

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE\*

### AS SEEN IN HER PORTRAITS

BY MAUDE E. SEYMOUR ABBOTT, B.A., M.D.  
*McGill University, Montreal.*

#### INTRODUCTORY.

It is nearly three quarters of a century since the name of *Florence Nightingale* first thrilled through Europe, plunged in the horrors of the terrible Crimean War. The details of her great and beneficent achievement have been forgotten by many, and in their full extent, indeed, have only been known by very few. Yet her name remains as a household word among us, breathing always the charm diffused by a life consecrated to high ideals, and symbolizing to us the power to move mountains of the passionate womanly sympathy, discerning judgment, and magnificent organizing genius, which together made her at once the Crimean heroine and the great reformer of military hygiene of the Victorian Age. Today we are again plunged into a war which has become even more terrible than any in the past, in consequence of the refinements of so-called civilization as applied to methods of modern warfare. But we have to thank the stream of military reform that set in after the Crimean crisis, so largely initiated and directed by the influence of Miss Nightingale, that the care of the soldiers—wounded, sick, or well—has been placed at the present day on a very high plane of efficiency.

In view of the immensity of detail in such a life as that of Florence Nightingale, a complete account is impossible here. The most that can be attempted is a brief outline of those events

\* Adapted from an Address on "The Work of Florence Nightingale and Medical Units in Active Service Today," delivered before the Harvard Historical Club, December 7, 1915.