

present we have only a dispensary for out-door patients, but we hope soon to be able to open a few wards for poor patients and also to have a Health Camp. The aim of the Anti-tuberculosis League is not only to cure individuals of tuberculosis, but to get to the root of the evil and destroy and stamp out this terrible disease.

With a view to this end we are educating the people in a series of homely talks and lantern lectures to recognize the danger of a careless consumptive, the need of fresh air, light, rest and good food for the invalid. Over 60 patients come regularly to the Dispensary for tuberculin injections. We visit our patients in their homes and have a "march past" of the other inmates and in this way we come across many other cases of Tuberculosis. Most of our patients are doing well. Our League seeks to stir up the sanitary conscience of the general public so that concentrated efforts may be made to stamp out this dreadful disease. By educating the people, providing sanitary dwellings for the poor, supervising milk and food supplies, and getting a fund to help families of disabled consumptive bread winners.

### BOOK REVIEWS.

#### FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S WORK FOR INDIA \*

A perusal of the chapters of Sir Edward Cook's "Life of Florence Nightingale" dealing with his heroine's protracted, unseen and indefatigable labours for the inhabitants of India, European and Native, quickly dispels any lingering conception one may still have of this great woman as some angel of goodness and mercy, the picturesque "Lady of the Lamp" whose methods were those only of gentleness and devotion. Even in the Crimea such qualities by themselves would have been of little value; administrative skill, and an intellectual grasp of the work to be done combined with the resolution and vigilance required to carry it through were of much greater importance than the commoner and more womanly virtues. In her work for India even more the intellectual qualities were paramount. Doubtless the inspiration for it is to be found in her all embracing compassion and in the imaginative power which enabled her to realize the miseries of India from the arid pages of official statistics; but in the performance the chief requirements were a clear brain, a capacity for prolonged mental toil, and the ability to influence and control a long succession of ministers and officials. The extent of this influence was truly amazing and the wonder of it is increased by our knowledge that for many years it was exerted by a bedridden invalid.

\*A general review of Sir Edward Cook's *Life of Florence Nightingale* appeared in the March number of the *Journal*—*Ed.*

Miss Nightingale's work for this country began in 1859 when, horrified by the awful death rate of 69 per 1000 among the British garrison, she persuaded Lord Stanley to appoint a Royal Commission on Indian Sanitation. Miss Nightingale was in frequent consultation with the members, many of whom were her intimate friends; she collected a great part of the evidence, submitted and wrote more than half of the voluminous report. Nearly all the recommendations made were her suggestions. Dissatisfied with the official arrangements for publication she wrote and issued at her own expense a specially condensed version of the report with her "Observations" thereon and by great and unceasing efforts took care that it should be assured of the widest possible publicity. This work, which we have so briefly summarized, occupied the greater part of Miss Nightingale's time for five years, and the result of it all was the inauguration of a long series of sanitary reforms which have made India almost as healthy as the United Kingdom for the British Soldier. But it must not be imagined that Miss Nightingale's work ended with the report. No one knew better than she that reports are not self executive. There was in the case of India more than the usual amount of official apathy and obstruction to overcome, for every document and despatch had to be considered by three separate authorities, the India Office, the Indian Government and the War Office, all sensitive, self-important and dilatory. Added to these difficulties there were at this time frequent changes of ministry so it is more than probable that but for Miss Nightingale's ceaseless vigilance and her extraordinarily thorough knowledge of the subject, which commanded the respect of those in authority, nothing whatever would have been done.

It is only possible to mention here one or two instances of her influence. In 1863 she secured the appointment of Lord de Grey, an ardent sanitarian, as Secretary of State for War and worked successfully to secure the appointment of Sir John Lawrence as Viceroy of India. The latter was a great stroke of policy for the cause she had at heart. Sir John visited her before sailing and during his Viceroyalty they were in constant correspondence. Men used to say Sir Bartle Frere once told her "that they always knew when the Viceroy had received a letter from Florence Nightingale; it was like the ringing of a bell to call for sanitary progress." It would be useless to give here the names of all the ministers who asked and usually took her advice or of the Anglo Indian officials who called upon her before sailing for "instructions" and who were in frequent correspondence with her during their residence in India. Such a list would contain the names of nearly all the prominent men connected with India and the Army for fifteen or twenty years. With Sir John Lawrence, Lord Napier of Ettrick (when Governor of Madras), Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay, her influence was almost supreme. Frere, on his

retirement, was appointed to the India Council and Miss Nightingale dissatisfied with the progress made, secured by dint of continual pertinacity the formation of a new department for sanitation at the India Office entirely under his control.

Residents in India are too apt to believe that to them only is given a knowledge of the country. On this point Miss Nightingale's biographer makes an interesting comment:—"She seems at this time (1862) to have entertained the hope that her health would permit her, when the Report was out, to visit India in person. . . . But it was not to be. Her knowledge of India and Indian affairs was already great, and presently it became so minute as to encourage a legend that she herself had once been there. But she never saw the country. It is not always either the 'life long resident' or, on the other hand, 'Pagett M. P.' who is better qualified than the student to perceive and serve a country's need." Sir Edward Cook is not very explicit as to the nature of the reforms which Miss Nightingale advocated. Though regarded then as revolutionary, extravagant and in any case quite useless, they seem mainly to have been what we should consider quite obvious and essential, such as the avoidance of contaminated water supply, provision of sanitary barracks, hospitals and trained nurses, reasonable opportunities for recreation and exercise. Some extracts from her "Observations" (on sanitation in India) give one an insight into the official attitude of the day and may serve as an example of her scathing satire. Her biographer referring to her pamphlet writes "among the causes (of the terrible death rate) were Bad Water, Bad Drainage, Filthy Bazaars, Want of Ventilation and Overcrowding in barrack huts and sick wards. Her remarks under these several heads are often characteristically racy. 'Where tests have been used, the composition of the water reads like a very intricate prescription, containing nearly all the chlorides, sulphates, nitrates and carbonates in the pharmacopoeia besides silica and quantities of animal and vegetable matter which the reports apparently consider nutritive.' 'If the facilities for washing were as great as those for drink our Indian army would be the cleanest body of men in the world.' Under the head of overcrowding she quotes one report which said that the men (300 men per room) 'are generally accommodated in the barracks without inconvenience or overcrowding' and she asks 'what is *convenient* overcrowding? In India as at home it was a current opinion of the time that the soldier is by nature a drunken animal; the only question seemed to be as to how he had better get drunk. At one station, though the men were reported as 'mostly temperate,' she found that on a ten years average one man in three was admitted into hospital directly from drink. 'The men are killed by liver disease on canteen spirits, to save them from

"being killed by liver disease on bazaar spirits. May there not be some middle course whereby the men may be killed by neither?"

Of the success which followed Miss Nightingale's efforts the fall in the army death rate is the best evidence. Between 1863 and 1873 it fell from 69 to 18 per 1000 and as to the alleged extravagance of sanitation it was pointed out that this fall meant a saving of £285,000 in recruits in a single year. The army death rate has now fallen to 5.04 (1911.) Even after making allowance for the enthusiasm of a biographer there appears to be no doubt that for this immense reduction in human suffering and a corresponding increase in fighting efficiency Miss Nightingale was mainly responsible. Sir Edward is able to quote the opinion of an unprejudiced expert who though he admired her devotion did not always agree with her views or methods. Sir John Strachey said "of the sanitary improvements in India, three fourths are due to Miss Nightingale."

Of her work in connection with village and urban sanitation, the spread of irrigation, the establishment of improved civil hospitals with trained nurses and many other Indian questions it is impossible to write here. On some of them she was undoubtedly a little out of her depth and her advice was not of so weighty a character as on army sanitation, but on all Indian questions her services as a stimulating force, as the keeper of the national conscience were of the greatest possible value. For the details the reader is referred to her admirable biography. The present writer will be satisfied if he has assisted in establishing a more accurate conception of the character of this great woman and in showing that in India, as in England and the Crimea, Florence Nightingale was before everything else, the saviour of the British soldier.

#### "LECTURES ON MEDICAL DISEASES FOR NURSES." \*

To those who are already acquainted with Dr. Forsyth's Lectures, their being found in book form will be welcome, and even more so to those who are looking out for a teachers' or students' Handbook on the subject. Great stress is laid on the necessity of nursing *patients* and not *diseases* only. He does not enter deeply into treatment, but concisely touches on the causes, and aims at helping nurses to understand the reasons wherefore of doctors' orders, and actual conditions to be looked for in treatment being wisely left to the physician in charge, so that there is nothing to clash with any doctor's or hospital's particular method. Each chapter would make an excellent basis for nurses' class lessons as indeed they originally were, and the leader can then give any further teaching on the lines followed in that particular chapter. As nurses are to be the army of preventers, nothing

\* By Dr. J. Forsyth, M. D., D. Sc., F. R. C. P. Lond. Pub. by Baillière Tindall and Cox, 8, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, price 3/6 net.