

sterile, and therefore does not, as it does in most other cases, require to be let out. It usually is absorbed very quickly. This affection is one of the commonest causes of dense opacity in the cornea in adults, especially elderly ones. Remember that in the majority of cases it is preceded by a definite history of abrasion and, therefore, the treatment of even the slightest abrasion of the cornea is very important.

(To be continued.)

FLORENCE THE GREAT.

By ERNEST F. NEVE, M. D., F. R. C. S., EDIN.

SIR Edward Cook's biography of Florence Nightingale is the record of an amazing life. To the ordinary public, Miss Nightingale is chiefly known as the heroine of the Crimean war. By the nursing profession she is recognized as the foundress of modern nursing. But her biographer unfolds a work infinitely wider in scope, and he reveals to us her extraordinary gifts, combining as she did, administrative powers of the highest order with far sighted statesmanship.

In absolute intellectual capacity and achievement the name of Florence Nightingale ranks with those of the leaders of the nineteenth century.

In these times of war, when we hear much of work done under the Red Cross, it is interesting to know that, although M. Henri Dunant a Swiss physician was the real originator of the movement, he attributed his inspiration to Miss Florence Nightingale.

We do indeed owe far more than is generally known to her work in the Crimea and its results. The contrast between the conditions under which our troops are now fighting in France and those which prevailed at Balaklava are sufficiently striking. The spirit of the soldiers is the same. They were as brave then as now. Many are the deeds of heroism of which Miss Nightingale was the witness and recorder. "I remember," she wrote, "a Sergeant, who was on picket, the rest of the picket was killed, and he himself battered about the head, stumbled back to camp, and on his way picked up a wounded man, and brought him in on his shoulders to the lines, where he fell down insensible. When after many hours he recovered his senses, I believe after trepanning, his first words were to ask after his comrade, 'Is he alive?' 'Comrade indeed, yes he's alive, it is the General.' At that moment the General, though badly wounded, appeared at the bedside. 'Oh General it's you, is it, I brought in, I'm so glad. I didn't know your honour, but if I had known it was you, I'd have saved you all the same' 'This is the true soldier's spirit'".

It was in the Crimea that Miss Nightingale obtained her first insight into the crying need for reforms. Her actual nursing was most significant in its marvellous attention to detail, and its personal self sacrificing service. It is here that we find the first beginning of female nursing in the army. Some

of the stories about the women whom she was endeavouring to train are quite amusing. "I came out, Ma'am", said one of them, "prepared to submit to everything, to be put upon in every way. But there are some things, Ma'am, one can't submit to. There is the Caps, Ma'am, that suits one face, and some that suits another. And if I had known, Ma'am, about the Caps, great as was my desire to come out and nurse at Scutari, I wouldn't have come, Ma'am". One wonders whether such a complaint may not find a responsive echo in the minds even of some present day highly trained nurses!

Devoted and thorough as Miss Nightingale's nursing and training work was, her mind ranged over an immensely wider range, taking cognizance of hundreds of matters of army commissariat and supply. At the present time, the strain on our brave soldiers in the trenches, in bad weather has been terrific. But at least they have had good food and ample warm clothing. It was not so in 1855.

"Fancy" she wrote, "working five nights out of seven in the trenches often 48 hours with no food but raw salt pork, sprinkled with sugar, rum and biscuit; nothing hot, because the exhausted soldier could not collect his own fuel, as he was expected to do, to cook his own ration; and fancy through all this the army preserving their courage and patience as they have done, and being now eager (the old ones more than the young ones) to be led even into the trenches.

Miss Nightingale had the quality of mind of a Commander-in-Chief. She loved the British soldier. She believed in him. The appalling mismanagement which proved so fatal to the army in the Crimea, inspired her with the most intense zeal in the cause of reform, a work for which her peculiar faculty for intimately mastering detail was to fit her in a very special manner. No item in the organization of the army medical service with its sanitary and nursing branches was too small for her attention. The whole question of supplies and stores, of Barrack and Hospital accommodation were in turn subjected to her searching scrutiny. Endowed with a remarkable memory, unwearied powers of work in carrying on investigations, and amassing facts, and a singularly sound judgment Miss Nightingale became, after the Crimean war, perhaps the greatest expert and administrator and certainly the greatest reformer in matters relating to the health of the soldier. And this position she retained for at least twenty years. She attracted round her and inspired quite a band of leaders. The most important of these was Lord Herbert, Secretary for War from 1859 to 1861, who was a whole hearted ally and through whom most important reforms were carried out. Miss Nightingale had a very large influence on the report of the Royal Commission which followed the Crimean war. She so completely won the confidence of Queen Victoria that in a letter to the duke of Cambridge, Her Majesty said "I wish we had her at the War Office".

As years passed by, Miss Nightingale became more and more recognized as the great expert. Although almost bedridden for many years, and confined to her room for weeks at a time, by ill health, she wielded the power almost of a queen—a sanitary queen. She was consulted about the plans of many of the chief hospitals which were being built in a new era of sanitary

reform. Netley was altered to her request. The Herbert Hospital at Woolwich was erected from plans approved by her. Barracks were rebuilt throughout the kingdom, immensely reducing the mortality among troops in time of peace. The army medical school was really one of her 'children' and practically all the professors were nominated by her. And when in 1876 the institution was threatened, it was her influence with the War Secretary which saved it and the new appointments were made on her suggestion. In such high estimation was her judgment held, that even in the appointment of a Secretary of State for War in 1863 and a Viceroy for India, Sir John Lawrence, in the same year, it is possible that the weight of her influence helped to turn the scale in their favour against the objections which were raised.

In the war which broke out between Germany and Austria in 1866 Miss Nightingale was consulted on both sides as to their Hospital and sanitary arrangements. In 1870 her personal sympathies were on the French side. But she actively assisted the British Red Cross Aid Society, which collected nearly £300,000 and rendered a great deal of aid both in France and Germany. One notes incidentally her opinion of Bismarck, in a letter written in 1872, where she speaks of him as the Junker-Devil-Statesman. Of the Franco-German war she expressed the opinion that it far surpassed in horror, as of course it vastly exceeded in scale, anything that she had witnessed in the Crimea.

The moral tone of Germany has, we are often told, greatly deteriorated since the war of 1870. Certainly in those days there was no such ghastly roll of atrocities, no such manifestation of insensate hatred as at the present time. It is pleasing to read of German nurses who owed their inspiration to Florence Nightingale. One, a Madame Werckner, "went every night during all that long long dreadful winter, at a large German station, which almost all the prisoners' trains passed through. For the whole night, she used to feed and warm and comfort and often to receive the last dying words of the miserable French prisoners, as they arrived in open trucks, some frozen, some as dead, others to die in the station, all half clad and starving. Night after night as these long terrible trains full dragged their slow length into the station, she kneeled on its pavement, supporting the dying heads, receiving their last messages to their mothers, pouring wine or hot milk down the throats of the sick, dressing the frost bitten limbs, and thank God, saving many. Alas! the Official German treatment of their wounded has become even more brutal, and instead of the gentle Christian ministrations of German ladies we now hear of infuriated mobs who with the unrestrained instincts of primitive barbarism insult and even howl at the helpless victims of war who have had the misfortune to fall into the clutches of their soldiery.

In 1851 Miss Nightingale had spent three months at a German training institution for nurses at Kaiserwerth. Although not efficient in its nursing, there was something in the high moral and religious tone of the establishment, and in the personal influence of Pastor Fliedner the superintendent, which rendered the training peculiarly valuable, in the opinion of Miss Nightingale. This debt was to be repaid with compound interest. For in 1868 we find the

Crown Princess of Germany (who, it will be remembered was the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, and mother of the present Kaiser) coming to Florence Nightingale, full of schemes for Hospitals and Training Schools for nurses and seeking her advice and help. "I have a fresh neophyte," she wrote to a friend, "in the person of the Crown Princess of Prussia. She has a quick intelligence, and is cultivating herself in knowledge of sanitary (and female) administration for her future great career. She comes along like a girl, pulls off her hat and jacket like a five year old drags about a great portfolio of plans, and kneels by my bedside correcting them". In 1872 Miss Nightingale drafted a report on hospital organization, and "Subsequently a Home and Nursing School, named after her, was established in Berlin, and the Victoria Sisters, following the lead of the Nightingale Nurses, undertook the nursing in Municipal Hospitals. The success of the Victoria Training School, led in its turn to the establishment of similar institutions throughout Germany.

After the Franco-German war the next great call for nurses for the army was the Egyptian campaign of 1882 and Miss Nightingale worked at high pressure in selecting them and arranging details of their outfit."

Lord Wolseley, at the close of this war was very outspoken on the great benefit derived from the presence of lady nurses. He referred to it as a matter of first consequence "It was delightful," he said, "to go into a ward where there was a female nurse. Their presence made the greatest difference". Apart from the incalculable boon which the care and kindness of such ladies confers upon the sick or wounded soldier, I regard their presence in all our hospitals as a most wholesome check upon the whole *personnel* in them."

Miss Nightingale was unable to do any organizing work for the Boer war, but she of course took the utmost interest in it, corresponded with many of the nurses and contributed £100 to the Scottish Hospital in South Africa.

During all these years, one of the most striking features of Miss Nightingale's life and work was the marvellous capacity which she had of setting all sorts and conditions of people to work. Frequent invitations came from the Queen, and there was a constant interchange of correspondence with Her Majesty on subjects of military, social and sanitary importance. Cabinet Ministers were frequent callers at her house in South Street. Viceroys on appointment to India, almost without exception, visited her before departing for the East. Many who were leaders in the intellectual world were in constant touch with her. And she carried on an enormous correspondence with experts in every branch of public health. Her opinion was sought for appointments of every kind, from professorships at Oxford and various Medical Schools, to Nursing Superintendents for hospitals all over the world.

(To be continued.)