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Letter received by Dr Balfour from  
Florence Nightingale, dated 15 May 1881

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~~Private~~

Mrs Dinicke  
R. Hosp. Incurables

May 13/81

10, SOUTH STREET,  
PARK LANE. W.

My dear Dr. Balfour

Now about Mrs Dinicke —

— She has had a very difficult position in Dublin where she has now been for 2½ years.

— Difficult because of the elements which might be jarring that she has to work under & with — viz. two Boards and a Ladies' Committee, a Medical Staff, House Surgeon & Surgeon, Physician & Hospital Proprietors & servants. She is the head of the Training School for Nurses, attached to St. Patrick's Hospital but independent of it, running it & two other small Hospitals.

W. E. H. H. H. H.

In answer to your question, I believe I may say that she has "Administrative ability" & "power of organization". She has very remarkable powers of observation & of expression which are most useful in her position.

It will be for the authorities of the Training School, Sir Patrick Dun's Hosp<sup>l</sup> where she is in charge of the Nursing, & speak to her qualifications. I believe they will be very sorry to part with her.

We understand that she is very successful in charge of the female servants (Girls) also.

She has a Matron at the  
"Home," Sir P. Dun's Hosp<sup>l</sup>  
has something more than 100  
beds.

To return to your question, I  
think she has "firmness" <sup>& gentleness</sup> to  
"carry out her plans & the  
Committee's orders." & in  
"dealing with the subordinated  
staff." And she is a very  
kind & patient. I think she has  
both a "firm" & a "light hand" in <sup>all</sup> the above matters.  
I ask myself again your query:  
"would she be likely to work  
amicably with the Medical  
Officers or would she try to  
come C. O. over every body &  
every thing"? I don't think  
it would have been possible  
for her to work these <sup>somewhat</sup> conflicting  
elements of the Dublin concern,  
& to make them so well, as we

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believe, — if she had had any such nonsense in her head.

Confidentially to you I will say, she has a very good opinion of herself. But this is, I do believe, one secret of her success. She takes a pride in making things go amicably. If they did not, it would be a star upon herself in her own estimation. Self-satisfaction, you know, prevents some women from being imperious or irritable. It is not at all obnoxious or prominent in her. And I don't know that your Committee would remark it. I mention it to you only, because you have asked me pointed questions. And I am writing private experience to you I enable you to judge. 4

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10, SOUTH STREET,  
PARK LANE. W.

Success to all you do.

Let me be always  
for now & for auld lang syne  
Yours most sincerely

Florence Nightingale

Do you sometimes see Lady  
Sulloch now? Please  
send her my love when  
you write.

Dr. Graham Balfour