

A call to service

Pages 6 – 11 excerpt of the letter from Florence Nightingale to Marianne Nicholson announcing her vision and call to work.

P. 6 And all the colours seamed to form themselves again into one white ray and their voices to became one like the voices of the wind and to say.

“Life is a fight, a hard wrestling, a struggle with the principle of evil, hand to hand.”

“Foot to foot not only in thyself, not only in the world-but in thyself as one of the world.”

The kingdom of of God is coming, but like other kingdoms it must be won by the sword.

“Christ our Leonidas the world our Thermopylae, we the brave swords which keep the gap between

P. 7 Heaven and Hell and the chariots and horsemen of God are with us.”

We go forth arranged in the panoply of perfect love - it is not our salvation, it is the Kingdom of God we fight for and we must fight till our last moment, perhaps through many stages of existence till the Christ and the bride say it is won.

The night is given thee to take breath, to pray and drink deep at the fountain of power - the day to take the strength which hath been given thee, to go forth to work with it un-till the evening. At the eve thou shall pray. In the

P 8. morning thou shalt go forth to war...Often will thou be worsted often beaten down upon thy knees but the good soldier, tho sore wounded and half dead, tho the hordes against him be many and strong, yet turneth him not to fly for he is aware of the horsemen of the Lord which fight at his right hand.

The Kingdom of God is coming, he cries, my life for thy country and thy God. Fight on brave heart, courageously the salvation of thy country hangeth on

thy sword. Yield not an inch, let fall not thy arm, till the kingdom is fought for, the kingdom is won.

So fights he and so bleeds he till he sinks asleep on the turf of the valley.

P. 9 But not as that dreamer, dreamed, was it done unto thee!

So thought the earthly seer, but God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. For behold while she yet looked, a great storm arose and burst the rainbow asunder But half its hues remained - the blue, the green, the golden.

The rest were overshadowed, for the winds blew and the floods defended and in the whirlwind came the chariots and horses of water and she heard a voice in

P. 10 the storm saying my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and horses thereof.

The spirit had ascended up into heaven - God had fetched him.

The rainbow and the storm had vanished - and there was a dead calm. The sun was setting and I kneeled before it and said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Cause his mantle to be upon me. Give me tomorrow my work to do - no not my work, but thine."

P. 11 And I did in the morning as I was commanded.