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Dec 5064

TRANSCRIPT

Autograph letter on black-edged paper, 8" x 5" Miss Florence NIGHTINGALE to Miss Adela BROOKE at Combe; October 1890

"Private

ondon o

Oct 2 / 90

[in another hand: "£2 . 2/-"]

Dear Madam

I am an overworked old woman, & a permanent Invalid. I must stick to the two objects of my life. And it is absolutely impossible to me to undertake another line of correspond^g or to read, (much more to answer or to return enclosures from) stranger's letters.

But, fortunately for me, I caught sight of your list of books. I am always looking out for books for the men; & especially the boy-Patients in the large Hospital where is our training school for Nurses, to keep the boys and young men from the "penny dreadfuls" which they get in & gloat over.

& also for two Coffee & Reading Rooms which we founded on what was my father's estate: & which are out of my hands for I have no time.

Pardon me if I try to gide [sic] your noble plan. What is my experience & that of others. Put your "management" into the hands of a "Committee of Working Men", by all means. But let the lady's influence always be "personal". Let her go, if possible, to the rooms 2 or 3 times a week - talk to the men, especially the young men individually. Give in charge to each of them to bring in a 'mate'. Give singing-classes & other classes to those who like it, including Bible-classes - teach them games.

Otherwise the men will be too apt to consider only themselves & making themselves 'Comfortable' - to keep out the 'black sheep' instead of bringing them in.

The books they will order will become novels of not the highest f'order' deleted] class. Some will try to exclude 'noisy' fellows. Others will themselves adjourn from the Coffee Room to the Public House.

I know the difficulty of many ladies who would gladly do their sort of work, i.e. husbands & fathers naturally do not like their being away from the late dinner.

Pray pardon this note, which is Private.

As I have made use of your List, I am bound to send you my mite, tho' unable to do what I should wish.

Hopefully & faithfully yours

Florence Nightingale

Miss Adela Brooke"

01 November 2002

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