name, like Grace Darling's, now quickens the beat of millions of hearts. Some people are born with a genius for nursing and solacing, as much as others are with a genius for music or dancing or poetry, and Miss Nightingale may be regarded as the archetype of her order. Her spirit first showed itself in an interest for the sick poor in the hamlets round Lea Hurst, but at length found a sphere requiring more attention and energy in Continental hospitals, and afterwards in London, where she took the office of matron to a retreat for decayed gentlewomen; and now she is gone to tend and to heal the wounds of the sufferers by the siege of Sebastopol. What a contrast to the quiet, pastoral retirement of this vale of Holloway, with its fireside memories, its rural delights."

Florence Nightingale's real birthplace was Florence, "the city of flowers." She was born on May 15th, 1820. She was the younger daughter of Mr. William Shore Nightingale, of Embley Park, Hampshire, and Lea Hurst, Derbyshire. She and her sister, the late Lady Verney, became co-heiresses of Mr. Nightingale's properties. Her mother was the daughter of the well-known abolitionist, Mr. Smith, M.P., member for Norwich.

Mr. Nightingale was a man of scholarly taste, and favoured the higher education of women; and before his younger daughter had reached her seventeenth year, Mrs. Tooley tells us "that she was skilled in science, classics and mathematics, had a wide acquaintance with standard literature, was a fair artist, a good musician, and an excellent linguist—speaking French, German and Italian with equal fluency."

The sisters lived free, happy lives. Florence Nightingale was particularly fond of animals, and it is interesting to hear that her first attempt at nursing was performed on an old Scotch shepherd's dog with an injured leg. From that day, we are told, "that it became a custom when any one had a

cut or bruise, or a sick animal, to send for Miss Florence." And in another passage, Mrs. Tooley tells us, "During her girlhood she was chief almoner to the cottages around her home, and nursed all illnesses under the advice of her mother and the vicar, who, in his youth, had studied medicine. Her favourite books were those that dealt with the alleviation of human suffering and misery, and it seemed as though her whole nature were impelled in that direction. She became, while still a young girl, interested in the prison work of Elizabeth Fry, and paid a memorable visit to that veteran friend of humanity in her London home."

The ordinary routine of London social life had few attractions for Florence Nightingale. We hear that she and her sister were presented, but very shortly afterwards she withdrew from all gaieties. The call, "Come up higher," had already sounded in her ears. During the next few years she gave her attention to the condition of hospitals. After a systematic inspection of those in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, she visited civil and military hospitals all over Europe, and in 1851 went into training as a nurse in the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses, at Kaiserswerth on the Rhine. This institution was founded by Pastor Fliedner, who, we are told, "did for the prisons of Germany what Howard had done for those of England." She further supplemented her training by afterwards studying with the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, in Paris. After a period of much needed rest at Lea Hurst, Miss Nightingale undertook the management of an institution for sick and aged governesses, at 47, Harley Street, and devoted herself, with energy and ardour, to the reorganisation of this institution, which remains to-day as a monument of her work and method. A lady who visited her in Harley Street said, "She was to be found in the midst of the various duties of a hospital, for the Home was largely

a Sanatorium, organising the nurses, attending to the correspondence, prescriptions and accounts; in short, performing all the duties of a hard-working matron, as well as largely financing the institution."

The strain of such heavy work on Miss Nightingale's delicate constitution became too much, and again the indomitable worker was obliged to return to Lea Hurst for rest. For ten years she had served her apprenticeship in preparation for the work of her life; when the call came it found her ready. She was then about thirty-four.

When war broke out between England and Russia, in March 1854, the hospital arrangements of the British army were in a very imperfect state. The army while at Varna suffered from a deficient number of surgeons, though many courageous volunteers offered themselves. A hospital was established at Scutari, a port of the Turkish capital, and was intended for the wounded soldiers. There was also a naval hospital at Therapia, which was clean and orderly, and supplied with everything requisite for a well-managed hospital. Before the year 1854 expired there existed also for the army "The General Hospital," the Barrack Hospital, and two floating hospitals; there was also a hospital for Russian prisoners at Kulali, on the Bosphorus. "Subsequently, and as the result of the agitation in England, what was called the Civilian Hospital was established at Smyrna. But it was at Scutari that the great evils were prevalent, the great horrors enacted, and the indelible shame upon our country inflicted." There is no sadder chapter of human history than that of the Crimean War, and yet the causes of all these miseries have never been adequately traced. The grossest mismanagement seemed to have prevailed; the transport service was inadequate; the stores of warm clothing, great-coats, blankets and huts, which had been ordered for the protection of the army in winter, failed to reach them for

weeks after the English newspapers told of the comforts provided for the troops. "What a mockery it must have seemed to the poor fellows, who with scanty rations, and in threadbare and tattered clothes, were enduring the most cruel fatigues, aggravated by all the inclemencies of wind and rain, and snow and cold, upon the bleak heights of the Tauric Chersonese!" Well may Miss Marsh, in her "Memorials of Captain Hedley Vicars," tell us that the miseries of the winter before Sebastopol have passed into history!

"Battles," as she remarks, "won on the cold soil of the Crimea by weary men, worn down by hunger, bore terrible witness to the quenchless nature of British courage. The men who stormed the heights of Alma, who in the dreadful fight of Inkermann conquered again and again, amidst fogs and darkness, of whom a mere handful at Balaklava were seen 'charging an army while all the world wondered'; such men have proved their steel. Yet there is a limit to human endurance; and when men of this mould have been seen 'to weep,' as on night after night, succeeding days of starvation and toil, they were ordered to their work in the freezing trenches, who can estimate the exhausting misery they had at first endured?" But long before this deadly winter had closed in on our devoted army, public indignation in England had reached its climax, when Sir Robert Peel disclosed in the *Times* the awful suffering of the wounded after the battle of Alma Nolan's "History of the War" gives almost incredible accounts.

In spite of individual merit, every branch of the medical department of the army in the East worked badly. "No nurses were provided, and the medical orderlies were taken from the ranks, raw and untrained. The ambulance carts and waggons were so heavy as to be altogether unserviceable; even had they been fit, no horses were at hand to draw

them. . . . The commonest necessaries for field hospitals—bedding, medicines, and medical comforts—were wanting, and not a single operating table was supplied to the army."

In another passage we read: "It might without exaggeration be said, that not one yard from the trenches before Sebastopol to the hospital or cemetery at Scutari, was the poor soldier carried, without an amount of suffering being inflicted on him barbarous in the extreme, and which any previous preparation might have averted."

A medical officer writing home from the camp thus describes the outset of the unfortunate candidate for the corridors of Scutari!

"I often look back at the misery and wretchedness I have witnessed in England in my attendance on the sick poor, but in comparing these with my present everyday experience, their condition was Elysium itself; for when I tell you that the sick in this place have no other couch than the bare ground itself, saturated with wet, and a dripping canvas only between them and the clouds, you will perfectly comprehend that the veriest hovel would be a palace in comparison."

When the wounded were placed on board fresh miseries awaited. "The men lay between decks without any bedding, and often without a blanket, in the depth of winter." Invalids attended invalids, or they were unattended. There was plenty of pork and hard biscuits, but no proper food for the sick. "In this state," we read, "they lay from five to twenty days, according to weather." Some of the men literally died of cold or want of food. And "in several of these sick transports the poor fellows nearly perished for want of water; and on board one ship the sufferings of the men from this cause were appalling, although there was water on board in sufficient quantities to meet their wants, but it could not be got at from the confusion which

prevailed in the mode in which the cargo was packed away.

At Scutari a new series of suffering commenced; and in the Rev. Sydney Osborne's volume entitled, "Scutari and its Hospitals," we are told the miseries of the poor fellows increased at every step. When they were free of the pier they "were carried, exposed to cold or drenching rain, to the nearest hospital, to be told perhaps that there was no room, then carried probably to the General Hospital, and finally deposited in the corridors of the Barrack Hospital. Many sank into untimely death in these dark corridors. Within these hospitals confusion and misery prevailed. Humane hearts ache even now to peruse the ghastly details." More than three thousand men were lying on the bare ground in these hospitals, while bedsteads and bed-fittings were lying at Varna neglected "There were no vessels for water, no utensils of any kind, no soap, towels or cloths, no hospital clothes; the men lay in their uniforms stiff with gore, . . . their persons covered with vermin. . . . The medical men toiled with an unwearied assiduity—never did men deserve better of their country—but the numbers were inadequate to the work, and they had no means of procuring what was necessary." To add to the appalling details, Mr. Osborne and other faithful eye-witnesses record the awful fact, that "the wounded soldiers of England in many cases died of starvation in the hospitals provided for them by their country."

Such was the state of things at the close of 1854, and to some extent during the remainder of the winter. But help was at hand. The head of the War Department was Mr. Sidney Herbert, afterwards Lord Herbert of Lea. He was an enlightened and far-sighted man; he knew of Miss Nightingale's interest in nursing, and he wrote to her. Some ladies had already volunteered their services, and a staff of female nurses was being formed, and he

asked her to undertake the superintendence of the lady nurses and to organise the operations. By a strange coincidence, the very day Mr. Sidney Herbert wrote his memorable letter, Florence Nightingale had actually written to him offering her services to the sick and wounded in the Hospital at Scutari. The letters had crossed. Great must have been her surprise when she read his, asking her to take command of the little nursing band, and leave for the East in eight days. Short was the notice, nevertheless Miss Nightingale had everything ready; and on October 21st, 1854, and accompanied by her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bracebridge, of Atherstane Hall, Yorkshire, and a band of thirty-eight nurses, she left England on her great mission.

The ladies who were chosen out of the vast number of volunteers comprised six from St. John's House, Westminster, eight from Miss Sellon's House of Sisters in Devonshire, ten Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, and fourteen hospital nurses. When this "angel band," as Kinglake calls them, arrived at Boulogne, the fisherwomen carried their luggage as a labour of love. They reached Scutari on November 5th, in time to receive the wounded from the Battle of Inkermann. On their arrival they set at once to the performance of their arduous duties. Indescribably horrible was the state of the hospital when Miss Nightingale made her first inspection. Sanitary arrangements were *nil.* The beds were reeking with infection. Outside the hospital was a hotbed of pestilence. Hercules' labour in clearing the Augean stables could only be compared to the awful task that lay before those devoted women. A tower at one of the corners of the Barrack Hospital gave them accommodation.

Mr. Osborne gives us a description of the part allotted to the nurses:—

"Entering the door leading into the Sisters' Tower," he

writes, "you at once found yourself a spectator of a busy and interesting scene. There is a large room with two or three doors opening from it on one side; on the other, one door opening into an apartment in which many of the nurses and sisters slept, and had, I believe, their meals. In the centre was a large kitchen-table; bustling about this might be seen the high-priestess of the room, Mrs. C——. Often as I have had occasion to pass through this room I do not recollect ever finding her absent from it or unoccupied. At this table she received the various matters from the kitchen and stores of the sisterhood, which attendant sisters or nurses were ever ready to take to the sick in any and every part of these gigantic hospitals. It was a curious scene, and a close study of it afforded a practical lesson in the working of true common-sense benevolence. . . . The floor on one side of the room was loaded with packages of all kinds—stores of things for the internal and external consumption of the patients; bales of shirts, socks, slippers, dressing-gowns, flannel, heaps of every sort of article likely to be of use in affording comfort and securing cleanliness. It gave me some idea of what such a room would be in a good hospital, if on some sudden alarm it had been made a refuge for articles snatched from its every store. In reality it was one feature of a bold attempt upon the part of extraneous benevolence to supply the deficiencies of the various departments, which, as a matter of course, should have supplied all these things. In an adjoining room were held those councils over which Miss Nightingale so ably presided, at which were discussed the measures necessary to meet the daily varying exigencies of the hospital. From hence were given the orders which regulated the female staff working under this most gifted head This, too, was the office from which were sent those many letters to the Government, to friends and supporters at home, telling such awful tales of the sufferings of the sick

and wounded, their utter want of so many necessaries. There might be seen the *Times* almoner, taking down in his note-book from day to day the list of things he was pressed to obtain, which might all, with a little activity, have been provided as easily by the authorities of the hospital."

We have quoted this exhaustive and interesting description in full, as it gives a wonderful insight into the working of that masterly mind, and the untiring energy that planned and organised everything. From the first the indomitable will of "the Lady-in-chief," as she was called, made itself felt in every department, which gradually broke down all obstacles raised by the jealousy or bad tempers of the officials. As Nolan tells us, "Doctors, purveyors, store-keepers, orderlies, inspectors, dispensers, and interpreters were in the uttermost confusion amongst themselves, and they generally regarded these gentle missionaries as a new element of anarchy."

As Kinglake says most beautifully: "It was not only under her reign, but by force of her actual sway, that order sprang out of chaos; that the hell she had found when she came knew at last the blessing of cleanliness; that the administration of our Levantine hospitals began to seem almost perfect. . . . She brought to her self-imposed task that forethought, that agile brain-power, that organising and governing faculty of which our country had need."

At the end of six months the hospital arrangements had been brought into order. Kitchens and laundries had been established. "All England," as Mrs. Tooley tells us in her article, "from the Queen to the humblest peasant, were making warm garments and preparing lint and bandages for the soldiers. The Patriotic Fund for the relief of the widows and orphans rose by leaps and bounds, until within a year it amounted to one million pounds."

The author of "Two Months in the Camp before Sebastopol" gives a brief description of the Lady-in-chief: "In

the outer room," he writes, "we caught a momentary glimpse of the justly celebrated Miss Nightingale, the fair heroine of Scutari; an amiable and highly intelligent-looking lady of some thirty summers, delicate in form and prepossessing in her appearance. Her energies were concentrated for the instant in the careful preparation of a dish of delectable food for an enfeebled patient—one of her homely ministrations to the wan victims of relentless war, for whose relief she so readily and nobly sacrificed the comforts of her quiet happy English home."

There are some interesting passages in Nolan's "History" which give us an idea of the work of this wonderful woman, collected from the letters of Mr. Osborne, Mr. Bracebridge, Mr. Macdonald, and her faithful and zealous young helper, "Mr. Stafford, who sat by the bedside of the patients, reading for them the letters of their friends, and acting as letter-writer-general on their behalf." " She, Miss Nightingale, had to tend, or see tended, thousands of sick men." And again: "I was with her when various surgical operations were performed, and she was more than equal to the trial. She has an utter disregard to contagion. I have known her spend hours over men dying of cholera or fever."

When Mr. Macdonald was about to return to England he wrote concerning this queen of nurses: "Wherever there is disease in its most dangerous form, and the hand of the spoiler distressingly nigh, there is this incomparable woman sure to be seen. Her benignant presence is an influence for good comfort even amid the struggles of expiring nature. She is a 'ministering angel' without any exaggeration in these hospitals; and as her slender form glides quietly along each corridor every poor fellow's face softens with gratitude at the sight of her. When all the medical officers have retired for the night, and silence and darkness have settled down on those miles of prostrate sick, she may be observed