard find Nightingale’s faults “too evident,” although they describe her as a “brilliant reformer” and rate her achievements as “considerable”:

She tended to see all issues in black and white; those who agreed with her were friends and those who disagreed were enemies. Her lack of generosity, even vindictiveness, towards women who disagreed with her was a lifelong habit. She manipulated her friends and family shamelessly. (10)

Yet many of the letters in this volume, and many more not included, show extraordinary generosity, including to women with whom Nightingale had deep disagreements. Nightingale’s warm relationship with and practical support of Mary Jones carried on for life, despite her friend never taking any of her advice and even acting contrary to her strongest recommendations. Vicinus and Nergaard’s choice of conflict and painful relations as an organizing principle is perfectly legitimate, and the resulting book excellent. But neither it nor any other selection of a small number of letters out of thousands (most not even read by those making the selection) should be treated as representative of Nightingale’s work or relationships.

Colleen A. Hobbs, who relied entirely on secondary sources, summed up Nightingale as being “neither a saint nor the creator of modern nursing.” She was “irascible and often quick to find fault. She played political games and could be brutal to doctors, nurses or administrators she viewed as her opponents or competitors.” Hobbs considered that “many other women” did more for nursing and that it was only her “social position, her government connections and a stroke of good timing” that gave Nightingale “access to a bully pulpit.”<sup>14</sup>

13 Martha Vicinus and Bea Nergaard, eds., *Ever Yours, Florence Nightingale: Selected Letters* 1.

14 Colleen A. Hobbs, *Florence Nightingale* ix.

Roxanne Nelson asked readers to “think again” when considering Nightingale as a model, for she made women “completely subservient to the doctors.” This inventive author has Nightingale guilty of “actively lobbying against treating nursing as a profession and dismissing women who fought for equality.”<sup>15</sup> Yet she gave no names of women who fought for equality, let alone were dismissed for so doing—perhaps because none exist: the only time Nightingale employed any nurses, in fact, was the eighteen months at the Crimean War and no nurse there was campaigning for equality rights. Nightingale was further said to have opposed women being paid for their work and failing to realize that “not everyone had a wealthy father doling out a substantial allowance” (116), quite the opposite of her position.

Joanna Trollope’s popular book *Britannia’s Daughters: Women of the British Empire* has a chapter on Nightingale, “Every Woman Is a Nurse.” There is much misinformation in it, about both Nightingale and others. The chapter also includes the remarkable statement that Nightingale made “no mention” of “the huge problem of childbirth and of all female diseases” in India: “she scarcely had time, after all, with everything else that preoccupied her” (86). A vast amount of material on this subject is in the India volumes, and some on midwifery and the diseases of women and children has already appeared in this volume.

The BBC program (cited above) “Florence Nightingale: Iron Maiden,” initially broadcast in 2001 and frequently rebroadcast, likened Nightingale to Margaret Thatcher, a right-wing Conservative who was notoriously anti-woman (there were no women other than herself in Thatcher’s first Cabinet and she denied British women rights they held under European law).

While many critics have condemned Nightingale for accepting a too-subservient role for women, Elaine Showalter took the reverse stand: Nightingale was “not attracted to the androgynous figure of Jesus,” but instead saw herself as the agent of “a strong masculine God who commanded her to be a saviour and who justified her rebellion against the feminine morality of domestic duty and humble self-sacrifice.”<sup>16</sup> Showalter described Nightingale as a believer in women’s “emancipation,” but not “women’s rights” (411). She also has Nightingale being adopted as Benjamin Jowett’s “pupil”! (407), although the two clearly

15 Roxanne Nelson, “The Lady with a Lamp and a Few Secrets” 63.

16 Elaine Showalter, “Florence Nightingale’s Feminine Complaint: Women, Religion and *Suggestions for Thought*,” *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 6,3 (1981):402.

interacted as peers. Showalter cites only secondary sources in her work.

An article largely positive about Nightingale's work, but again using no primary sources, came to the opposite conclusion: "It is well known that Florence Nightingale was no supporter of female emancipation."<sup>17</sup>

Liane Aukin, a therapist interested in mother-daughter relations, continued the anti-woman theme with her assessment of Nightingale as "pathological," for being "outraged" at her aunt and not speaking to her "for twenty years,"<sup>18</sup> a statement based on false information (from Woodham-Smith). Aukin subsequently explained that she came to her position after reading a great deal, but no primary sources, and then looked for quotations to support her conclusion! Although this therapist did not read the family correspondence (she used only printed sources), she inferred a "powerful ambivalence and, at times, whole-hearted outrage against mothers in general and her own in particular."<sup>19</sup>

Marni Jackson, in a book on pain, has a section on Nightingale that gives her credit for many accomplishments, even (erroneously) that at the Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness, which she calls the Harley Street Hospital, Nightingale "insisted that prostitutes receive proper care."<sup>20</sup> The only named sources given in Jackson's book are the whimsical essay by Lytton Strachey and a website produced by Country Joe McDonald (no relation to this editor). Jackson drew on unnamed "biographers" to make the wild claim (one I have never seen anywhere else) that Nightingale was "a neurotic malingerer who had to be carried from room to room but could still manage to bully her aunt, who took care of her for decades" (220-21). Presumably this is not the same aunt to whom Nightingale is said to have refused to speak for twenty years! Jackson called for a Broadway musical, to be called *Flo!*, to portray this "adventuress, a thinker, a tyrant in love (so they say) . . . a gifted scientist ex officio" (220).

This critic also described Nightingale, parenthetically, as being adopted by lesbians, that "she rejected two suitors and pursued her female cousin, Marianne Nicholson, but the evidence is thin regarding actual affairs." She adduces not even "thin" evidence (I know of

17 Elvi Whittaker and Virginia Oleson, "The Faces of Florence Nightingale: Functions of the Heroine Legend in an Occupational Sub-Culture," 126.

18 Liane Aukin, "Doing It Better than Mother," *History Today* (April 2003): 31-37.

19 Liane Aukin, "The Author Replies," *History Today* (June 2003):61.

20 Marni Jackson, *Pain: The Science and Culture of Why We Hurt* 224.



none whatsoever), again a tactic of using someone else, unnamed, to make an unlikely point.

Clive Ponting in *The Crimean War* not only attacks Nightingale's character but blames her for turning a clean, airy and well-run hospital (195) into one with an inordinately high death rate (199). He used no primary sources whatsoever, cited one biography only (Woodham-Smith's error-prone *Florence Nightingale*) and relied on the egregiously inaccurate F.B. Smith's *Florence Nightingale: Reputation and Power*. He claimed that Nightingale achieved "very little . . . certainly no more than nurses in other hospitals" (199). He correctly gives credit to the three-person sanitary commission that came out in March 1855 for reducing the death rate, but extraordinarily concludes: "Their programme was an indictment of the previous management (including that of Florence Nightingale)" (199). Curious that the two surviving members of that team (one died on the trip) became lifelong Nightingale supporters and collaborators (John Sutherland and Robert Rawlinson) if they believed that she was in any way responsible for the high death rates.

On her relations with women Ponting declared Nightingale "a strict disciplinarian" who "alienated nearly all of the women under her. She was intolerant, would only accept her way of doing things" (197). If so, why did so many of them become and remain friends, and indeed keep in touch decades later, as so much material above shows?

A review of Gillian Gill's *Nightingales* repeats the current sexual gossip and innuendo: that she "castigated herself as impure"; that it has been "suggested that she was lesbian" and was "obsessed with masturbation," all matters on which there is zero evidence. The reviewer has Nightingale "retiring to her bedroom and refusing to see her own family after her return from the Crimea" (far from the case). Nightingale is given credit as being "one of the most significant reformers in the history of medicine," but with a qualifier: "her role as a hospital reformer was greatly overestimated." Seymour overall finds much to admire about this "hard to like" person, indeed "this intelligent and determined monster of a woman."

Other examples of hostile portrayal appear in Appendix B of volume 1 of the *Collected Works* (1:843).

Numerous fictional accounts use Nightingale as a character (and others use her nurses). Some of these, too, portray her relations with women in a hostile way, although no more so than accounts purporting to be academic. Robert Goddard's *Painting the Darkness* has Nightingale dismissing an unmarried nurse at the Barrack Hospital, Scutari,

for having a baby: “The cowed red face darkened with indignation . . . a *child*—the stress she laid on the word made it sound like a disfiguring disease.” Nightingale then “shuddered” at the suggestion that she might have let such a woman nurse for her. Yet there is nothing in the primary sources to suggest any such reaction.

### Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Secondary Literature

Sexist stereotyping is so pervasive in our culture that it appears in books otherwise highly favourable to Nightingale. Nor are misogynist men the only culprits. Well-established academic women, even some who would consider themselves to be feminists, often reserve surnames and honorifics to the male sex, referring to Nightingale and other women by their first names, even nicknames, at any age. Two books, both by women authors with positive accounts of Nightingale, serve as examples: Val Webb’s *Florence Nightingale: The Making of a Radical Theologian*, an attempt to treat her theological work seriously (albeit limited to readily available printed sources), and Gillian Gill’s *The Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale*, a quasi-biography with material on many members of her family. Both authors call Nightingale and other women by their first names, nicknames and no titles, at any age, while according the dignity of surnames, initials and titles to men. Hence “Fanny,” “Flo” and “Sigma.” Author Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, “Mrs Gaskell” as she was known, becomes “Lizzy Gaskell” in Gill, yet Theodor Fliedner is “Pastor Fliedner.” The pornography collector Richard Monckton Milnes is always “Monckton Milnes” while his long-suffering wife is “Annabel.”

Webb’s use of sexist titles even extends to giving Sidney Herbert a title, “Sir,” which he never had, while his wife is given a nickname she never used, e.g., “Sir Sidney Herbert’s wife Liz” (315). Yet he was Mr Herbert most of his life, becoming Lord Herbert of Lea only months before his death. If he had been “Sir Sidney Herbert” his wife would have been “Lady Herbert.” Webb routinely called her “Liz” (Nightingale called her “dearest” and, once, “Lizzie”). In fact Sidney Herbert had a nickname the two women used, “The Cid,” one I have never seen a biographer or commentator use.<sup>21</sup>

---

21 Letter to Sidney Herbert 28 September 1856, Wiltshire County Record Office, Pembroke Collection 2057/F4/66; and to Elizabeth Herbert (see pp 678, 681 and 724 above).

Biographers and commentators like to refer to Nightingale's father, William Edward Nightingale, by his initials, WEN, and some even think they are doing what his contemporaries did. One even stated that "Wen" was his first name. But the "WEN" abbreviation is an affectation of biographers. True, he signed letters often with his initials, but so did many in the Nightingale family (WSS, MSS, BSS, JS, FNV, HBC, etc.); Frances Nightingale was "FN," as was her younger daughter. W.E. Nightingale in fact had a nickname, "Night," as used by his wife, "Uncle Night" by his nieces and nephews. Authors who feel it is important to use nicknames for the people they discuss could call him by his along with the "Fanny" they use for his wife.

These authors (and many like them) do not only give women infantile names and men adult names but they assign different qualities to them. The very common treatment of Nightingale's father as being serious, responsible and reasonable, in contrast with her frivolous and even hypocritical mother, is without foundation in the primary literature. For example, Gill called Nightingale's father, referred to by his initials, as "a prudent and peace-minded man," who preferred "libraries to drawing rooms." Nightingale's mother, called "Fanny," was ascribed two age-old sexist stereotypes, the shrew and the social climber. She "screamed like a cockney fishwife" in a disagreement with her daughter (xiii), but how did Gill manage to hear this 150 years later? In the ongoing conflict between the two parents "WEN" peaceably gave his "ambitious" wife her head (xiv).

For Webb "WEN" was "introspective, liberal thinking . . . fond of travel and intellectual pursuits," while "Fanny" insisted on getting a second home near the "right" people; he saw his duty to "legislate in local politics" and, despairing of his unproductive life, he sought a seat in Parliament "or perhaps Fanny desired it for him" (23). Yet there is no record of W.E. Nightingale being dissatisfied with his unproductive life (his younger daughter wanted him to do more useful things), nor is there evidence of his working in local politics or of Frances Nightingale pushing him to run for Parliament for reasons of social prestige. Even Nightingale's grandfather is given more than his due: his bank failed, but Webb called William Shore "a successful banker" (23).

The same holds on the Nightingale parents' move into the Church of England from their Unitarian backgrounds, typically explained as a result of Mrs Nightingale's social-climbing proclivities. Vicinus and Nergaard reduce Nightingale's mother to the social-climbing "Fanny"

who “insisted that the family become Anglican as more appropriate for landed gentry.” Her father, the more dignified “W.E.N.,” they describe as “a supporter of Parliamentary reform” (13), which he was in principle, although he undertook no activity to this end (he ran once unsuccessfully for Parliament, but even then without emphasizing reform concerns). Webb, for example, referred to “Fanny’s rejection of Unitarianism’s intellectual honesty and social conscience” as a fact, implying that Florence Nightingale disapproved of her mother’s choice as “ineffectual, socially blind Anglicanism” (25). Yet Nightingale respected her mother’s faith and saw it as genuine and deep. Her father’s cynicism riled her; for examples see *Theology* (3:367-76 and 384-91). He was conscientious in fulfilling his duties of patron of the living, in effect becoming the employer of the local vicar, but remained quite Unitarian in his beliefs. One might wonder if there were social reasons for his adherence to the established church.

This tendency to claim intimate knowledge of the Nightingale family, their deepest motives and desires, reminds me of what sociologist David Riesman called the “inside dopesters” in his American classic, *The Lonely Crowd*. Some “inside dopesters . . . crave to be on the inside, to join an inner circle or invent one” (198), tendencies Riesman saw as cynical; their goal is “not to be taken in by any person, cause or event” and they go to great lengths to keep from looking like an “uninformed outsider” (200).

But the tantalizing details of family life and nicknames these authors give us do not come from membership in the Nightingale family (how could they?) or familiarity gained through reading their letters and journals (available if difficult of access). Rather the “inside dope” comes from other “inside dopesters,” unreliable secondary sources. But even this hypothesis does nothing to account for the sexist depiction of the “inside dope,” the surnames, honorifics and higher qualities attributed to men, and first names, nicknames and frivolous qualities to the women.

In addition to the above (printed) sources of misinformation and sexist stereotyping about Nightingale must be added the casual gossip that at least for several decades has been circulating informally in nursing schools. I am routinely informed on meeting nurses that they were “taught” that “she was not a nice woman,” which statement turns out to mean that she was sexually promiscuous. Sometimes she is said to have died of syphilis, “because she loved the soldiers.” Some have her as a prostitute, no longer giving it away but charging for it

(where did anyone find soldiers to interview?). No sources are given for these amazing charges, attributed vaguely to “instructors” and never nursing historians. Yet nothing of the sort ever appeared in the press or in private correspondence at the time or for fifty years after Nightingale’s death. Surely such activity would have been newsworthy if true: “the lady with the lamp” as a tramp! Curious that no one noticed, not other soldiers (although they lay on mats eighteen inches apart in the Barrack Hospital), nor nurses, doctors, chaplains, officers and other visitors to the barracks.

Extreme caution must be exercised in using this all-too-abundant, unreliable and yet growing secondary literature. Scholars are heartily urged to refer instead to the primary literature, the *Collected Works*, obviously, and other published letters. The Nightingale who appears in this primary literature is quite different from that of the secondary, and so are her family, friends and colleagues. Those of us who work on the *Collected Works of Florence Nightingale* have had the first opportunity of doing research based on the full range of sources. We hope that other scholars will join us.

### **Bibliography for Appendix B**

- Aukin, Liane. “Doing It Better than Mother.” *History Today* (April 2003):31-37.
- Baly, Monica E., and H.C.G. Matthew. “Nightingale, Florence (1820-1910).” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* 40:9004-12.
- Elizabeth Burton. *The Early Victorians at Home*. London: Arrow 1974.
- Forster, Margaret. “Florence Nightingale 1829-1910.” In *Significant Sisters: The Grassroots of Active Feminism 1839-1939*. London: Martin Secker & Warburg 1984:93-129.
- Gill, Gillian. *The Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale*. London: Hodder & Stoughton 2004.
- Goddard, Robert. *Painting the Darkness*. London: Bantam 1989.
- Goldsmith, Margaret. *Florence Nightingale*. London: Hodder & Stoughton 1937.
- Hobbs, Colleen A. *Florence Nightingale*. New York: Twayne 1997.
- Housman, Laurence. “Florence Nightingale.” In *The Great Victorians*. London: Ivor Nicholson 1932:355-67.

- Jackson, Marni. *Pain: The Science and Culture of Why We Hurt*. London: Bloomsbury 2003:220-26.
- Nelson, Roxanne. "The Lady with a Lamp and a Few Secrets." *Geography Magazine* (January 1999):63-67, 116.
- Ponting, Clive. *The Crimean War: The Truth Behind the Myth*. London: Chatto & Windus 2004.
- Poovey, Mary. "A Housewifely Woman: The Social Construction of Florence Nightingale." In *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1988:164-98.
- Ramelson, Marian. *The Petticoat Rebellion: A Century of Struggle for Women's Rights*. London: Lawrence & Wishart 1967.
- Riesman, David. *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*. New Haven: Yale University Press 1950.
- Seymour, Miranda. "Nurse's Aides." *New York Times* 24 October 2004:8.
- Showalter, Elaine. "Florence Nightingale's Feminist Complaint: Women, Religion and Suggestions for Thought." *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 6,3 (1981):395-412.
- Smith, F.B. *Florence Nightingale: Reputation and Power*. London: Croom Helm 1982.
- Stanmore, Lord. *Sidney Herbert: A Memoir*. 2 vols. London: John Murray 1906.
- Trollope, Joanna. *Britannia's Daughters: Women of the British Empire*. London: Hutchinson 1983.
- Vicinus, Martha. *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1985.
- . "‘Tactful Organizing and Executive Power’: Biographies of Florence Nightingale for Girls." In Michael Shortland and Richard Yeo, eds., *Telling Lives in Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1996:195-213.
- , and Bea Nergaard, eds. *Ever Yours, Florence Nightingale: Selected Letters*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1990.
- Whittaker, Elvi, and Virginia Oleson. "The Faces of Florence Nightingale: Functions of the Heroine Legend in an Occupational Sub-Culture." *Human Organization* 23,2 (Summer 1964):123-30.
- Woodham-Smith, Cecil. *Florence Nightingale 1820-1910*. London: Constable: 1986 [1950].



## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

---



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Abbott, Evelyn, and Lewis Campbell, eds. *Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett*. 2 vols. London: John Murray 1897 and supplement 1899.
- Abbott, Jacob. *The Corner-stone, or, a Familiar Illustration of the Principles of Christian Truth*. London: T. Ward 1834.
- Amos, Sheldon. *A Comparative Survey of Laws in Force for the Prohibition, Regulation, and Licensing of Vice in England and Other Countries*. London: Stevens 1877.
- Anderson, Dorothy. *Miss Irby and Her Friends*. London: Hutchinson 1966.
- Arlidge, J.T. *The Pottery Manufacture in Its Sanitary Aspects*. Allbut & Daniel 1892.
- Aveling, James Hobson. *English Midwives: Their History and Prospects*. London: Elliott 1967 [1872].
- Baker, Samuel W. *The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia and the Sword Hunters of the Hamran Arabs*. London: Macmillan 1867.
- Baly, Monica. *Florence Nightingale and the Nursing Legacy*. 2nd ed., London: Whurr 1997. London: Croom Helm 1986.
- Barnett, Henrietta Octavia. *The Making of the Home: A Reading Book of Domestic Economy, etc*. London: Cassell 1885.
- Bird, Robert. *Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth*. London: Kegan Paul 1892.
- Blackwell, Elizabeth. *The Laws of Life, with Special Reference to the Physical Education of Girls*. New York: Putnam 1852.
- . *The Human Element in Sex: Being a Medical Enquiry into the Relation of Sexual Physiology to Christian Morality*. London: J. & A. Churchill 1884.
- . *Essays in Medical Sociology*. 2 vols. in 1. New York: Arno Reprint 1972 [1902].

- Blackwood, Alicia. *Narrative of Personal Experiences and Impressions during a Residence on the Bosphorus throughout the Crimean War*. London: Hatchard 1881.
- Boddy, Alexander A. *The Laying on of Hands: A Bible Ordinance*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge 1895.
- Brown, Susan. "Economical Representations: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 'Jenny,' Augusta Webster's 'A Castaway,' and the Campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts." *Victorian Review* 171,1 (Summer 1991):78-95.
- Buckton, Catherine M. *Health in the House: Twenty-five Lectures on Elementary Physiology in Its Application to the Daily Wants of Man and Animals, etc.* London: Longmans 1875.
- Burdett-Coutts, Angela, ed. *Woman's Mission: A Series of Congress Papers on the Philanthropic Work of Women*. London: Sampson Low, Marston 1893.
- Burke, Edmund. *The Works of the Rt Hon Edmund Burke*. New ed. 6 vols. London: F.C. & J. Rivington 1808.
- Butler, Josephine. *Government by Police*. London: Dyer 1879.
- . *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade*. Westport CT: Hyperion Reprint 1976 [1911].
- Carter, K. Codell, and Barbara Carter. *Childbed Fever: A Scientific Biography of Ignaz Semmelweis*. Westport CT: Greenwood 1994.
- Cartwright, Frederick F. "Nightingales and Eagles: The Reform of British Nursing." Unpublished manuscript 2001.
- Charrier, Amédée. *Mémoire présenté en 1855 à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris*. Concours pour le Prix Monthyon.
- Clive, Caroline. *IX Poems by V*. London: Scholartis 1928 [1840].
- Clough, Blanche Athena. *A Memoir of Anne Jemima Clough*. London: Arnold 1897. 11
- Cook, E.T. *The Life of Florence Nightingale*. 2 vols. London: Macmillan 1913.
- Cullingworth, Charles James. *Puerperal Fever, a Preventable Disease: A Plea for the More General Adoption of Antiseptics in Midwifery*. London: J. & A. Churchill 1888.
- Donnison, Jean. *Midwives and Medical Men: A History of Inter-Professional Rivalries and Women's Rights*. New York: Schocken 1977.
- Duncan, James Matthews. *On the Mortality of Childbed Fever and Maternity Hospitals*. Edinburgh 1870.
- . "The Influence of Aggregation on the Mortality of Lying-in Women." *Medical Times and Gazette* 25 November 1871:658.

- Fancourt, Mary St. J. *They Dared to Be Doctors: Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson*. London: Longmans 1965.
- Garrett Anderson, Louisa. *Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson 1836-1917*. London: Faber & Faber 1939.
- Gill, Gillian. *The Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale*. New York: Ballantine 2004.
- Goldie, Sue. *A Calendar of the Letters of Florence Nightingale*. Oxford: Microform 1983.
- Goldman, Harold. *Emma Paterson: She Led Women into a Men's World*. London: Lawrence & Wishart 1974.
- Hamilton, Gail. *Gala Days*. Boston: Ticknor & Fields 1863.
- Hammond, J.L., and Barbara Hammond. *James Stansfeld: A Victorian Champion of Sex Equality*. London: Longmans, Green 1932.
- Healey, Edna. *Lady Unknown: The Life of Angela Burdett-Coutts*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson 1978.
- Helmstadter, Carol. "Robert Bentley Todd, Saint John's House and the Origins of the Modern Trained Nurse." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 67 (1993):282-319.
- Hicks, J. Braxton. "The Education of Women in Midwifery." *Medical Times and Gazette* 25 November 1871:659.
- Hill, George Birkbeck. *Colonel Gordon in Central Africa 1874-1879*. London: Thomas de la Rue 1885.
- Hoecker-Drysdale, Susan. *Harriet Martineau: First Woman Sociologist*. Oxford: Berg 1992.
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell. *Puerperal Fever as a Private Pestilence*. Boston: Ticknor & Fields 1855.
- Hopkins, Jane Ellice. *Work in Brighton; or, Woman's Mission to Women*. With a preface by Florence Nightingale. London: Hatchards 1877.
- Howe, Julia Ward. *Reminiscences 1819-99*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1900.
- Howe, Samuel Gridley. *On the Causes of Idiocy*. Edinburgh 1858.
- Jackman, Sydney W., and Hella Haassee, eds. *A Stranger in The Hague: The Letters of Queen Sophie of The Netherlands to Lady Malet 1842-1877*. Durham and London: Duke University Press 1989.
- Johnson, Peter. *Voyages of Hope: The Saga of the Bride-Ships*. Victoria: Horsdal & Schubert 2002.
- Jones, J. *Memorials of Agnes Elizabeth Jones by Her Sister*. London: Strahan 1871.
- . "Una and Her Paupers," *Memorials of Agnes Elizabeth Jones by Her Sister*. With an introduction by Florence Nightingale and introduc-

- tory preface by the Rev Henry Ward Beecher. New York: G. Routledge 1872.
- Jowett, Benjamin. *College Sermons*, ed. W.H. Fremantle. 2nd ed. London: John Murray 1895.
- Kerr, J.M. Munro et al., eds. *Historical Review of British Obstetrics and Gynaecology 1800-1950*. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone 1955.
- Kirkes, W.S., assisted by J. Paget. *Handbook of Physiology*. London: John Murray 1848.
- Le Fort, Léon. *Des maternités: études sur les maternités et les institutions charitables d'accouchement à domicile dans les principaux états d'Europe*. Paris: Masson 1866.
- Lepetit, Charles. *De la fièvre puerpérale: épidémie observée en 1856 à l'hôpital des clinique et à l'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*. Concours pour le Prix Montyon.
- Lesser, Margaret. *Clarkey: A Portrait in Letters of Mary Clarke Mohl (1793-1883)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1984.
- Litchfield, Henrietta E., ed. *Emma Darwin: A Century of Family Letters 1792-1896*. 2 vols. London: John Murray 1915.
- Loudon, Irvine. *The Tragedy of Childbed Fever*. Oxford: University Press 2000.
- Macalister, Florence. *Memoir of the Rt Hon Sir John McNeill, G.C.B. and of His Second Wife Elizabeth Wilson*, by their Granddaughter. London: John Murray 1910.
- MacKenzie, G. Muir, and A.P. Irby. *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe*. 2 vols. London: Daldy, Isbister 1877.
- Mahood, Linda. *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the 19th Century*. London: Routledge 1990.
- Martineau, Harriet. *Illustrations of Political Economy*. 3 vols. London: Charles Fox 1832.
- . *Society in America*, ed. S.M. Lipset. Garden City NY: Anchor 1962 [1837].
- . *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, ed. Michael R. Hill. New Brunswick NJ: Transaction 1989 [1838].
- . *Life in the Sick Room: Essays by an Invalid*. London: Edward Moxon 1844.
- . *Eastern Life: Present and Past*. 3 vols. London: Edward Moxon 1848.
- . *England and Her Soldiers*. London: Smith, Elder 1859.
- . *The Contagious Diseases Acts, as Applied to Garrison Towns and Naval Stations*. Liverpool: Brakell 1870.

- . *Autobiography*. 3 vols. London: Smith, Elder 1877.
- McDonald, Lynn. *Early Origins of the Social Sciences*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996 [1993]
- . *Women Founders of the Social Sciences*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1996 [1994].
- , ed., *Women Theorists on Society and Politics*. Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1998.
- . "Florence Nightingale Revealed in Her Own Writings." *Times Literary Supplement* No. 5907 (6 December 2000):14-15.
- . "The Florence Nightingale-Harriet Martineau Collaboration." In Michael R. Hill and Susan Hoecker-Drysdale, eds., *Harriet Martineau: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives*. New York: Routledge 2001:153-67.
- McHugh, Paul. *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform*. London 1980.
- "Miss Nightingale on 'Lying-in Institutions.'" *Medical Times and Gazette* 18 November 1871:625-27.
- Mohl, Mary Clarke. *Vingt-sept ans d'histoire des études orientales*. Paris 1879.
- Mohl, Mary Elizabeth. *Madame Récamier: With a Sketch of the History of Society in France*. London: 1862 [1861].
- Morland, Egbert. *Alice and the Stork, or, The Rise in the Status of the Midwife as Exemplified in the Life of Alice Gregory 1867-1944*. London: Hodder & Stoughton 1951.
- Murray, Andrew. *Like Christ: Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Conformity to the Son of God*. Chicago, New York and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co. [1886].
- Nash, Rosalind. *A Sketch of the Life of Florence Nightingale*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge 1937.
- . "Preface" to *Florence Nightingale to Her Nurses: A Selection from Miss Nightingale's Addresses to Probationers and Nurses of the Nightingale School at St Thomas's Hospital*. London: Macmillan 1915 [1914].
- Newman, John Henry. *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert*. 14th ed. London: Longmans Green 1900 [1848].
- Nield, Keith. *Prostitution in the Victorian Age: Debates on the Issue from 19th Century Critical Journals*. Farnborough Hants: Gregg International 1973.
- Nightingale, Florence. *Subsidiary Notes as to the Introduction of Female Nursing into Military Hospitals in Peace and in War*. London: Harrison & Sons 1858.

- 
- . *Notes on Hospitals*. London: John Parker 1859. 3rd ed., London: Longman, Green 1863.
- . *Notes on Nursing: What It Is, and What It Is Not*. London: Harrison 1860.
- . *Army Sanitary Administration and Its Reform under the Late Lord Herbert*. London: McCorquodale 1862.
- . *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions, Together with a Proposal for Organizing an Institution for Training Midwives and Midwifery Nurses*. London: Longmans, Green 1871.
- . *Florence Nightingale to Her Nurses: A Selection from Miss Nightingale's Addresses to Probationers and Nurses of the Nightingale School at St Thomas' Hospital*. With a preface by Rosalind Nash. London: Macmillan 1915 [1914].
- . "Sanitary Statistics of Native Colonial Schools and Hospitals." *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science* 1863:475-88.
- . "Life or Death in India." Paper read at the Meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science October 1873. London: Harrison 1874.
- . "Hospitals and Patients." *Nineteenth Century* (September 1880):1-4.
- . "The Dumb Shall Speak, and the Deaf Shall Hear, or the Ryot, the Zemindar." *Journal of the East India Association* (1 June 1883):164-210.
- . "Introduction" to Dayaram Gidumal, *Behramji M. Malabari: A Biographical Sketch*. London: Fisher & Unwin 1892:v-vii.
- Nuland, Sherwin B. *The Doctors' Plague: Germs, Childbed Fever, and the Strange Story of Ignác Semmelweis*. New York: Norton 2003.
- O'Malley, I.B. *Florence Nightingale 1820-56: A Study of Her Life Down to the End of the Crimean War*. London: Butterworth 1931.
- Osborn, Samuel. *Ambulance Lectures on Home Nursing and Hygiene*. London: H.K. Lewis 1885. 2nd ed., 1891.
- Parent du Châtelet, Alexandre Jean Baptiste. *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris, considérée sous le rapport de l'hygiène publique, de la morale et de l'administration*. 2 vols. Paris 1836.
- Pichanick, Valerie Kossew. *Harriet Martineau*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1980.
- Playfair, W.S. *Treatise on the Science and Practice of Midwifery*. 2 vols. London: Smith and Elder 1883.

- Quinn, Vincent, and John Prest, eds. *Dear Miss Nightingale: A Selection of Jenjamin Jowett's Letters to Florence Nightingale 1860-1893*. Oxford: Clarendon 1987.
- Review of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*. *Lancet* 4 November 1871:640-41.
- Review of *Introductory Notes on Lying-in Institutions*. *British Medical Journal* (11 November 1871):559.
- Richards, Laura E., and Maud Howe Elliott, assisted by Florence Howe Hall. *Julia Ward Howe 1819-1910*. 2 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1916.
- Rigby, Edward. *System of Midwifery*. London and Philadelphia 1841.
- Rumsey, Henry Wyldbore. *Essays on State Medicine*. New York: Arno Reprint 1977 [London: J. Churchill 1856].
- Schreiner, Olive. *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonoland*. London: Fisher Unwin 1927 [1897].
- Semmelweis, Ignaz Philipp. *Die Aetiologie, der Begriff und die Prophylaxis des Kindbettfiebers*. Trans. from Hungarian by Ferenc Gyorgyey 1861. Reprint, New York: Johnson 1966.
- . *The Etiology, Concept and Prophylaxis of Childbed Fever*. Trans. and ed. K. Codell Carter. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1983 [1861]. [Abridged]
- Shorter, Edward. *Women's Bodies: A Social History of Women's Encounters with Health, Ill-Health and Medicine*. New ed. New Brunswick NJ: Transaction 1991 [1982].
- Simpson, M.C.M., ed. *Letters and Recollections of Julius and Mary Mohl*. London: Kegan Paul 1887.
- Stanmore, Lord (Arthur Hamilton-Gordon). *Sidney Herbert: Lord Herbert of Lea, A Memoir*. 2 vols. London: John Murray 1906.
- Stephen, Caroline Emelia. *The Service of the Poor: An Enquiry into the Reasons for and against the Establishment of Religious Sisterhoods for Charitable Purposes*. London: Macmillan 1871.
- Strachey, Ray. *The Cause*. London: C. Bell 1928.
- Sullivan, Mary C., ed. *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1999.
- Sutherland, Gillian. "Anne Jemima Clough and Blanche Athena Clough: Creating Educational Institutions for Women." in Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch, eds., *Practical Visionaries: Women, Education and Social Progress 1790-1930*. Harlow Essex: Pearson 2000: 101-14.

- Swayne, J.G. *Obstetric Aphorisms*. Many editions from 1856 to 1890s.  
*Obstetric Aphorisms: For the Use of Students Commencing Midwifery Practice*. London: Churchill 1856.
- Tarnier, Claude-Stéphane. *Recherches sur l'état puerpéral et sur les maladies des femmes en couches*. Paris: Rigoux 1857.
- . *De la fièvre puerérale observée à l'hospice de la Maternité*. Paris: J.-B. Baillière 1858.
- Thomas, Gillian. *Harriet Martineau*. Boston: Twayne 1985.
- Walkowitz, Judith R. *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1980.
- Webb, R.K. *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian*. London: Heinemann 1960.
- Wheatley, Vera. *The Life and Work of Harriet Martineau*. London: Secker & Warburg 1957.





## INDEX

---

## INDEX

---

Space limitations required some compromises in the index. It includes most proper names, omitting those of acquaintances, employees and persons who appear briefly and are not readily identifiable. Items with identifying information are shown in *italics*. Items with many entries are grouped. Biblical references are indexed by book under “Bible.”

- Abbott, Evelyn 956, 1056  
 Abbott, Jacob xiv, 5, 111, 927n, 972, 1056  
 accoucheur (physician) 35, 38, 53-54, 144, 160, 162, 167, 174, 177, 197, 203, 208, 259, 302, 304, 318, 326-28, 335, 343, 347, 349, 351, 355, 387-88, 394, 396  
 accoucheuse (*see also* midwife) 36, 53, 55-57, 61, 204, 245, 327-28, 333, 337, 341-43, 348, 352, 354-55, 357-58, 369, 379, 386  
 Acland, Charles Thomas Dyke 497-500, 502-03  
 Acland, (Dr) Henry Dyke 17, 50, 56, 91, 96, 100, 176, 192, 359, 361-65, 368, 496, 833, 891, 918  
 Acton, William 466, 469  
 Adams, John Couch 550  
 Addison, Charles Bowyer. *See* Norton  
 Adshead, Joseph 534-35  
 Aeschylus 690, 859n  
 Airy, George Biddell 863  
 Airy, Sibil 1022, 1026  
 Albany, duchess of 820-21  
 Albany, duke of 820-21  
 Albert, Prince 202, 437, 634, 712-13, 763, 776, 820, 831, 864  
 Alexander, Thomas 35, 564, 566  
 Alice, Princess. *See* Princess Louis  
 Allen, Fanny 648  
 Allier, Mme 27  
 America/n (*see also* United States) xiii, 15, 17, 22, 28-29, 35, 54, 57, 68, 220, 271, 441, 572, 688-89, 692, 712-13, 717, 747, 757, 766, 794, 795, 800-02, 804, 812, 824, 865, 927, 997, 1034-36, 1051  
 Anderson, Garrett. *See* Garrett  
 Andrassy, Julius 849, 852  
 Anglican nuns xi, 4, 7, 41-42, 46, 100-01, 181, 509, 523, 1013, 1020-30  
 Anglican (other) 101n, 558, 627, 691n, 910n  
 antiseptic/sis (*see also* disinfectant, infection and Listerian) 152, 373-74, 393, 402-03, 405, 407, 1057  
 Aristotle 337, 587, 609n, 943  
 Arlidge, John Thomas 946-47, 1056  
 Arnaud, Angélique 48  
 Arneth, F.H. von 148-49, 362  
 Arnold, Mary. *See* Humphry Ward  
 Ashburton, Lady (wife of 1st baron) 712-13, 766  
 Ashburton, Lord (1st baron) 713  
 Ashburton, Lord (2nd baron) 26, 710-11, 717, 720-21, 723

- Ashburton, Louisa (Mackenzie Stewart) 26n, 519, 521-22, 660, 710-37, 766, 946
- Ashley, Lord 862
- Asquith, Herbert H. 606, 947
- Aubigné, J.-H. Merle d' 739
- Augusta, Empress 833, 841
- Austen, Jane 587
- Austria 43, 145, 352-54, 576n, 715, 742n, 744, 779-80, 822, 849, 852-55, 1040
- Austro-Prussian War 42, 576, 785, 822, 842
- autopsy (*see also* post-mortem) 145, 388
- Aveling, James Hobson 364, 1056
- Ayrton, A.S. 453, 458
- Baden, grand duchess of 18, 833-41
- Baker, Samuel W. 70, 471, 539, 1056
- Balaclava 24, 526, 578, 874, 943-44
- Balfour, Lady 983
- Balfour, Thomas Graham 414, 416-17, 452, 463, 474-75, 480, 705
- Baring, Mary (later Bonham Carter) 92
- Baring, Mary Florence (Maisie, Maysie) 710, 719, 722, 725, 727-31, 733-36
- Barker, Agnes 86
- Barnes, J.H. 206, 213, 215, 223, 281n, 329, 370
- Barnes, Robert 191-92
- Barnes, Robert Sydenham Fancourt 192, 388
- Barnett, Henrietta Octavia 401, 1056
- Barrie, Mary Gonzaga 185, 1014-17
- Barry, James Miranda 19
- Barthélemy-St Hilaire, Jules 581, 826, 970
- Battersby, George Harford 910
- Baxter, Richard 585, 801, 808
- Beale, Lionel 198n
- Beck, Snow 340
- Beecher, Henry Ward 800-02
- Beigel, H. 341
- Bence Jones, Henry 662-63, 665, 674-81, 684
- Benedicks, Selma 519-20, 762
- Benson, Philip 891-92, 918
- Berlin 27, 209, 257, 265, 271, 329, 337, 342, 345-46, 348, 352-53, 358, 557, 575-77, 776, 822, 831-32, 841, 960, 967
- Bible (*see also* scripture) 86, 96, 126, 333, 710-11, 807, 814, 900, 946, 990, 1001, 1057; Gen 49:4 852; Exod 20:5 432; Num 22:23 546; 22:33 748; Josh 3:15-17 596; Judges 5:7 632; 1 Kings 17:12 920; 2 Kings 6:17 553; Job 38:2 333; Ps 23:4 538, 792; 32:8 993; 46:1 639; 91:11-12 114; 95:7 844; 127:2 604, 729, 911; Isa 40:3 127; 57:1 687, 861; 64:6 646; Eccl 11:1 133, 388; 12:8 333; 12:12 643; Jer 15:15 333; 20:12 333; 21:10 34; Ezek 43:11 904; Joel 2:28 802; Zech 12:5 333; 12:10 333-34; Mal 3:2 887; Wis 3:9 959; 4:7 544; Matt 3:3 127; 4:5 113; 4:6 114; 4:8 113, 115; 5:3 766; 5:5 527; 5:6 750; 6:12 512; 6:54, 56 513; 9:16 837; 10:6 389; 10:16 910; 13:12 116; 13:46 936; 18:10 548; 20:16 840; 26:39 700; 27:19 383; Mark 10:51 549; 12:30 853; Luke 1:28 726; 1:38 715, 766; 2:49 925; 10:42 486; 13:35 701; 14:23 1028; 19:41 580; 22:42 700, 701; 23:43 539, 705; John 3:7 646; 8:11 487; 13:5 829; 14:2 544; 15:13 902; 16:7 547; 16:26 829; 17:4 704; 18:539; 19:30 544; Acts 2:17 802; Rom 8:19 647; 8:21 594; 8:31 511; 12:10 929; 14:8 699; 1 Cor 7:31 763; 9:22 952; 12:31 802; 13:2 959; 13:12 550; 2 Cor 4:9 906; 4:11 701; 5:14 829; 5:21 486; 7:15 574; 11:9 914; 12:9 700; 1 Pet 5:7 647; 2 Pet 2:5 40; Gal 5:22 553; Phil 2:12 544; 3:20 106, 514; 4:3 643; 4:7 1023; 4:8 527; 1 Tim 2:15 337; 5:21 511; 2 Tim 1:7 615; 1 John 2:16 957; 4:13 1023; Heb 1:14 546; 2:10 544, 992; 11:38 115; 12:1 68, 547, 652, 700; 13:2 870; Jas 1:4 70, 515; 1:17 645; Rev 21:1 652; 21:2 652; 21:23 652

- Billerbeck, Olga von 814  
 Birch, Samuel 557  
 Bird, Robert 927n, 1056  
 Bismarck, Prince Otto von 576, 579, 633, 832, 967  
 Blackwell, Elizabeth *xi*, 15-16, 18, 20-30, 57, 342, 345, 352-57, 384-86, 407, 459, 472-74, 477-80, 1035-37, 1044, 1056  
 Blackwell, Emily 16, 22, 24, 1036  
 Blackwood, Alicia 644-47, 1057  
 Blackwood, J.S. 644-45  
 blood poisoning 76-77, 142, 146, 277, 290, 300  
 Blower, Helen 368  
 Boddy, Alexander 927, 1057  
 Bodichon, Barbara (Leigh Smith) 858  
 Boer War 814, 876n, 880, 930n, 942  
 Boivin, Marie-Anne 328  
 Bonaparte. *See* Napoleon  
 Bonham Carter, Alice 981n  
 Bonham Carter, Charles 873-75  
 Bonham Carter, Edith 816  
 Bonham Carter, Gerard 876  
 Bonham Carter, Henry *xi*, 2, 7, 30, 75, 80, 82, 93, 95, 100n, 158, 161, 163-64, 166-67, 197-98, 202, 205, 381-82, 392, 397-98, 405, 526, 606, 610, 801, 804, 809, 871-72, 876, 1021, 1026-27, 1029  
 Bonham Carter, Hilary *xi*, 114n, 553, 560, 563, 565, 592, 628-29, 648-49n, 653, 661, 695-96, 710, 719, 782n, 814, 869, 953  
 Bonham Carter, Hugh 952  
 Bonham Carter, Joanna Frances, "Joan" 873, 875  
 Bonham Carter, Joanna Marie 553, 610  
 Bonham Carter, John I 553, 953  
 Bonham Carter, John II, "Jack" 92, 546, 744  
 Bonham Carter, Sibella 610, 871-77  
 Book of Common Prayer 330, 646n, 844n, 890n  
 Booker, Mary Aloysius 1013  
 Bosanquet, Elizabeth F. 933  
 Bosnia 72, 589, 591-92, 849, 853-54, 857n, 859  
 Bowman, William 154-55, 164, 180-84, 189, 198, 920  
 Bracebridge, Charles Holte *xi*, 519, 535, 537, 543, 554-56, 584, 648, 710, 739, 741, 778, 781, 799  
 Bracebridge, Selina ( $\Sigma$ ) *xi*, 100, 162, 370n, 519, 521, 525-44, 545-46, 549, 554-56, 558, 566, 584, 601, 648, 704-05, 710, 739, 741, 749, 751, 778, 781, 799, 915  
 Bratby 866n, 982n, 986, 989  
 Bremer, Frederika 864  
 Bright, John 574, 590  
 Bright, Richard 682  
 British Army *xiii*, 422, 433, 436, 467, 1025n  
 Brodie, Benjamin 28, 192, 663, 678  
 Broglie, duc de 579, 583  
 Broglie, duchesse de 583  
 Brönte, Charlotte 798  
 Broomhead, Mrs 522, 984, 986, 989  
 Brougham, Henry Peter 26  
 Brown, John 723  
 Bruce, Augusta (later Stanley) 620, 815  
 Bruce, Cumming 620  
 Bruce, Elma 620, 622  
 Bruce, Henry Austin 474-76, 483-85  
 Bruce, Robert 617, 623  
 Buckingham, duke of 590, 896  
 Buckton, Catherine M. 401, 1057  
 Bullard, H. 926  
 Bunbury, Edward 557  
 Bunsen, Christian von 533, 717-18, 774  
 Bunsen, Frances von 533  
 Bunsen, George 831-32  
 Bunyan, John 682  
 Burdett-Coutts, Angela 711, 739, 808-12, 1057  
 Burke, Edmund 693-94, 1057  
 Buss, Frances Mary 900  
 Butler, Josephine E. *xi*, 56, 460, 476, 481, 492-93, 499, 507, 782, 1037, 1057  
 Bywater, Ingram 923

- Cabinet 423, 565, 641, 664, 743,  
779-80, 788, 821, 1046
- Caird, Edward 923
- Caird, James 968
- call to service xiv, 110, 133n, 519-20,  
880
- Calvert, Frederick 832, 892, 906, 910,  
936, 1001
- Cambridge, duke of 427, 437, 614,  
688, 690
- Cambridge University xiii, 5, 112, 114,  
782-83, 834, 866, 900
- Cameron, Miss 483-87, 489-90
- Campbell, Thomas 933n
- cancer 92, 150, 831, 841
- Canino, prince of 742
- Canning, Charlotte 560
- Canning, George 571
- Canrobert, Mme 575
- Cardwell, Edward 483, 489, 580
- Carlyle, Thomas 554, 609
- Carpenter, Jessie Boyd 402
- Carpenter, Mary 478, 813
- Carpenter, William Boyd 402n
- Carr, Laura (later Cranworth) 26,  
754-55, 759
- "Cassandra" (essay) 6, 110-11, 127-38
- Cavendish, Lady 903
- Cavour, Benito 601, 722
- Chadwick, Edwin 334-35, 544, 672,  
793, 823n, 844-45
- Chamberlain, Joseph 895-96
- Channing, William Ellery 863-64
- Chapman, John 622
- Charles V 715
- Chaumont, Dr de 371
- Chermside, Mrs 697-98
- Chermside, Richard Seymour 697
- Chisholm, Caroline 21, 812-13, 817n
- Christ (*see also* Jesus, Saviour, Son of  
God) 65, 108, 113, 115, 121, 137,  
487, 511-15, 547-49, 556, 580,  
588n, 599, 604, 649, 701, 803, 829,  
831, 844, 866, 890, 943, 992, 1001,  
1019, 1023, 1061
- Christian/ity 2, 41, 50, 92, 157, 159,  
416, 471, 480-81, 486, 541, 572,  
603, 607, 705, 794, 798, 802-03,  
816, 829-31, 864, 874, 877, 900,  
1037, 1056-57
- Christian, Princess 607
- Christison, Robert 663
- Church of England (*see also* Anglican)  
xiv-xv, 32, 78, 101, 119n, 121n,  
126, 155, 187-88, 531, 550n, 656,  
872, 949, 1035, 1050
- Clanwilliam, Lord (Richard Meade)  
676, 698n
- Clarence, duke of 926n
- Clark, Andrew 604, 949
- Clark, James 27
- Clive, Archer 554, 648, 738-39
- Clive, Caroline 554, 566, 648-49, 738-40
- Clough, Anne Jemima 613, 615,  
782-84, 866, 1057, 1063
- Clough, Arthur Hugh, "AHC" xi, 25,  
84, 89, 94n, 156, 158, 564-65, 595,  
639, 667, 671, 676, 687, 782, 860,  
865-66, 867, 869, 872, 1035
- Clough, Arthur Hugh (son) 607
- Clough, Blanche Athena 782n, 866,  
1057, 1063
- Clough, Blanche Smith xi, 782,  
860-67, 871
- Clough, Florence Anne 866, 870-71
- Coleman, Elizabeth, "Lizzie" 938,  
979, 1000
- Coleman, Elizabeth, "Minima" 979
- Coleman, Joseph 938, 979-80
- Coleman, Mrs 938, 979, 1011
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor 946n
- Coltman, Arthur Francis 867
- Coltman, Bertha Elizabeth Smith 90,  
595, 648, 668, 867-71
- Coltman, Lady 648, 668, 716, 787
- Coltman, Mary Urith 867, 870-71
- Coltman, William Bachelor 90, 595,  
668, 867, 869
- Coltman, William Hew 867, 870
- Colyar, Henry 778, 781-82
- Colyar, Mrs Henry 778-82
- Compton, Berdmore 537
- Compton, Mrs 537, 540-41
- Comte, Auguste 21, 111, 1035
- conservative/Conservative (political)  
xiv, 172n, 177n, 545, 557, 609n,

- 713n, 725, 831, 879, 905n, 1041, 1046  
 consumption 100, 255, 261, 263-64, 296, 419, 612, 860, 981  
 contagion/contagious disease 150, 192, 299, 451, 457, 478, 482, 507-08  
 Contagious Diseases Acts xiv, 4, 20, 364n, 411-508, 784, 820, 1034, 1037, 1042, 1057, 1060  
 convert/sion (Protestant) xiv, 133n, 880, 927  
 convert/sion (to Roman Catholic) 112, 573n, 649, 651, 691n, 781n, 798, 920n, 1014, 1024, 1061  
 Correggio, Allegro Antonio 116  
 Cowper-Temple, Baron 366  
 Cranworth, Lady. *See* Carr  
 Cranworth, Lord 26  
 Craven, Mrs Dacre. *See* Lees  
 Creator (*see also* Father, God, Lord) xiv, 510  
 Crimean/ War xiii, 7-8, 17, 19-20, 27, 88-89, 98, 141, 147, 414, 417n-18n, 420, 495-96, 512n, 520-21, 525, 527, 535n, 545, 564-65, 578, 614, 617, 632, 634, 644, 648-50, 688, 707, 772-73, 791-92, 808, 814, 833, 866, 929-30, 939, 956-57, 1013-14, 1017, 1019-21, 1034, 1046, 1048, 1053, 1057, 1062  
 Croft, A.W. 71, 498  
 Crossland, Mary S. 503, 806n, 874, 897-98, 998  
 Cuffe, Lady Joan 932  
 Cullingworth, Charles James 403, 1057  
 Cunningham, James McNab 480  
 Cunningham, Henry 507-08  
  
 Dale, Thomas Pelham 204  
 Dalhousie, Lord 570  
 Damrong, Prince 810, 905-06  
 Dante 944  
 Darius, of Persia 592n  
 Darwin, Charles 543, 648  
 Davenport, Arthur 746  
 Davenport, Charlotte 746  
 Davenport, Edward Davies 746  
  
 Davidson, Mrs 898, 910, 926-27  
 Dawes, Mrs 787  
 Dawes, Richard 786  
 deaconess 5, 38, 43-49, 60, 100-01, 103, 182, 554, 576, 650, 814-15, 823, 825  
 De'Ath, George Hanby 923, 938-39  
 death xiii, xvi, 2, 4, 15, 19-20, 58, 63-64, 67, 72, 77, 79, 82, 92-93, 110-12, 124-25, 129, 133, 135, 137-38, 142-45, 147, 152, 154, 160, 172, 176, 188, 198-99, 201, 205-07, 210, 213-15, 218-20, 222, 231, 234, 236, 238, 241, 244-46, 249, 251, 253-59, 262-64, 269-71, 274, 280, 283-85, 291, 294, 296, 299, 305, 322, 334-37, 344, 371, 374, 377, 383, 400, 407, 413, 420, 425, 437, 441, 520-21, 525-26, 535-38, 540-45, 547-48, 552, 556, 558, 560, 583-84, 592, 595-96, 602, 608, 611, 621, 624, 629, 634, 637-40, 647, 656, 682-83, 686-88, 697-98, 700-07, 711, 719, 722-23, 726, 741, 747-48, 761-62, 769, 771-72, 774-76, 783-84, 787, 792, 794-97, 799, 800, 807, 813, 819, 823-24, 826, 831, 834, 841-42, 848, 852-64, 867, 873-75, 902, 923-24, 935, 942, 944-45, 953-55, 963, 979, 984, 991-92, 997, 1014, 1020-21, 1035, 1038-39, 1041, 1043, 1049, 1052  
 death rate (*see also* mortality) xiii-iv, 17, 54-55, 142, 145-46, 148, 150, 171, 191-92, 201, 204, 210, 214-16, 218, 222-23, 231-32, 234, 249, 253-57, 260, 262-63, 268-78, 280, 283, 289-91, 294, 296-97, 299-300, 303, 308, 332, 334-37, 372-74, 388, 395, 407-08, 459, 590, 820, 1042, 1048  
 de Grey, Lord 233, 426-28, 435, 437-38, 441, 447, 454, 455, 615, 630, 664, 667, 672, 684-87, 689, 693  
 Delane, John Thadeus 614, 677  
 Derby, Lord, 14th earl 361, 780  
 Derby, Lord, 15th earl (Lord Stanley) 84, 437, 617-18, 622, 624, 647, 689, 855

- Des Genettes, Abbé 561
- Dickens, Charles 21, 47n, 689, 751n, 764n, 768, 808, 812, 914n, 928n
- Dimmock, Susan 348
- disinfect/ion/ant (*see also* antiseptis) 145-46, 149-50, 152-53, 209-10, 371, 402, 470, 890
- Disselhoff, Luise Fliedner 650
- Dowding, Fanny 980-82
- Dowding, Jane 980-81
- Dowding, Mary 980-81, 983
- drain/age xiii, 52-53, 76-77, 277, 280, 311, 590, 838, 912
- drunk 3, 18-19, 39, 78, 343, 416, 512, 817, 837-38, 843, 974-75, 987-99
- Dublin 200, 262, 271-72, 274-75, 285-86, 364, 404, 587, 687, 840, 1024
- Dufferin, Lady 387-88, 392, 602-04, 1024
- Dufferin, Lord 392, 602
- Duncan, James Matthews 220, 231-32, 244, 254, 259, 332, 337-38, 340, 1057
- Dunfermline, Lord 637
- Dunmore, Catherine 683
- Dunn, C.B.N. 86n, 978, 985, 987-88
- Dunsany, Anne (Dutton) 520, 565, 658, 710, 748-52
- Dutton, Anne. *See* Dunsany
- Eastlake, Elizabeth 813-14
- Edinburgh 16, 18, 62, 76, 149, 151-52, 257, 265, 273, 340, 369, 374n, 388, 399-400, 521, 587, 606, 634, 645, 663n, 723, 828, 836-37, 857, 895, 897, 1015, 1024
- Egypt/ian xiii, 128n, 525, 533n, 539-40, 557-58, 572, 711, 717-18, 729, 734, 736, 744, 751, 775, 945, 1022
- Elgin, Lady 561, 611
- Elgin, Lord (8th earl) 617
- Elisha 553
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo 596
- epidemic 50, 76-77, 143, 154, 206, 246, 271, 275, 288, 296, 300, 373, 823
- Erichsen, John Eric 405
- Erle, William 921
- erysipelas 143, 170, 238, 241, 249, 251, 271, 297, 311, 315, 383, 498
- Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness (*see also* Harley St.) xiii, 519, 651, 1042
- Eugénie, Empress 38, 581n, 844-46
- European Travels* 100, 112, 115n-17n, 134n, 145, 519, 525-26, 554n, 557n, 640, 648-51, 722n, 737, 762, 780n, 785, 815n, 821-822n, 842, 844, 861n, 864n, 867, 880, 1017
- evangelical xiv, 42-43, 46, 111, 546, 710, 990
- Evatt, G.J.H. 896
- Ewart, J.C. 454
- Ewing, Julian Horatia 978
- faith (religious) xiv, 2, 69, 210, 415-16, 521, 525, 545, 548, 705, 711, 747, 764, 782, 804, 841, 863, 935, 983, 990-91, 1037, 1051
- family (Nightngale's) xiii-vi, 5, 7-8, 13, 17, 19, 23-24, 88-91, 413, 519-22, 525-26, 542, 544-45, 593, 606, 608, 632, 637, 648, 704, 710, 712, 737, 748, 761, 763, 767, 770, 776, 800, 813-14, 860, 862, 866-67, 873, 879-80, 882, 935, 944, 956, 958, 973, 1014, 1033, 1035, 1038, 1043, 1045, 1047-52
- family (other) 6, 22, 67, 86, 88, 100, 111-12, 118-19, 123, 137, 436, 487, 492, 514, 522, 529, 565, 649-50, 724, 743, 747, 749, 770, 772, 774, 779, 785, 796, 812, 836, 838, 840-41, 868, 971, 990, 995, 999, 1005-06, 1015, 1035
- famine 196, 571, 590, 666, 905n, 1041-42
- Faraday, William 474, 545, 1036
- Farnall, H.B. 624, 626
- Farr, Mrs 28
- Farr, William 28, 31, 37, 39, 92, 95, 142-43, 148, 170-72, 202, 206-07, 210, 214, 220-21, 231, 240, 244, 334-35, 340, 388, 477, 564, 687, 1036
- Farrar, F.W. 866



- Farre, Arthur 155, 159, 162, 197  
Farrer, Julia 733  
Father (*see also* Creator, God, Lord)  
    xv, 13, 492, 515, 544, 548, 591, 604,  
    700, 706-07, 725, 730, 828, 887,  
    889, 912, 925, 994, 1000, 1019  
Fauriel, Claude-Charles 589  
Fawcett, Henry 819  
Fawcett, Millicent Garrett 819  
Feilding, Lord 781  
Ferdowsi Tousi (Firdousi) 572  
Ferrucci, Caterina 649, 861, 864  
Ferrucci, Francisco 600  
Ferrucci, Rosa 649, 861  
Fliedner, Caroline 49, 89, 650, 809  
Fliedner, Friederike 47  
Fliedner, Luise. *See* Disselhoff  
Fliedner, Theodor 47, 49, 101, 529,  
    632n, 640, 650, 1049  
Fowler, Mrs 648, 704  
Fowler, Richard 556, 648, 799  
Fox, Charles James 693  
France/French xiii, 21, 38, 43, 48, 50,  
    54-55, 57, 59, 68, 85, 97, 101, 103,  
    143, 172, 203, 222, 245, 271, 277,  
    299, 342, 352, 354, 370, 386,  
    400-01, 408, 412, 416-18, 420-22,  
    425-28, 432, 438-39, 448, 453, 461,  
    571, 573, 577, 582, 736, 744,  
    779-80, 784-85, 820, 826, 844, 1061  
Francis of Assisi 957n  
Franco-Prussian War 8, 42n, 57, 68,  
    206, 330n, 417n, 478, 545, 784-85,  
    809, 823, 845, 959, 1042  
François de Sales 544  
Frederick, Emperor Friedrich III 822,  
    831  
Frederick, J.J. 209, 244, 488, 605-06  
Frederick, Mrs 631n  
Freeman, Louisa 213  
Fremantle, Emily Caroline 910  
Fremantle, William Robert 402, 910  
Frere, Bartle 539, 570  
Frere, George 378  
Freshfield, Douglas W. 607  
Freshfield, Miss 607  
Fry, Elizabeth 530, 533, 812  
Furdoonji, Naoroji 196  
Galileo 609  
Galton, Douglas xi, 61n, 62n, 91,  
    148n, 153, 169, 176, 206, 216-17,  
    228, 375, 377, 381-83, 414-15, 418,  
    421, 426, 435, 438, 446, 454, 459,  
    506-09, 558, 560, 605, 658, 673,  
    684, 688-89, 710, 808, 821, 828, 949  
Galton, Marianne. *See* Nicholson  
Gamaliel, Rabbi 905  
Garibaldi, Giuseppe de 601, 786  
Garrett, Elizabeth (Anderson) 16, 20,  
    30-39, 57, 204, 232, 415, 460-70,  
    474, 506, 1035  
Garrett Anderson, Louisa 16n  
Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn 413, 800,  
    803, 814  
Gaster, Louisa 521  
Gaunt, John of 579  
German/y xiii-iv, 23, 42, 48, 59-60, 85,  
    103, 146, 202-05, 245, 304, 338, 341,  
    352, 354, 363, 400-01, 420, 544,  
    556-57, 575-78, 580, 582, 586, 602,  
    633, 678, 681-82, 717, 744, 746, 752,  
    770, 779, 785, 795, 822-27, 830, 832,  
    834, 838, 841-42, 858, 864, 868, 898,  
    935, 959, 966, 986  
Ghose, Manmohan 603  
Gibson, J.B. 416, 439-40, 454  
Girdlestone, Laura 1021, 1023-26,  
    1029-30  
Girton College 818-19, 878, 885n  
Gladstone, Catherine 898  
Gladstone, W.E. 72, 210, 435-38, 441,  
    544, 566, 590, 630, 676, 708  
Gliddon, George Robins 717-18  
Gluck, Christoph 767n  
God (*see also* Creator, Father, Lord,  
    Providence) xiv, 6, 13, 39, 41, 47-49,  
    68-70, 73, 86, 90, 94, 106-08, 118-19,  
    121, 123, 128, 131-32, 135, 138, 147,  
    168, 186-87, 190, 198, 244, 332-33,  
    335, 382, 414, 425, 436, 484, 487,  
    491-92, 500-02, 511-15, 528, 535-36,  
    539, 541, 543-44, 552, 569, 575, 577,  
    579-81, 591  
God, blessing of 69, 71, 87, 107, 171,  
    173, 189-90, 195-96, 201, 228, 396,  
    483, 499, 504, 527, 539, 552, 560, 571,

- 574, 580-81, 583, 585, 588-90, 592,  
595, 600, 602, 604-05, 610, 621, 643,  
645-46, 649, 653, 655, 666, 668, 681,  
683, 685, 687, 691-97, 700, 703-04,  
706, 717, 719, 722-37, 745, 762, 766,  
773, 788, 816, 828, 848, 858-60, 865,  
870-72, 876, 881, 884-85, 888-89, 892,  
894, 902, 904-09, 912-20, 924-25, 943,  
945, 947, 953, 956, 971, 986, 992-93,  
996-98, 999-1002, 1004-13, 1017-20,  
1022, 1024, 1027-29
- God, law of 119, 412
- Godley, J.R. 667, 689
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 564n
- Gordon, Charles 17, 600, 711, 730-32,  
859, 890, 1058
- Gordon Boys' Home 879, 896, 916-17,  
1023
- Goschen, George Joachim 895
- Graham, James 609, 613-14, 779, 781
- Gray, Thomas 551n
- Greece/Greek xiii, 69, 339n, 525,  
540, 551, 556-57, 567, 650, 691,  
744, 779, 791, 799, 842-43, 854,  
923, 943
- Greece, queen of 842-43
- Green, Alice Stopford 818-19, 885
- Green, Charlotte Symonds (Mrs T.H.)  
955-56
- Green, T.H. 955
- Greg, W.R. 247
- Gregory, Alice 406, 1061
- Grillage, Lillian 978
- Grillage, Peter 978
- Grosvenor, Countess 820
- Grote, George 556-57
- Groundsell, Frances 859, 1000-12
- Guizot, F.-G.-P. 746, 779
- Gully, James Manby 741
- Hall, Florence Howe 792n, 1063
- Hallam, Henry Fitzmaurice 747
- Hamilton, Gail 952n
- Hanford, Fanny 554, 862
- Hardy, Gathorne 172, 177
- Harley St. (*see also* Establishment for  
Gentlewomen during Illness) xiii,  
157, 560, 651, 662
- Harris, Selima 775-76
- Hartington, Lord 447, 453, 895
- Hatcher, Temperance (later Grillage)  
978
- Haussonville, comte d' 573
- Hawes, Benjamin 664-65, 667, 672,  
686
- Hawkins, Charles 216-17
- Hawthorn, Amy E. 399, 402, 498-99,  
503-04, 917, 938
- Hawthorn, Robert 938
- Haywood, W.J.P. 85, 884, 986, 990
- Heathcote, Lady 712
- Heathcote, William 715
- Heber, Reginald 502n, 608n
- Hegel, G.W.F. 864
- Helen, Grand Duchess 147
- Helfta, Gertrud von 544n
- Helmsdörfer, Charlotte 858
- Hely, Anne Ayer 716
- Hemans, Felicia Browne 684n, 758n
- Herbert, Constance Gladys 660
- Herbert, Elizabeth xi, 188, 519-21,  
540, 556, 651-710, 782, 859n, 1036,  
1049
- Herbert, Elizabeth Maud 556, 670
- Herbert, George Robert Charles. *See*  
Pembroke
- Herbert, Mary Catherine 652
- Herbert, Sidney xi, 36-37, 147, 156,  
233, 412, 415-17, 419, 437n, 439,  
459, 472, 526, 538, 543, 557,  
564-66, 595, 615, 619, 639, 647,  
649, 651-52, 658-60, 652-68, 670,  
674-93, 696-99, 704, 707-10, 722,  
782, 795, 947, 1036n, 1039-40,  
1042, 1049, 1053
- Herbert, Sidney (son) 701
- Herbert, William Reginald 581, 655n,  
661, 702
- Herbert Hospital 459, 683, 828
- Herodotus 734
- Herschel, John 768, 950, 1036
- Hewlett, Thomas Gillham 603
- Hicks, J. Braxton 207, 331-32, 338-39,  
343, 355, 1058
- Higginson, George 917
- Higham, James Bellamy 939-40

- Highgate Workhouse Infirmary  
356n-57, 487, 872
- Hill, Annie 483
- Hill, Frances 650
- Hill, Frederic 413
- Hill, Octavia 41n, 784, 816-18
- Hindu 64, 203, 404, 874, 1024
- Hodgkin, Thomas 952
- Holland, Henry 419
- Holland, Philip 32
- Holland, queen of. *See* Netherlands
- Holmes, Elizabeth 988-86, 989-94
- Holmes, Mrs 71, 86, 522, 985, 989-94, 1011
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell 144
- holy communion 536, 782, 979
- home rule (Ireland) 879, 888n, 895n-96, 921n
- Homer 117, 547, 557, 624
- Hood, T. 538n, 705n
- Hope, James 637
- Hope, Lady 900
- Hopkins, Jane Ellice 491-92, 496, 501-02, 507
- Horner, Joanna 519, 755, 757, 767-70
- Horner, Susan 519, 767-70
- Hospital Reform* xv, 61n, 234n, 683, 823
- Houghton, Lord. *See* Milnes
- House of Commons 427, 438, 441, 447, 450-53, 463, 476, 488, 499, 613, 618, 622, 624, 658, 661-64, 667-68, 671, 675, 677, 687-88, 782, 818, 905, 950
- House of Lords 460, 462-63, 782
- Howard, John 114
- Howe, Julia Ward 522, 791-99, 1058, 1063
- Howe, Samuel Gridley 613, 791-99, 865, 1058
- Howson, John Saul 103
- Hudson, George 813
- Hughes, Thomas 72, 784, 891
- Hugo, Victor 757, 991
- Hume, Allan Octavian 603
- Huss, Jan 707n
- Husson, Armand 148, 171-72, 222, 268, 275, 280, 345
- Hutchins, Emmanuel 987
- Ignatius of Loyola 45, 111
- illness (of Nightingale) (*see also* sick) xiv, 57, 61, 63, 69, 223, 251, 330, 342, 347, 369-70, 372, 472, 495, 520-21, 535, 591, 611, 633, 647, 692, 703, 708, 787, 799, 804, 818, 821, 1002, 1018-20, 1042
- ill/ness (other) (*see also* sick) 2, 76, 79, 83-84, 92, 105, 108, 193, 294-95, 304, 315, 319, 350, 393, 424, 513, 522, 537, 606, 608, 611, 621, 629, 632, 645, 647, 651, 683, 691, 701, 784, 787, 832, 852, 878, 891, 901, 909, 912-13, 924, 935, 944, 958-59, 963, 982, 985, 987, 1021, 1035
- India xv, 19, 26, 36, 50, 53-55, 63-64, 79, 93-95, 169, 171, 191, 196, 206, 232, 242, 341, 355, 368, 375, 383-84, 387, 400, 402, 414, 418, 421, 424-25, 433, 435-37, 439, 441-42, 444, 447-48, 453, 480-82, 488-89, 494-95, 506-08, 570n-71, 573, 589-90, 595, 602-03, 607, 611, 613, 616-18, 622, 624-26, 628-30, 633, 644-45, 647, 649, 659, 673, 693-94, 697, 706-07, 711, 727, 729, 783, 809-11, 813, 819-20, 824, 834-35, 857, 860, 874, 878-79, 894n, 896, 900, 905-06, 908, 937, 939, 944, 953-55, 958n, 961, 1003-04, 1022, 1024-26, 1029-30, 1034, 1041-42, 1046, 1062
- India, Royal Commission on 84, 437, 628-29, 692, 954, 1034
- infection/ious disease 146, 150, 153, 170, 192, 216, 286, 298, 308, 332, 404, 413-14, 426-27, 479-80, 498, 868-69, 917
- Inglott, F.V. 456
- Irby, Adeline Paulina xi, 588-89, 591-92, 847-60, 964-65, 984, 1006, 1056
- Ireland/Irish xv, 46, 50, 186, 546, 559, 570n, 587n, 606, 636, 642, 648, 818-19, 863, 879, 897, 921n, 987, 990, 1001
- Isabella II of Spain 843-44
- Italy/ian (*see also* Rome) xiii, 112, 117, 130, 145, 187, 525, 533, 547, 600, 649, 701, 712, 742, 744, 759n, 767,

- 779, 785-86, 821-22, 844, 853, 899,  
909, 919
- Jackson, Pilkington 424, 426, 442,  
685-86
- Jameson, Anna Brownell 94, 1058
- Jebb, Joshua 153-54, 156, 158, 165
- Jenner, William 462
- Jesus (*see also* Christ, Saviour) 13, 108,  
113n, 510-15, 547, 549, 602, 700,  
925, 927, 1046, 1056
- Jex-Blake, Sophia 16, 385
- Jocelyn, Lady 714, 765
- Jocelyn, Lord 714, 765
- John of Avila 1016
- Johnston, Priscilla 854, 856
- Jones, Agnes *xi*, 8, 47-48, 102-03, 206,  
213n, 643, 698, 800-02, 806-07,  
813, 815, 825, 1042, 1058
- Jones, Mary *xi*, 4, 7, 39, 94, 142,  
153-74, 178-201, 206, 209-10, 224,  
227-29, 234, 236, 320, 344-45, 352,  
355, 382, 390, 406, 627, 640-44,  
1021, 1026-29, 1045
- Jones, Mary Stanislaus 1017-20
- Joseph II of Austria 434-4
- Jowett, Benjamin 415, 446, 460, 536,  
573-74, 815-16, 820, 843, 923-24,  
927, 941, 955-59, 1008, 1046, 1056,  
1060, 1062
- Jowett, Emily 573
- Kaiserswerth *xiii-iv*, 8, 18, 23, 47n-49,  
60, 89, 100-01, 103, 134n, 503, 509,  
526, 533n, 650, 654, 809, 814-15,  
823, 825, 847
- Kelly, Mary Anastasia 1019
- Kennedy, Clark 417, 686
- Kingdon, Maria 92-93
- Kinglake, Alexander William 772-73
- King's College Hospital 4, 7, 36, 39,  
55, 141, 143-44, 147-49, 152-205,  
216, 219-20, 235, 238, 240-41, 243,  
249-50, 252, 262, 264, 270, 272,  
276, 280-82, 288-90, 313, 315n,  
320, 334, 341, 357, 377-79, 381-82,  
391, 406, 526, 626-27, 640, 643-44,  
694, 721, 1021, 1029, 1043
- Kirkes, W.S. 654-56, 1060
- Kitchin, George William 941
- Knowles, James 922
- Knowles, Mark 77, 79
- La Barte, William White 182, 184
- Lachapelle, Marie-Louise 328
- Ladies' Sanitary Association 30,  
601-03
- Lafayette, Mme de 554
- Lamartine, Alphonse-M.-L. de 556,  
714, 756
- Lanfrey, Pierre 570
- Lawrence, John 94, 425, 453, 458,  
506, 521, 545, 566, 570-71, 617-18,  
624, 626, 628-30, 649, 723, 730,  
783, 813, 874
- Lawrence, Lady 506
- Le Fort, Léon 147-51, 191-92, 220-22,  
231-32, 249-50, 257, 259, 262-63,  
269, 271-73, 278-80, 288-90, 301,  
337, 1066
- Le Verrier, Urbain-Jean-Joseph 550
- Lear, Edward 539
- Lees, Florence (later Craven) 330,  
362-63, 398, 506, 818, 827, 838-39
- Lefevre, George Shaw 713, 855
- Lefroy, John Henry 92, 418
- LeMarchant, Samuel G. 456
- Lennox, Jessie 396
- Lepsius, Karl Richard 557, 717
- Lewis, Frankland 557
- Lewis, George C. 421, 424, 426-27,  
437-42, 557, 649, 687-89, 691
- liberal/Liberal (political) *xv*, 2, 4, 91,  
177, 366n, 415, 447n, 453n-54n,  
474n, 497n, 525, 574n, 606n, 710,  
713n, 781, 815, 820n, 831-32, 841,  
855n, 879, 895-96, 950n, 1041
- Liddell, John 422-23, 435, 439
- Liddon, Henry Parry 857
- Life and Family* 3, 413, 522, 527, 634,  
652n, 792, 823, 833, 856, 860, 866,  
873n, 877n, 880, 902n, 921n, 935,  
942, 959, 982, 995, 1029
- Lind, Jenny 550
- Lindsay, Robert 417-18
- Lister, Joseph 152

- Listerian (*see also* antiseptic) 374  
 Littrow-Bischoff, Auguste von 331, 345-47, 353  
 Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary xi, 32, 36, 191, 206, 213, 215, 218, 224, 228-29, 235, 239-41, 244-47, 256, 260, 290-97, 313-14, 329, 370-71, 643, 698, 800, 806, 1042  
 Livingstone, David 539, 585, 772, 775  
 lock hospital 414, 416, 421, 423-27, 436-37, 443, 447, 449-50, 472, 482, 485-89, 494-95, 497-500, 503, 506  
 Locock, Charles 37, 328  
 Longmore, Thomas 785  
 Lord (*see also* God, Jesus) 127, 129, 210, 333, 511, 528, 539, 549, 582, 605, 608, 647, 700, 715, 766, 877, 985, 993, 1018, 1038  
 Lothian, Lady 727  
 Louis, Princess, of Hesse-Darmstadt 691, 823, 842, 858  
 Louis-Napoléon, Napoléon III 38, 43, 576, 581-82, 738, 744, 746n, 778, 780-82, 844  
 Louis-Philippe 746n, 780n  
 Lovelace, Ada 814  
 Lowe, Robert 486, 488, 664, 667  
 Lushington, Godfrey 90, 869, 921  
 Lushington, Stephen 538, 754-55, 760  
 Lushington, Vernon 483, 488-89  
 Lytton, Edward Bulwer 758  
 Lytton, Lord (viceroy) 905  
  
 Macalister, Florence Stewart 634, 1060  
 Macaulay, Thomas Babington 556-57, 630n, 780, 914, 1008  
 Macaulay, Zachary 914  
 Machin, Maria 984  
 Mackenzie, Morrell 832  
 Mackenzie, Mrs S. 660  
 MacMahon, Marshal 580  
 MacNaughten (MacNaghten), Chester 929  
 Malabari, Behramji Merwanji 937, 1062  
 Malleson, Elizabeth 368, 476  
 Mallet, Mme Henri 576  
 Malmesbury, 1st earl of 780  
 Malmesbury, 3rd earl of 780-81  
 Manning, Henry Edward 691, 812, 1014  
 Manzoni, Alessandro 718  
 Maria Christina, Queen 843  
 Marjoribanks, Edward 157-58, 165  
 Markby, William 958  
 marry/marriage/married 1, 3, 6, 8, 14-15, 24, 44, 67, 78, 82, 87-90, 92, 94, 102, 111-12, 114, 118-21, 123-25, 133-34, 136-37, 162, 280, 285, 298, 313, 411, 416, 419-20, 425, 436, 442-46, 453, 491, 496, 506-08, 528, 542, 544-45, 552-54, 556, 567, 584, 606-07, 613, 621, 634, 637, 648, 657, 660, 668, 683, 710-11, 715, 727, 737-41, 743, 746-48, 751, 753, 759, 768, 770, 772-73, 776, 779, 781-82, 785, 797, 811-12, 815, 829, 840-41, 845, 860, 867, 871, 877, 897, 924-25, 932, 957, 974-75, 978-80, 989, 991, 1000  
 Marsh, Catherine 814-15  
 Martin, Eleanor 569, 575-77, 586, 589, 591-93, 597-99  
 Martineau, Harriet xi, 111, 141, 160, 420, 441, 444, 449-52, 456, 460, 519, 611-34, 712, 717, 760, 764, 766, 794, 798, 842-43, 863, 1033-35  
 Martineau, James 861, 863, 1033  
 Martineau, Maria 445, 611-17, 620  
 Marylebone Workhouse Infirmary 176, 192, 199, 217, 235, 296, 356, 405, 506, 595, 727, 819, 828, 884, 896-97, 900  
 Massey, Mr 536, 624, 626  
 Masson, Flora 956  
 Mayne, Richard 454  
 Mayo, Lord 571  
 McLeod, Norman 815  
 McNeill, John 7, 167, 521, 564, 634, 1060  
 McNeill, Lady 521, 634-39, 1060  
 Meade, Herbert 698  
 Meade, Richard. *See* Clanwilliam  
 medical student (male) 33-34, 64, 145-46, 148-50, 153-55, 161, 193-97, 199, 202, 232-33, 241, 247, 272,

- 283, 288-89, 297, 300, 302, 327,  
329, 331, 340, 391, 393-94, 400,  
404, 408, 503, 560, 654
- Merryweather, Miss 103
- Michelangelo 129, 867, 913, 956, 958
- Middleton, Constance 77
- midwife/ery (*see also* lying-in) 1, 4, 7,  
17, 20-21, 23, 28, 34, 36, 38, 53-57,  
61, 64-65, 100, 141-408, 611, 624,  
626, 640, 643, 694, 822-24, 1021,  
1024, 1035-37, 1042-43, 1046
- Mill, John Stuart xv, 16, 21, 206, 629,  
1035
- Milnes, Amicia Henrietta 727, 745,  
773
- Milnes, Annabella (Crewe) 745,  
772-75
- Milnes, Florence Ellen 772, 774
- Milnes, Richard Monckton (Lord  
Houghton) 89, 366, 720-21,  
727n-28, 772-75, 863, 1049
- Milton, John 762
- Minto, Lord 759
- mission/ary 73, 116, 133, 402, 491-92,  
625, 648, 650, 742, 772, 809, 814,  
831, 874, 893, 896, 903, 941,  
1020-21, 1029, 1057-58
- Mochler, Alice 983-90
- Mohl, Julius *xi*, 49, 206, 331, 345, 540,  
549, 554, 560, 562-63, 568, 572-76,  
578, 580-83, 585-86, 588-91, 594,  
597-600, 633, 815, 963
- Mohl, Mary Clarke *xi*, 6, 13, 16, 519,  
521, 540, 544-600, 633, 815, 964,  
1060
- Mohl, Ottmar de 589, 827
- Molière 587, 674, 896n
- Montalembert, Charles René Forbes  
de 779
- Monteagle, (2nd) Lord 66, 939n
- monthly nursing 142, 160, 204, 348,  
377, 380, 398-404, 823
- Moore, Mary Clare 7, 89, 148, 188,  
659, 1013-14, 1016-17, 1063
- Morant, Amy 909, 914-16, 919
- Morant, R.L. 90, 784, 919
- More, Thomas 715
- Morey, Edith 939
- Morey, William 886, 939, 960, 1006,  
1008
- Moriarty, Ellen 403
- Morley, Lord (3rd earl) 855
- Morpeth, Lord 587
- mortality (*see also* death) 2, 4, 17,  
142-43, 145-49, 151-54, 167, 170,  
172, 176, 179, 190, 192, 195,  
201-06, 214, 216-20, 224, 229-31,  
238-39, 242, 246-47, 249, 251,  
253-55, 257-60, 264, 269, 271-77,  
279-81, 283-84, 288-89, 297,  
299-302, 312, 332, 334, 358-59,  
370-72, 374, 384, 387, 401, 406-08,  
628, 870, 1043, 1057
- Moss, Lemuel 68
- Muhammadan 22, 64, 390
- Mure, William 557
- Murray, Andrew 604
- Murray, John 717, 798
- Mysticism and Eastern Religions* xiv,  
557n, 588n, 649n, 717n-18n, 798n
- Naoroji, Dadabhai 894-96
- Napoleon I 549, 573, 742-43, 795
- Nash, Rosalind. *See* Smith
- Nash, Vaughan 606, 926n, 944, 947,  
949-52, 954-55
- Neale, John Mason 992n
- Neild, Mrs 909-11, 914, 993, 997-98,  
1000-02
- Netherlands, queen of 568, 841-42
- Newcastle, duke of 712, 763
- Newman, John Henry 798, 1061
- Nicholson, Anne 92n, 544, 546, 868
- Nicholson, George Henry 92, 747, 867
- Nicholson, George T. 747, 753, 757,  
868
- Nicholson, Hannah 864
- Nicholson, Laura 92, 546
- Nicholson, Marianne (later Galton)  
*xi*, 558, 560, 861, 868, 1047
- Nightingale, Frances *xi*, xiii, 19, 89,  
112, 168, 198, 525, 536, 539, 553,  
555, 589, 608, 610, 632, 634, 637,  
706, 710, 715-16, 738, 752-56, 795,  
813n, 822n, 847, 856, 865, 975,  
980n-81, 1038, 1050

- Nightingale, Parthenope. *See* Verney
- Nightingale, William Edward *xi*, *xiii*,  
20, 89, 91, 112, 168, 359, 521,  
539-41, 547, 549, 553, 556, 558, 561,  
569, 574, 579, 591, 632, 634, 637,  
648, 673, 696, 703-06, 716, 718,  
745-46, 753, 756, 760, 763, 768, 774,  
787, 792, 795, 814, 822, 867, 952,  
978, 980, 991, 1038, 1050-51
- Noailles, Pauline de 26
- Northampton, 5th marquess of 710
- Northampton, 6th marquess of 710, 730
- Norton, Lord 56, 77
- Notes on Hospitals* 216, 234, 1061
- Notes on Nursing* 2, 66, 413n, 569, 611,  
613, 649, 772, 786, 800, 845, 913n,  
915n, 1036, 1061
- nurse/nursing (*see also* *Notes on Nurs-  
ing*) *xi*, *xiii-xvi*, 1-2, 4-5, 7-8, 12-13,  
15-67, 72, 74-84, 88-105, 108-09, 134,  
141-42, 147, 151, 153, 155, 157, 159,  
162, 167-68, 170, 173-81, 184-86,  
191-93, 196-98, 202-03, 206, 208,  
210-14, 216, 218-19, 228-29, 242,  
247, 283, 288, 295, 298, 304, 310,  
312, 315-20, 330, 333, 343, 350, 352,  
356-77, 379, 381, 388-91, 393-407,  
414, 419-20, 423, 444, 446, 490, 495,  
498, 501, 503-06, 509, 512, 522,  
525-28, 530-35, 540, 542, 556,  
560-64, 568, 576, 586, 595, 598-99,  
606-07, 611, 613, 620, 622, 624-28,  
640, 643-48, 651, 654-56, 660-61,  
663, 665-66, 676, 694, 701, 706 708,  
711, 716-21, 724, 727-28, 734-35,  
737, 747, 758, 771, 774, 783-84, 791,  
795, 797, 800-01, 804-09, 813-14,  
817-25, 829-42, 858, 864, 874-75,  
877-78, 884-85, 888, 890-91, 897-98,  
903, 910, 912-15, 917, 924, 930,  
934-35, 945, 955, 957, 974, 978, 981,  
986, 996-97, 1013, 1017, 1020-30,  
1036-36, 1039-40, 1043-51
- O'Connell, Daniel 863
- Ommanney, W.F. 202, 206-07, 213-16,  
224, 227, 229, 231, 235-36, 240,  
242, 320
- Omnium, Jacob 450
- Ord, William Miller 946, 982
- Osborn, Samuel 401, 1062
- Osburn, Lucy 204, 356, 824
- Ossington, Lady 390
- Otter, Caroline 763
- Otter, Maria 519, 762-67
- Owen, Ellen, "Nelly" 911-13, 995-99,  
1001-06
- Oxford University 50n, 364, 538,  
549-50, 688, 732, 834, 890, 935,  
937, 951, 957-58
- Paget, Clarence 451
- Paget, James 400, 462, 619, 920, 1036,  
1060
- Paget, John 639
- Paget, Rosalind 397-98
- Pakington, John 780
- Paley, William 764
- Palmerston, Lady 778
- Palmerston, Lord 415, 440, 690,  
713-14, 724n, 743-44, 763, 765,  
778-81, 843, 930
- Panmure, Lord 706
- Parent du Châtelet, A.J.B. 432, 1062
- Paris *xiii*, 27, 36-38, 45, 48-49, 55, 57,  
100, 103, 148-49, 151, 153, 159,  
167, 171, 175, 177-79, 191, 200-01,  
203, 214, 220, 222, 232-33, 238-39,  
256-58, 266-72, 275-79, 287-90, 294,  
299, 304, 328, 337, 342, 345, 352,  
354, 357, 373, 386, 425, 462, 466,  
469, 474, 496, 509, 528, 544-45,  
554-55, 557, 559-63, 573-79, 581,  
583, 597-98, 627, 660, 693, 701,  
720-21, 743, 746, 751, 768, 778-79,  
781, 815, 843-45, 964-67, 977, 1021,  
1035, 1037
- Parkes, Edmund Alexander 415, 474,  
694, 821, 852
- Parliament 179-80, 199, 368, 383, 416,  
443, 446, 449, 458, 470-71, 482,  
485, 487, 543, 581, 613, 629, 658,  
664, 688, 690, 723-24, 765, 779,  
787, 819, 834, 857-58, 921, 950,  
1043, 1050-51
- Parnell, Charles Stewart 921

- Pascal, Blaise 587  
 Paterson, Emma 67, 70, 73-74, 1058  
 Paul, St 106, 115, 547, 553, 652, 701, 829, 985  
 Paulet, William 420  
 Peddie, Clara S. 857  
 Peel, Robert 557, 609, 712, 862  
 Pembroke, Lady 659  
 Pembroke (13th earl) 653, 691-92, 702-03  
 Persia xi, 544, 572, 592n, 596, 815, 931  
 Perssè, Kate 817-18  
 Pertz, Georg Heinrich 776-78  
 Pertz, Leonora 776-78  
 Perugino, Pietro 559  
 Pestalozzi-Froebel Haus 831  
 Peter, Pauline 402, 405  
 Phillimore, Robert 47  
 Pillans, James 783  
 Pirrie, Ellen 374, 395-96  
 Pius VII 573  
 Pius IX 741-42  
 plague 435, 439, 888  
 Plato 552n, 587, 739, 864, 957, 1008  
 Playfair, William 151, 391-92, 400, 1062  
 Plowden, Charles 70  
 poor/poverty/pauper 3, 22, 32, 42, 44, 49, 57, 64, 68, 75, 86, 99, 107-08, 142, 153, 161-62, 168, 175, 178, 187, 193, 195, 207, 222, 235, 250-51, 281, 290, 295, 302-03, 313, 326, 334, 345, 367, 378-80, 389, 394, 398-404, 414, 421-22, 434-35, 449, 481, 484, 490-92, 494, 498-501, 503, 505, 514, 521, 531, 547, 558, 560, 569, 576, 578, 582, 595, 622, 624, 631-32, 640-42, 644, 661, 677, 695, 704, 724, 747, 760, 784, 797, 808-09, 812, 814, 816-17, 834, 838-39, 846, 849, 857, 889, 897, 905, 925, 927, 942, 952, 954, 960, 1018-19, 1028  
 Poor Law 42, 60, 65, 71, 171-72, 177-78, 336, 357, 360, 434, 444, 480-81, 628n, 630, 641-42, 784, 950, 1016, 1040-41  
 Pope, Alexander 543, 887n  
 post-mortem (*see also* autopsy) 46, 144, 193-95, 241, 249, 282, 297, 350, 377, 751, 832  
 Powell, Nathaniel 199  
 Power, Henry 920  
 pray/er (*see also* Book of Common Prayer) 65, 101, 103-04, 107-09, 115, 118, 126, 129, 187-88, 334, 414, 427, 507, 510, 514, 520, 531, 535, 538-39, 569, 591-94, 597-600, 604-05, 643, 645-47, 649, 653, 655, 661, 668, 696-97, 700-01, 703, 711, 722, 727, 730, 732, 742, 758, 789, 807, 874, 877, 880-81, 885-86, 888, 893-94, 923-25, 927, 931, 947, 956, 970, 983-84, 990-91, 993-94, 995, 1006, 1017, 1019, 1023, 1026  
 preventible disease/mortality xiii, 15, 146, 151, 176-77, 272, 254, 288, 291, 311, 345, 371, 413-16, 419-20, 422, 430-31, 435, 437-38, 444, 451, 457-58, 469, 475, 482, 484-85, 492-96, 501, 686, 823, 1036, 1057  
 Priestley, William Overend 193-94, 196-99, 201-02, 238, 241, 406  
 Pringle, Angelique Lucille 62, 374, 381, 387-89, 391, 540, 908, 920n, 998, 1026  
 prostitute/tion (*see also* vice) 1-2, 4-6, 21, 42, 91, 101, 411-515, 611, 1037, 1042, 1047, 1051  
 Protestant xiii, 42-44, 60, 88-89, 100-01, 103, 186-87, 525, 527, 531, 650  
 Providence (*see also* God) 89, 103, 105, 230, 563, 739, 754, 793, 796, 802  
 Prussia, crown princess of 202, 581n, 607, 821-33  
 Prussia/n (*see also* Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian War) 202, 348, 352, 354, 564, 576-77, 579-80, 582, 633, 701, 780, 785, 821-33, 841, 966  
 Public Health Care xv, 36n, 176n, 191n-92n, 522, 601, 607n, 611-12n, 722, 727n, 772, 792, 800,



- 809, 813, 879, 951n, 979, 982, 990, 1001n, 1041  
 puerperal fever/mortality/peritonitis 4, 54-55, 77, 141-46, 149-54, 176, 179, 191-92, 194-99, 203, 205, 213-16, 218-19, 221-22, 225, 234, 238, 240-41, 246-47, 249-52, 254-64, 269-80, 283-85, 288-301, 312, 315, 319, 331, 334, 336-37, 341, 344, 371, 373, 381, 383, 395-96, 406-08, 823, 1057-58  
 Pusey, E.B. 559  
 Pythagoras 740  
 Quetelet, L.A.J. xv, 5, 142, 860, 944  
 Raglan, Lord 929-30  
 Raleigh, Thomas 946  
 Rantau, Marianne von 650  
 Ranyard, Ellen 96  
 Raphael 864, 880, 925  
 Rappe, Emmy Caroline 171  
 Rathbone, William 36, 99, 102-03, 163, 191, 247, 397, 399, 688, 838, 915  
 Raven, Mathilde von 776-77  
 Rawlinson, Robert 7, 332, 605, 608n, 720  
 Récamier, Jeanne de 6, 563, 565, 756, 1061  
 Reeve, Henry 419  
 Richards, Laura E. 791n-92, 794, 798-99, 1063  
 Richardson, Helen 519, 547, 554, 752-61, 764, 862, 864  
 Richardson, Hope (later Reeve) 752, 862  
 Richardson, John 547, 752-55, 758-60, 862, 752, 862  
 Richardson, Samuel 119n  
 Richmond, William Blake 62-63  
 Ridding, Laura 502  
 Rigby, Edward 144, 152, 160, 407, 1063  
 Rigden, George 234, 236, 239-40, 259, 337  
 Ripon. *See* de Grey  
 Roberts, Frederick 508, 1025n  
 Roberts, Lady 1025  
 Roberts, Mrs 535  
 Robertson, Mr 734-35  
 Robertson, Mrs 522, 735, 899  
 Roman Catholic orders/nuns xiii, 41-44, 100, 125, 179, 509, 523, 564, 609n, 649, 861n, 1013-20  
 Roman Catholic (other) xiii, 111, 118, 125-26, 530, 533, 651, 708, 742, 778, 795, 798, 844, 846, 920n, 1019n, 1024  
 Rome/Roman xiii, 115, 525, 540, 545, 554n-55, 558-59n, 572-73, 649, 651-52, 691, 699, 741-44, 759n, 778, 780-81, 909, 1017, 1019  
 Romilly, John 763n  
 Romilly, Mrs 763  
 Rosebery, Lord 950, 958  
 Rossi, Pellegrino 741-42  
 Royal Commission on the Sanitary State of the Army in the East xiv, 441, 472, 474, 506, 772, 1034-35  
 Rumsey, Henry Wyldbore 412-13, 471, 1063  
 Rumsey, Mrs 412n, 471  
 Russia/n 147, 362-63, 388, 401, 420, 744, 779-81, 854, 874, 929, 961  
 Rye, Maria 641-43, 816  
 Sabin, J.E. 235, 239  
 Safford, Mary Jane 348  
 Sainte-Colombe, Laure de 89, 649-50  
 Salisbury, marquis of 233, 590, 896  
 Salmon, Dorothea 932, 935-36, 938, 940-42  
 Salmon, W.H. 931, 935  
 salvation 48, 544, 599, 646-47, 919-20, 991  
 Sand, George 757  
 sanitary 25-26, 43, 51-55, 62, 76-79, 152, 167, 169, 215, 242, 244, 254, 287, 291, 328, 337-38, 345, 361, 375, 378, 383-84, 387, 391, 394, 397-98, 402, 412-14, 429, 435, 441, 453, 459-60, 466-67, 474, 477, 481, 494-96, 500-01, 571, 601-03, 607, 617, 629, 673, 689, 692, 694, 708, 811, 820, 823, 825, 827-28, 838,

- 844-45, 922, 930, 938, 948-49, 951,  
1024, 1034, 1048  
Sappho 552, 567  
savings banks 2, 67, 70, 72, 74-75,  
83-85, 986, 996, 998, 1001  
Saviour (*see also* Jesus, Christ, Son of  
God) 113, 115, 527, 657, 766, 797,  
992  
Savonarola, Girolama 600  
Savory, William 916  
scarlet fever 170, 194, 283, 498, 670,  
865, 986, 988  
Scharlieb, Mary 368, 384, 388, 506, 835  
Schelling, F.W.J. von 864  
Schreiner, Olive 930n, 1063  
Schwabe, Julie 785-86, 842  
Scot/land 540, 553-54, 606, 633-34,  
648, 711, 732, 740, 762, 806, 845,  
897, 903, 997  
Scott, Walter 556, 958  
scripture (*see also* Bible) 531-32, 639,  
730, 831  
Scutari xiii, 420, 526-27, 543, 584, 656,  
686, 773, 808, 866, 915, 930, 957,  
1013, 1015, 1019, 1048  
Seeley, John Robert 860, 906  
Sellon, Priscilla Lydia 186-87, 627,  
643, 1020-21  
Semmelweis, Ignaz 144-54, 362n, 407,  
1057, 1062-63  
Senior, Jane (Mrs Nassau) 72, 784-85  
Sensi, Felicetta 781  
sewer/age (*see also* drain) 151, 217,  
311, 345, 672, 821  
Shaftesbury, Lord. *See* Ashley  
Shakespeare, William 584n, 623n,  
696n, 706n, 762n, 775n, 796n,  
826n, 926n, 939, 951-52  
Shalders, S.M. 885, 889-93, 898  
Shelley, Percy Bysshe 136n  
Shepherd, C.P. 166  
Shore, Mary xiv, 126n, 558, 737n,  
752, 792-93, 881n  
Shore, Offley 750  
Shore Nightingale, Louis Hilary 732,  
857, 924, 949, 989  
Shore Nightingale, Samuel 857, 948,  
984, 924, 989  
Shrimpton, Charles 178, 331, 345,  
363, 1021  
sick/ness (of Nightingale) (*see also* ill)  
26, 595, 680, 721  
sick/ness (other) 37, 39, 42-43, 45-47,  
59, 62, 70, 72-76, 78-84, 87, 96-97,  
99, 105, 108-09, 118, 134, 150, 249,  
277, 295, 297, 304, 311, 315, 319,  
373, 377, 395, 399, 405, 414,  
420-22, 435, 444, 446, 448, 459,  
467, 483, 485, 490, 506, 532-34,  
560, 565, 575, 577, 593, 595, 607,  
611, 630-31, 643, 661, 724, 751,  
809, 834, 838-39, 842, 845, 854,  
863-64, 891, 897, 902, 927, 954,  
956, 984, 987, 990, 996, 1016,  
1019, 1024, 1026, 1042  
Siddons, Sarah 768n  
Sidney, Philip 581, 702  
Sieveking, Amelia 650  
Simon, John 415, 459, 462  
Simpson, James Y. 37, 151-52, 219-20,  
230, 232, 328, 330, 407  
smallpox 150, 194, 311, 315, 383, 428,  
439, 443, 848, 869  
Smedley, John 71, 74, 990  
Smith, Andrew 868-69  
Smith, Barbara Margaret Thyra (later  
Stephen) 117n, 857, 924  
Smith, Beatrice 90, 483n, 595, 608,  
867, 869  
Smith, Bertha. *See* Coltman  
Smith, Blanche. *See* Clough  
Smith, Heywood 372  
Smith, J. Greig 405  
Smith, Julia, "Aunt Ju" xi, 89, 550,  
553-54, 560, 608-10, 868  
Smith, Louisa Shore xi, 606, 848-50,  
855, 857n, 859-60, 868, 890, 926n,  
944-45, 951, 983-84, 987, 989  
Smith, Margaret Thyra Barbara (later  
Stephen) 117n, 857, 924  
Smith, Martha Frances, "Aunt Patty"  
555, 756-58  
Smith, Mary Shore, "Aunt Mai" xi,  
89, 560, 565, 602, 608, 768, 860,  
867-68, 871, 918, 1013-14, 1020,  
1041

- Smith, Octavius, "Uncle Oc" 553, 608, 634, 767
- Smith, Rosalind Shore (later Nash) 709n, 732, 819n, 926n, 944-55, 984, 989, 1061-62
- Smith, Samuel xi, 89, 785, 860, 989, 1037
- Smith, W.H. 905
- Smith, William 756
- Smith, William Shore, "Shore" xi, 81, 88, 542, 606, 732, 748, 750, 848, 850-51, 854-55, 857n, 890, 924, 944-45, 948, 973, 983-84, 987, 989
- Snell, Henry Saxon 828
- social reform/er xiv, 5, 196, 478n, 521, 526, 545, 603n, 808, 811-12, 877, 906, 944, 1040
- social science 30, 37, 40, 142, 197, 460, 687, 706n, 1034
- Society and Politics* xv, 3n, 91n, 119n, 142n, 435, 461, 474n, 543n, 546n, 587n, 814, 817n-18, 823, 842, 847, 864n, 877n, 890n, 893n, 896n, 900n, 902n, 907n, 935, 944, 955
- Socrates 206, 249-50, 331, 556-57, 959
- soldiers' wives 147, 197, 202-03, 207, 226, 236, 285, 290, 298, 303, 313, 437
- Somerset, 12th duke of 424, 450
- Son of God (*see also* Christ, Jesus, Saviour) 13, 105, 109
- South, James 609, 808
- Southey, Caroline Anne Bowles 795, 991n
- Spain, queen of. *See* Isabella
- Späth, Josef 149
- Spiritual Journey* xiv, 333n-34n, 649, 712, 880
- Spottiswoode, Messrs 247
- Spring Rice, Catherine Ellen 939, 943
- Spring Rice, Frederica 939, 943
- St John's House 95, 100-01, 154-68, 175-85, 190, 194, 198-99, 250, 357, 375, 377-78, 488, 509, 627, 721, 1021, 1029
- St Pancras Workhouse Infirmary 296-97, 356, 643, 727
- St Petersburg 61, 147-48, 257-58, 265, 271, 273, 342, 366
- Staël, Mme de 583
- Stanley, Arthur Penrhyn 538, 557, 620, 786, 815
- Stanley, Lord. *See* 15th earl of Derby
- Stanley, Maude 899
- Stanmore, Lord 707n-09, 1039, 1053
- Stansfeld, James 364-66, 499, 784, 1058
- statistics xv, 252-53, 259-60, 267-69, 290, 294, 313, 336, 428, 436-37, 465, 507-08, 612n, 616, 628-29, 687, 812, 860, 946n, 1034, 1041-42
- Steele, John 635-37
- Stephen, Caroline 41, 50, 100
- Stephen, James 48-49
- Stephen, Margaret Thyra Barbara. *See* Smith
- Stewart, Jane Shaw 27
- Stowe, Calvin 800, 803
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher 800-08
- Stratford de Redcliffe, Viscount 929
- Stroßmayer, Josip Juraj 857
- Strutt, Edward 764
- Struve, Friedrich F. von 550
- Strzelecki, Count Paul Edmund de 692
- Stubbs, Charles Williams 909-10
- Suggestions for Thought* xiv, 1, 4, 6, 110, 127, 137, 737, 786, 796n, 812, 944, 1035, 1053
- Sutherland, John xi, 6-7, 9n, 13, 25, 33, 57, 169-70, 176-77, 180, 193, 199, 204, 206, 210, 214, 216, 218, 221-24, 226-27, 229, 231, 233, 237, 240, 242-50, 330, 333-35, 337-38, 340-45, 352-58, 364-65, 370-71, 374, 378, 387, 414-15, 418, 441, 472, 475-77, 479-80, 483-85, 506, 508, 521, 568, 601-06, 657, 688, 782-84, 823, 867, 922, 948, 981, 1000, 1037n-38, 1040, 1048
- Sutherland, Sarah Elizabeth xi, 536, 538, 568, 601-08, 672, 981, 1037-38
- Swann, Mrs 978, 989
- Swayne, Joseph G. 388n, 1063
- sympathy 6-8, 70, 113, 118, 122-23, 131, 133-34, 368, 379, 384-85, 436, 491, 495, 502, 505, 527, 540, 548,

- 564-66, 569, 618, 621, 628, 656,  
687, 698, 701, 705, 761, 772, 783,  
799, 816  
syphilis (*see also* venereal disease) 4,  
91, 412-14, 419-20, 425, 428-29,  
432, 435, 439, 443, 446-47, 455,  
457, 459, 472-75, 482, 497, 508,  
1042, 1051  
Tait, A.C. 180  
Talbot, Edward Stuart 941  
Talfourd, Thomas Noon 556  
Taylor, Clementina 461  
Terrot, Sarah Anne 1015  
*Theology* xiv, 6, 86n, 100-01n, 119, 142,  
179-80, 509, 540, 544, 640, 792, 814,  
816, 955, 959, 1013-14n, 1021, 1051  
theology/ical xiv, 737, 816, 842, 1049  
Thiers, Louis-Adolphe 581  
Thirlwall, Connop 557  
Thomas à Kempis 588n  
Thorne, May 20  
Thornton, Robert John 983n  
Titian 117, 887  
Tollet, Ellen 737, 743, 748  
Tollet, Georgina 737-48  
Torrance, Elizabeth Anne 356, 643  
Truelove, Mrs Edward 330, 786-89  
Tulloch, Alexander 419, 564  
Tunzelmann, Elise von 770-72  
Turkey/ish 75, 98, 589n, 849, 852-55,  
865, 929  
Turnbull, Elizabeth Bertha 1020-30  
Turner, Mrs Frewen 545, 558, 569,  
572, 578, 585, 589, 591  
Twining, Louisa 181, 478  
Tyndall, General 917  
Tyndall, Mrs 917  
typhoid fever 345, 619-20, 838, 912  
typhus 53, 203, 698, 800, 823, 868  
Unitarian xiv, 785, 813, 863n, 872,  
1033, 1035, 1050-51  
United States (*see also* America) 220,  
791, 800, 805-06, 865, 1034-36  
vaccination 443, 753, 756, 759, 877  
Van Dyck, Anthony 556  
venereal disease (*see also* syphilis)  
411-12, 417, 419, 424, 426-34, 443,  
448, 451, 463-65, 467-69, 472,  
494-95, 507  
ventilate/ion 2, 27, 58, 64, 76, 144,  
170, 176, 195, 205, 215-16, 227-28,  
249-50, 271, 280, 282-84, 295,  
297-98, 300, 310-11, 324-25, 371,  
445, 658, 673, 821, 911-12  
Verney, Edmund, "Captain" 817, 859,  
877-80, 893, 901-02, 910, 921, 935,  
938-39, 942, 996  
Verney, Edward Vortigern 923-24  
Verney, Ellin 902, 931, 935-37, 939,  
941-43, 1004  
Verney, Emily 8, 57, 232, 329, 536-38,  
702, 775, 784-85, 822, 881  
Verney, Frederick William xi, 67,  
72-74, 85, 87, 90, 709, 711, 732,  
783, 877-81, 883, 885-90, 893-96,  
898, 901-16, 918-19, 921-26, 930-31,  
933, 836, 942, 968, 997, 1004-06  
Verney, George Hope 886, 908, 924n,  
933  
Verney, Gwendolen 880, 882, 885-95,  
898-99, 903, 906-07, 910, 912, 914,  
916, 919-22, 924, 928-29, 931-32  
Verney, Harriet Julia Hinde Morfor-  
wyn 886, 923n, 934  
Verney, Harry xi, 33-34, 57, 71, 148n,  
173-75, 177, 180, 186, 359, 423,  
425-28, 436-38, 440, 442, 447,  
452-53, 455, 458, 471, 474, 482-83,  
485-86, 488-89, 496, 540-41, 578,  
606, 620, 622, 637, 643, 690, 701,  
722, 725, 787, 801, 808-09, 813,  
818, 822, 825-28, 839, 841-42,  
844n, 847-48, 886, 890-91, 899,  
904, 910, 912, 916, 921, 923,  
936-40, 943, 945, 954-56, 996-97,  
1001, 1004-07, 1009, 1015  
Verney, Harry Calvert 941, 996  
Verney, Harry Lloyd 886, 932-34  
Verney, Kathleen 878, 887, 889-94,  
897, 899, 907, 911, 922, 926, 931  
Verney, Lettice 935-42  
Verney, Margaret xi, 87, 708, 784-85n,  
819n, 841, 877-79, 888-91, 893,

- 899, 901-02, 906-09, 911n, 920-24, 926, 935-36, 938-40, 942, 955n, 958, 979, 995-96, 998, 1004, 1011
- Verney, Maude *xi*, 877-933, 942, 997-99, 1004-06
- Verney, Morforwyn Mary Levison 886, 923-24n, 933-34
- Verney, Parthenope, "Pop" (Nightingale) *xi*, 167, 232, 446, 540, 554-55, 557-60, 565, 582, 605, 608n, 610, 620, 637, 647, 653, 712, 725, 728, 732, 737n, 747, 754-55, 760, 762, 773n, 789, 817n-18, 822n, 827, 832, 847-48, 861-62, 865, 867, 870, 878-88, 890, 893, 898, 901, 910, 915, 917, 921, 939n, 957, 960, 965-66n, 973, 977, 979, 981, 996, 1002, 1014
- Verney, Ralph 885-95, 898-99, 903, 906-08, 919, 929, 997
- Verney, Ruth Florence 482, 819, 941-42
- vice (*see also* prostitution) 426, 441, 444, 460n, 507-08
- Victoria, Queen 37n, 151, 202, 602n, 634, 711-12, 744, 762, 779, 815, 820-21, 823, 842, 844, 864, 876n, 903n, 1019n, 1040
- Vienna 27, 144-54, 171, 214, 222, 265, 271-72, 278, 288-89, 304, 331, 337, 341-42, 345-48, 352-53, 358, 362, 384, 650, 848, 855, 962-65
- Villiers, Charles Pelham 172, 177, 336, 624, 626, 630
- Vincent de Paul 45
- Virchow, Rudolf Ludwig Karl 271, 329
- Virgil 559, 582, 764
- Wales, prince of 345, 426, 617b, 623, 896
- Wallas, Graham 926
- Walpole, Horace 780
- Wantage, Lady 506
- Ward, Mrs Humphry 508, 618, 621, 819-20
- Wardroper, Sarah 21, 59-60, 94-95, 156, 203, 627, 824, 968
- Watson, Thomas 176
- Wedderburn, William 954
- Weinbrenner, Professor 828
- Wellington, duke of 712-13, 763, 929n
- Werckner, Caroline 959-71
- Wesley, Charles 815
- Wesley, John 125n
- Wesleyan *xiv*, 531
- Westminster, duke of 820
- Whittier, John Greenleaf 571n
- Whyte, Annie 389, 391
- Wildgoose, Robert 986-87
- Wilhelm, Kaiser 831
- Wilkinson, John Gardner 717-18
- Williams, C.J.B. 229-30, 330, 662-63, 665, 675, 682-83, 691
- Williams, Sarah 881-82
- Wolsey, Cardinal 715, 764
- women, education of *xiii*, 2-3, 18-19, 21, 27, 31-33, 44, 51, 53-57, 64-65, 71, 91-93, 99, 103, 112, 114, 116, 132, 134, 325, 386, 395, 504, 529, 532, 561, 627, 649, 783, 785-86, 797, 806, 810-11, 816, 829-30, 833-35, 840, 1020, 1033-34, 1037, 1044
- women, employment of 4, 22, 31-32, 39, 44, 66-87, 93, 162, 176-78, 216, 334, 346, 354, 366, 378-79, 404-05, 413, 490, 497, 625, 627, 694, 840, 866, 903, 948, 964, 973, 979-80, 982-83, 995, 1000, 1034, 1046, 1058
- women, income security/property of 1-4, 17, 19, 66-87, 91, 124, 782, 967, 969-70
- women, medical 1, 4, 15-40, 49-54, 233, 241-42, 259, 325-29, 332-33, 335, 339, 342-43, 346-47, 351, 353, 355-47, 361-62, 364-70, 384-85, 392, 402, 407, 470, 603, 1035
- women, rights/cause of 1, 6-9, 141, 179, 185, 470, 479-80, 564, 959, 1034, 1041, 1046
- women, role/status of *xiv*, 2-3, 5-9, 13, 959
- women, suffrage/vote for 3, 461, 481, 502n, 819-20, 866, 1039-44
- Wood, Charles 453, 617-18, 630
- Wordsworth, William 541n, 705n

- workhouse infirmary (*see also* Highgate, Liverpool, Marylebone and St Pancras) 3, 15, 32, 60, 92-93, 100, 148, 172, 176-78, 181n, 191, 195-97, 199, 201, 204-06, 214, 222, 224, 229, 235, 239, 241, 249, 256, 260, 264, 270, 274, 290-91, 296-97, 303, 312-13, 356, 374, 383, 490, 497-98, 505, 522, 525, 624, 626, 628, 642-43, 645, 727n, 733, 784, 800, 806, 813, 878, 885, 900, 915, 1017-18, 1040-43
- Wyatt, T.H. 693, 695
- Wyatt, William 960
- Wylde, Frances 178, 390, 406, 1021-29
- Wylie, W. Gill 57
- Yeomans, William 86, 988-89, 991