MITCHINER MEMORIAL LECTURE*

'THE NIGHTINGALE TOUCH'

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FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE (1820 to 1910)

From a photograph by H Lenthall

"Wondering is like yawning, and leaves the same sensation behind it, and should never be allowed except when people are very much exhausted." Florence Nightingale.

Sir Edward Cook in his life of Florence Nightingale recalls this amongst so many pungent observations as an illustration of her dedication to fact rather than to imagination, to the objective rather than to the empirical, to the statistical and not to the anecdotal attitudes man can take towards problem solving. "What does it pruv?" said the old Scotchwoman of *Paradise Lost* and was abused for saying it. I say the same thing. *Paradise Lost* pruv nothing. *Samson Agonistes* pruv a great deal, Tennyson never pruv anything. Browning's *Paracelsus* pruv something. Shakespeare in whatever he writes — in the deepest highest tragedies, like 'King Lear' or 'Hamlet' pruv everything and does most to explain the ordinary life of every one of us!

Already we may surmise (if she would allow us to surmise) that she didn't suffer fools gladly. And we can ask ourselves immediately — what is there to

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'pruv' about Florence Nightingale? What were those achievements which touch our lives today, and was she, to use her own words again "One whose life makes a great difference for all: *all* are better off than if he had not lived; and this betterness is for always, it does not die with him — that is the true estimate of a great LIFE"?

If one were to undertake a street survey with a questionnaire (of which she, with her statistical bent would have approved) to find out what the common man thinks about her today, what answers would we get and what would the survey 'pruv':- "She was a nurse" — "She is a nurse" — "She was a Victorian lady" — "She is the lady on the back of the £10.00 bank-note" — "She went to the Crimean War" — "The lady of the lamp" and "I don't know". How many would be able to bring out examples of her heroism, coping with wounded and the cholera victims in the Barrack Hospital at Scutari on the Bosphorus — "The lady *with* the lamp" and would know how she applied her experiences in the Crimean War, at the age of 35 years, to the improvement of the health and welfare of the common man; *that between 1856 and 1872*, few decisions about sanitation and public health were taken without her advice or comment, especially in planning? That with the aid of devoted and like-minded officials, such as Sidney Herbert, she was instrumental in bringing about fundamental changes and improvement in the health and welfare of the British Army — in health, the development of the Army Medical College and the Medical Corps and giving impetus to Herbert's volunteer movement (later the Territorials); — or in welfare, included the introduction of a new dimension in education, occupational training and crafts, the care of soldiers' families, and pay-remitting arrangements. And for the country at large there was her work on hospital design, and particularly the removal of the old image of the nurse, the introduction of a new reality into nursing and nurse-training, and establishing a new image of "what nursing is, and what it is not". Within her was an intensive and sustained desire to do good and to reduce, through health and education, the sum of human suffering. It was all done "for the sake of the work", with no personal ambition, no desire for any limelight, no reward.

It is only by studying the several books written about her life and work, appraising the considerable bio-bibliography, looking at some of the colossal literary output from this gifted power-house that one can be reminded of what can be 'proved', and what the 'Nightingale touch' may be. Characteristically, she would have approved of the phrase "what made her tick".

The Guardian Angel. "I go to prove my soul." Paracelsus. R Browning. She was named after Florence (Italy) where she was born on 12th May 1820. Five years earlier her parents had called their first-born Frances Parthenope, after the site of the Ancient Greek settlement near Naples where they were staying at the time. Florence Nightingale was not, however, the first Florence though millions of little girls have been named after her. According to Baring Gould, Saint Florentia (St Florence) AD 630 dedicated her virginity to God and followed the monastic maxims of her brothers: a contempt of the world, and the exercise of prayer. Florence did perhaps identify herself with a Philomena of which there are two

saintly examples (Rome, August 10th, and San Severino, July 5th) both representing virgin martyrs and daughters of light. Like St Florence and Philomena, Florence remained an untarnished legend. She styled herself FN and was commemorated in this way on the family tomb at Wellow in 1910. For much of her life she withdrew from the world, either by intensive day-dreaming in childhood, or after the Crimean Campaign, on a sofa or in bed at various addresses, but mostly in South Street, Mayfair. It was here, in a state of chronic ill-health supposedly near to death most of the time, that she undertook her prodigious task, and while a kind of open-door policy may have been followed downstairs, anyone, including Princes, Governors and Prime Ministers who wished to go upstairs to see her, had to do so by an appointment, which was not always fulfilled. Much has been said about the strange illness; was it hysterical conversion, or, as with Darwin, 'the depression of genius', or the depression which is now thought to follow certain traumatic events in life — and which are believed to shake every fibre of the old autonomic Adam within. Could it have been a touch of myxoedema madness? In her creative hyperkinetic years she was a day-and-night fresh-air fiend, but later her windows remained closed. No thyroid-function tests in those days. She did, in fact, live to be 90 (Fig 1).

Fig. 1. Miss Nightingale still in office circa 80's

The exercise of prayer was a constant feature of her life. She was just as emphatic about religious audit as she became about medical and surgical audit. But in spite on constant soul-searching and self-recrimination her 'vales of misery' were used as a well, and the pools were filled with water. She sensed a call from God at the age of six but she notes in her diary that on 7th February 1837 God called her to his service. Naturally she never was able to express the call in words, "I think our feelings waste themselves in words when they ought to be distilled into actions and into actions that bring results — 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord', not the handmaid of correspondence . . .". However, it is worth noting here that she was the author of over 158 published or unpublished papers and some 20,000 letters and notes. In the Crimean War she wrote her diary and reports at all hours under lamplight behind a screen in a kitchen in the vast barrack hospital in Scutari (Fig 2), and wrote letters home on behalf of the 'Johnnies' (British soldier='Tommy' 1914-18), or replied to letters sent her by anxious or mourning relatives. She drew a sharp distinction between what she called literature for its own sake and writing as subservient to action.

Fig. 2. Scutari Barracks, Miss Nightingale's quarters were in the second and third storeys of the Tower (centre)

Thank God she was broadminded in sectarian matters. Of Unitarian upbringing and enjoying an elevated position in society she was acquainted with the Puseyite trends of Anglicanism, the Oxford movement, the convert Cardinal Manning, Madre Sta Colomba of Rome, Pastor Fliedner of Kaiserworth, Arthur Hugh Clough, the poet, and Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol. She remained uncommitted and refused to indulge in *odium theologicum*. This was a useful touch helping to ensure the success of the hitherto unknown value of nurses in the battle arena. A foretaste of her good common sense was revealed when she was appointed to her first real post in August 1853 as Superintendent of the 'Establishment for

Gentlewomen during illness' in Harley Street. She writes (to her lifelong friend 'Clarkey' — Madam Mohl) "My Committee refused to take in *Catholic* patients whereupon I wished them good-morning unless I might take in Jews and their Rabbis. . . . now it is settled and *in print* that we are to take all denominations whatever and allow them to be visited by their respective priests and Muftis." In her departure for Scutari the government's instructions included specific reference to sectarian problems and it relied on FN's vigilance to prevent religious tampering with the sick and the dying. The accounts confirm that there were great problems in this respect and FN did deal with them and kept stability on this important front. She stood no nonsense.

A few words about Arthur Clough and Benjamin Jowett are appropriate here as they increased the degree of her religious touch. Was she a mystic "The flight of the alone to the alone"? (Plotinus AD 205-270 Neoplatonist of Alexandria). Clough, her cousin by marriage, became her odd-job man, fetching and carrying, reading proofs — nothing was too much — he was one of the many good men FN had 'in thrall'. A certain empathy between them might be suggested by comparing lines from Clough's most famous poem 'Say not the struggle nought availeth' and a fragment from her 'Suggestions for Thought' 1860: "A hundred struggle and drown in the breakers. One discovers a new world. But rather, ten times rather, die in the surf, heralding the way to that new world, than stand idly on the shore!" and from Clough (the whole poem can be found in any hymnbook) "Say not the struggle nought availeth" . . . "Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers, and but for you possess the field" . . . "For while the tired waves vainly breaking" . . . "But westward, look, the land is bright." They had a common interest in Italy and its struggle towards unification, and Clough indeed had drafted the poem in Rome in 1849 at the time of that setback of the Risorgimento. Apparently the poem was first published in 1855 in America and not as was long believed in 1862. The poem was, as so many of us will remember, one of the rousing calls to the nation used by Churchill in the dark days of the 1939-1945 war. Could it be, because of her close relationship with Clough that here too was the Nightingale touch?

Clough introduced FN to Benjamin Jowett, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford and Master of Balliol, and here again a close relationship was forged, there being 'certain-kindness' and 'freedom-freshness' between them. Certainly there was no disagreement as to his distaste for experiment and research. For surprisingly FN would have none of the germ theory of Pasteur or Lister's application of it. For Jowett, knowledge could only be handed down:

"First come I; my name is Jowett,	I am the Master of this College:
There's no knowledge, but I know it.	What I don't know isn't knowledge."

H C Beeching

FN was accomplished speaking in Italian ("have you heard how beautifully she speaks Italian" remarked a soldier in Scutari), in German, in French and in Latin, and especially so in Greek. She assisted Jowett in his great translation of Plato and he made use of her contributions. She helped him with his ser-

mons, the production of the Children's Bible (with some very witty and to-the-point remarks), and even a draft for a new form of service for Balliol College Chapel. He gave her communion. She gave him personal advice. He tried to help her over her major religious work 'Suggestions for Thought'. Of special interest was their joint proposal, twice unsuccessfully assayed, to found a Chair of Applied Statistics at Oxford.

It is difficult to condense the religious and mystical aspects of the Nightingale touch — yet it is fundamental to any understanding of her life and work. In spite of her own brand of sackcloth it is enough to reveal that this touch, this undercurrent, was alive and sparkling. I would not agree as Lytton Strachey implied that she was possessed by a demon. Saints are, as history tells us, not the easiest of people to get on with and they make great demands on others. After some great life events they become effective and untiring administrators, in the true sense of the word. At least, unlike St Teresa, FN didn't levitate. She became rather overweight as the years passed by.

This section would be incomplete without a comment by her on why, in 1845 she refused the proposal of marriage from H Nicholson, brother of her intimate friend Harriette and son of 'Aunt' Hannah who meant so much to her in her childhood. He died tragically by drowning in 1850. She said, "I have an intellectual nature which requires satisfaction, and that would find it in him. I have a passional nature which requires satisfaction and that would find it in him. I have a moral, an active nature which requires satisfaction and that would not find it in his life." The something in her which rebelled against the life she would have to live in such a marriage is revealed in the next section.

The spirit of Rescue

To that original of educators in our time, Kurt Hahn, founder of Gordonstoun School can be attributed a variation of the Samaritan ethic that 'the Spirit of Rescue burns in every human breast' — particularly in the young. In FN the spirit began to burn early and it is likely that the influence was environmental as much as the remarkable intellectual powers she must have inherited from one of her roots. Her name could have been Florence Shore, but five years before she was born her father assumed the name Nightingale and thereby succeeded to the property left to him by Peter Nightingale of Lea, near Matlock (Fig 3). It was here that FN grew in those very special and vulnerable early years of childhood and, despite the attribution of wealth which enabled her father to buy something better in the south, Embley Park, near Romsey, it was in Lea that the family lived during the summer season and to Lea and to that area that Florence continually returned until 1883. Certainly her heart was there, and throughout the Crimean campaign her thoughts returned to this home, for the sound of the waters on the Bosphorus would remind her of the rushing waters of the River Derwent below Cromford Bridge. In November 1855, one year after the battle of Inkerman, she wrote "If ever I live to see England again, the western breezes of my hill-top home will be my first longing . . .", and it was to that home that she returned quietly and without the pomp and circumstance that had been arranged, on a warm evening in August 1856.

Fig. 3. Miss Nightingale's family tree

By all accounts, she seemed to be possessed at an early age with an inordinate desire and ability to nurse broken dolls and injured animals and to become a willing 'emergency man' for the family as regards any minor household disaster, but FN was very fond of Great Aunt Evans of Cromford Bridge and Grandma Shore. She paid a great deal of selfless attention to these ageing ladies by visits and by home nursing as required. But it was the families of the increasingly depressed villages of Cromford, Bonsall and Lea who lighted the spirit. In 1769 Richard Arkwright designed and erected his spinning mill at Cromford; was it here that the dark satanic mills of industrial revolution had a beginning? The lead and silver mines there, sunk some 1,500 years earlier during the Roman occupation of Britain, were worked out and, except for sheep, it was a hard country from which to scratch a living. Grinding poverty and dreadful sickness were everywhere. The young Flo helped run cheap schools, visited the poor, arranged school treats, but all the time reproached herself for being able to do so little. Born into well-to-do society, what one might call a 'Jane Austen' family, a certain likeness to the Brookes of 'Middlemarch' was suggested, as this novel was written by another relative and descendant from that rugged area around Bonsall, Elizabeth Ann Evans (George Eliot see figure 3). The accounts of her family social events and travels fills most readers, I guess, with that sense of boredom, dullness and depression which afflicted FN. In her own words she was "frustrated by the trap laid for the luxurious life of the affluent", noting "the painful difference between man and man in this life."

Her sickness grew worse for, although a dutiful daughter, she was inwardly choked by the 'best' society. It is recalled that her efforts towards work in the Salisbury Hospital were nipped in the bud by maternal frost. In the 1840's poverty was increasing to a terrible degree. There were riots in Derbyshire. As Flo said,

"You cannot get out of a carriage at a party without seeing what is in the faces marking the lane on either side without feeling tempted to rush back and say 'These are my brothers and sisters'." It would not do, she was told, for a young lady in her station. Later in the Crimea, she reverted to a carriage for expediency (Fig 4).

Fig. 4. Carriage used on the visits to the Crimea after her illness; previously she rode on horseback and was an accomplished horsewoman

Kurt Hahn goes on, "He who drills and labours and encounters difficulties all to be ready to serve his brother in peril, — he experiences God's purpose in his inner life" "not" as Lancelot Fleming, in his address at Hahn's memorial service put it, "that a young person would necessarily use such words to describe the profound transforming experience of being involved in a rescue operation or a samaritan service . . .". FN we know at last managed to make the break and to start training, drilling and labouring through two satisfying periods, in 1846 and 1848, at Pastor Fliendner's all-embracing hospital — infant school — penitentiary — orphan asylum — school for schoolmistresses at Kaiserworth, near Düsseldorf. In 1849 she inspected hospitals and found work in Ragged Schools in London with "my little thieves at Westminster — my greatest joy in London".

There was one final parental effort to effect a compromise solution when in 1852, on the death of dear Aunt Evans, it was suggested that her home, Cromford Bridge House could be made into a hospital for Flo to run. Gracefully she turned it down and early in 1853 left London to work in and study hospitals in Paris. In August she took up the appointment of Superintendent of the Establishment for Gentlewomen already mentioned and this proved a valuable though restricted springboard. From there the leap was to be in the direction of the

new King's College Hospital, behind the Royal College of Surgeons, where a new superintendent of nursing was required, but events as we know overtook her.

This is a convenient place to continue with Hahn's theme about training in respect of one Sidney Herbert's many contributions to the freedom, health and welfare of his country, namely the start, in 1859, of the volunteer movement which was to become the Territorial Army. FN, equally devoted to the need for training, in military medicine and in nursing, added her own special touch to keep the project moving forwards, especially after his death in 1861. Her stirring and effective letter of support was displayed in large print on a card. Particularly appropriate are the following extracts: "The nation can never go back which is capable of such a movement as this . . . these are men who have all something to give up; all men whose time is valuable for money . . ." and in stressing the importance of efficient training to very high standards, she continued, " 'Garibaldi's Volunteers' did excellently in guerilla movements; failed before a fourth-rate regular army." One of her axioms was "When in peace, train for War".

Challenge "Show them they are needed"

Kurt Hahn lights the touchpaper — "do not preach at the young — this is a hook without a worm, do not coerce their opinions — this is of the devil, but show them they are needed — this impels them into experiences which will draw out their innate strength".

Florence had drilled and laboured, and she responded with incredible innate strength to the call that her country needed her. She had her own strangely disarming way of putting it, "I never did anything except when I was asked."

It is stated repeatedly by all those who have researched and studied her that the end of her war experience was the beginning of her great work. Her response to challenge in Scutari and in the Crimea was turned into the weapon that enabled her to render inestimable and everlasting service to the soldier and the common man. The weapon was, as Lytton Strachey puts it, a sword of Damocles to be held, for at least five years, over the heads of ministers of war and their subordinates. It was the threat to publish her experiences and in publishing it was not she who would be damned, for public opinion together with the personal support of her Majesty the Queen were right behind her. It was a situation which had been brought about by the introduction of a new dimension in the conduct of a war, namely immediate public accountability through the use of the media. Churchill comments, "The Times, under its great editor J T Delane, sent out the first of all war correspondents, William Russell, and used his reports to start a national agitation against the Government." Indeed, Lord Aberdeen's Government had to resign and Palmerston, contrary to expectation, "proved himself man of the hour".

One of Russell's dispatches compared the management of the sick and wounded British soldiers, "worthy only of the savages of Dahomey", with that afforded by the French who were better organised and were using nursing sisters. The French had not forgotten the lessons Larrey had taught them 30 or 40 years previously. Britain, it appeared, had forgotten about everything, military or

medical, and had relied entirely upon the courage and endurance of the British Soldier. Churchill continues: "amid storms and blizzards the British Army lay without tents, huts, food, warm clothes, or the most elementary medical care."

The response to Russell's letters, the call for nurses, Sidney Herbert's action strictly outside of his own ministerial capacity at the time in sending out the first team of British nurses to serve in a battle area, and FN's heroic actions all make for compelling reading whatever book is taken up. The accounts by Cook, O'Malley, and Woodham Smith are as vivid as most modern media coverage. Lytton Strachey is overawed enough to relax his ironic treatment of FN. The account given by one of the splendid Selonite sisters who were amongst the original party of 38 nurses, Sarah Ann, has a particular appeal as it enables one to get close to the bedside of the wounded and sick soldier. I have chosen the following extract, which reveals some pre-Listerian common sense:-

"The General Hospital had a very different aspect from the Barracks; it seemed cleaner, lighter, and more cheerful in every way. The wards were in better repair, no broken windows stuffed with rags, no rain streaming in, no beds on the floor — everything in better order. The men too, were very much more cheerful than they were when I first went, mostly wounded from Alma, Balaclava and Inkerman and most recovering . . . He (the doctor) was a little man, quick to perception, and rather so in temper. He gave me directions as to washing the wounds and dressing the slighter ones, forbidding rather needlessly the use of a sponge. I used a bit of tow, and of course, burnt it, and took a fresh bit after each wound. There was a good supply of warm water, and I emptied and rinsed out my basin every time it was used.

"The men rejoiced to have a nurse, and told me I was much cleaner and gentler than the orderly, who used, when the doctor was engaged, to wash several patients' wounds in the same water."

The soldiers, many of whom were 16 years of age, were considered veterans by the time they reached 18.

By the autumn of 1856, she steadfastly ignored advice about taking a restful post. Armed with the sword of Damocles and a sheath of statistics (she became a member of the Statistical Society in 1858), she began to make sure that the disaster should not be repeated. "I stand at the altar of murdered men and while I live I fight their cause." Constantly she refers to the soldiers as her children. "No one can feel for the Army as I do . . . I have had to see my children dressed in a dirty blanket and an old pair of regimental trousers, and to see them fed on raw salt meat . . . and nine thousand of my children are dying from causes which might have been prevented, in their forgotten graves. But I can never forget." She had the figures at her finger-tips. During the first seven months of the campaign there was a mortality of 60 per cent per annum from disease alone — greater than that of the great plague in London (1665), and from another source "the mean strength of the Army in the Crimea during the quarter ending 31st December 1854 might be taken as 38,789. Of this number 25,336 were under medical treatment and of these 2,577 died and 8,153 were sent away as convalescents." During the last six months of the war her efforts had contributed

to reducing the mortality of the sick to little more than the mortality at home. She continued "There is nothing in the education of the medical officer, nothing in the organisation or powers of the Army Medical Directorate — nothing in the whole hospital procedure — nothing in the Army regulations which would have met the case of these hospitals. And were a similar necessity to arise again, especially after the lapse of a few years of peace, the whole thing would occur over again. You cannot improvise the sanitary care of an Army in the field."

Subsequent statistical studies on the Army, including the Guards, at home revealed that the mortality of 17 to 20 per 1,000 was nearly double that amongst the civilians. It was, she said, equivalent to taking 1,100 men out upon Salisbury Plain and shooting them. Inexorably, she built up the data on which to base her arguments with the Administration. Using what we might call an unofficial working party meeting almost daily, and in communication even two or three times a day, she fought the cause on behalf of her "children". The *dramatis personae* in this act lasting over six years are revealed sufficiently by role and character in the biographies, and in the scope of this lecture one should not try to elaborate on them. Suffice to say she was the "Lady-in-Chief" of a cabal or cabinet where the main assistants or advisers were Dr Sutherland (sanitation) and Dr Thomas Alexander (military medicine), and the man who was the vital interface with government, Sidney Herbert. Here also one is unable to elaborate on the remarkable partnership between FN and Herbert. It was an extraordinary relationship, fully supported by Mrs Herbert, and based upon a common background of religious thought, love for Italy (they often corresponded in Italian), but, fundamentally, an intense devotion to the health, welfare and efficiency of the British soldier. I will not attempt to embark on any assessment of whether FN drove her "dear master" by overwork to his death, or for that matter contributed to the death of her other assistants and confidants. Dr Sutherland was, however, quite resilient. Certainly, she had these men in harness, and after Herbert's death in 1861, which she mourned continually in a kind of duality of stricken personal grief and of frustration of work unaccomplished (re-organisation of the War Office), she used others. But in 1872, with a change of government, she became 'out of office' and less effective in reform.

The Nightingale touch

One can attempt to express this in much the same way as one expresses the Nelson touch: "To turn a blind eye on occasions" or as one of our colleagues well versed in Naval history put it to me, one who "strives for the best decision in any difficult circumstances. To hell with authority if required. Always act in consideration for others" (he was a great communicator with his staff through staff meetings). Thus for the Nightingale touch:- One who uses every ounce of innate strength, mind, body and soul without any desire for any reward or advantage in the interests of the British soldier and his family in peace or war and in the interests of the health and welfare of the common man.

On the other hand, it would seem sufficient, and even better, to enumerate

Fig. 5. Nurse (left) wearing the Scutari sash

those aspects of life today in which we can identify the Nightingale touch. I present these in random order with notes as appropriate. I realise that the list is incomplete:-

Night-duty

The £10.00 note is inaccurate in that no nurses did night-duty. Florence did it herself, alone, with the lamp. It was said to be a four-mile stint.

Nurses' capes

These were used with the sash (Fig 5) to identify nurses. The QA's cape is said to be a direct descendant.

Modern nursing

Her 'Notes on Nursing' still make splendid reading and most of her advice is applicable today.

Nurse-training, district nurses, health visitors, social workers and baby-minding

Regarding the emancipation of women she affirmed that women can stand on their own merits. Her mystical nature (see above) rather inhibited her from joining in any cause. This was also her attitude to the registration of nurses and a nursing association. She believed that all should be founders and not followers.

Red Cross Society

Henri Dunant publicly acknowledged that it was her example which inspired his action in beginning this Society. Strictly speaking it was Ambrose Paré, surgeon in the Franco-Spanish Wars of the mid-sixteenth century who set the example, especially with regard to prisoners of war.

Hospital planning

FN's 'Notes on Hospitals' was acknowledged as one of the best contributions ever made on this subject. Netley Hospital was *not* designed by her — she tried to get the plans altered but was defeated as work had already started. The Herbert Hospital (named at her instigation), The Hospital for Incurables at Putney, St. Thomas', the Military Hospital at Millbank, and many, many others were constructed according to her plans and advice.

Hospital records and statistics, medical audit, deaths and complications meetings

All were her special interest. I do not think she would have been pleased with our rate of progress in these matters.

Diet kitchens, in a sense the Army Catering Corps

These began in Scutari and in this she was assisted by Alexis Soyer, the Chef of the Reform Club, who had volunteered his services.

Army education and off-duty facilities

These facilities (eg NAAFI) for reading, games, food and drink (non-alcoholic!) had their beginning also through FN's initiative in Scutari — for example, she started reading rooms and her Inkerman Café.

The remittance of soldiers' pay home

Sending soldiers' pay home to their families was organised independently by her. The officials who have recently reversed this arrangement of hers, in the Royal Navy, would, if she were alive today, be having a terrible time.

Health services to soldiers' families

These were also a part of her work begun in Scutari.

The Army Medical Corps (now RAMC) and the TAVR

These also bear the marks of the Nightingale touch. She worked with Sidney Herbert for the Royal Commission (1857) and in its Sub-commissions, (i) to put the Barracks in sanitary order, (ii) to organise a statistical department, (iii) to institute a Medical School and (iv) to reconstruct the Army Medical Department, to revise hospital regulations and draw up a warrant for the Promotion of Medical Officers.

The Army Medical College

This was her particular baby, and one reads how she, with persistence and skill procured the services of the one surgeon for whom she and Sidney Herbert had the greatest respect, Dr Thomas Alexander. His early death was a sad setback, but Florence persisted in her efforts to establish the school, at first at Chatham, obtaining equipment, appointing the first professors and making sure they were paid.

Housing, even *mortgage-schemes*, *irrigation* and *agriculture* all evoke her memory, and especially *drains*; even in our modern hospitals, when the sewers erupt and dark, smelly fluids suddenly appear from below the ward wash-basins (Shades of Scutari, even to the occasional dead rat). She achieved improvements by terrifying civil servants with threats of public exposure of inadequate services. Finally, at least as far as this lecture is concerned, she impressed on clinical staff and nurses that they must be prepared to accept a rôle in administration. Like anyone in a senior clinical position nowadays, there was nothing she liked better, than to escape from her organising duties to go to the actual care of the patients, but she recognised what she had to do, and she asks us to do the same.

Here is the Voice of History, through G M Trevelyan, "Whatever . . . anyone else may have got out of the Crimean War, England's gain from it was the life-work of this woman — an immense acquisition of moral territory, if all its secondary consequences and ramifications be followed out."

I think it is abundantly clear that the Nightingale touch fits into the theme of the Mitchiner Memorial Lectures. Philip Mitchiner was a surgeon at St. Thomas's and must have taught many a young Nightingale. Indeed, it was Florence who insisted on teaching by medical men of her nurses in training. And we know of another very special relationship of his with her school. He married a 'Nightingale'. He was very much a soldier and a soldier's surgeon and, one thing more which is so relevant, he always said of himself "I'm Philip Mitchiner, I'm the common man."

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