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FACTA NON VERBA

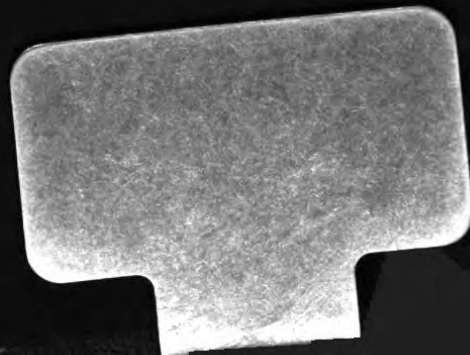
A COMPARISON  
BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT  
CHARITY IN ENGLAND







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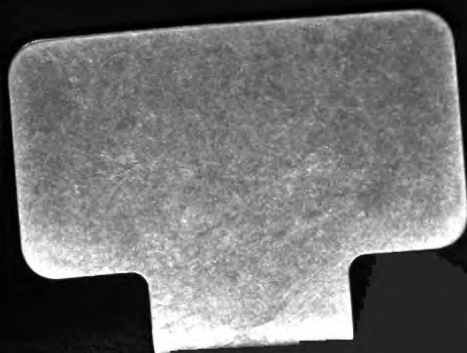
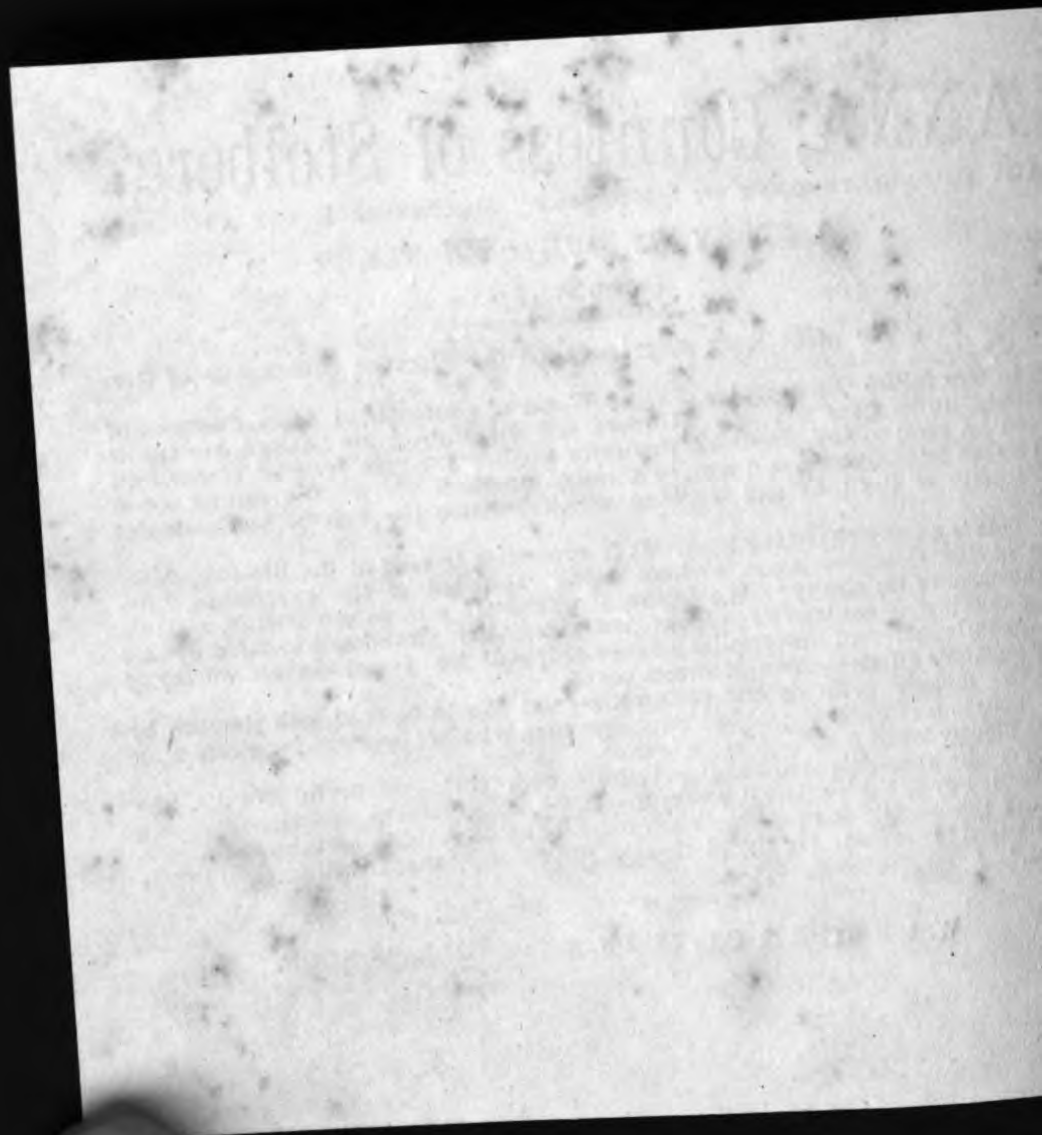
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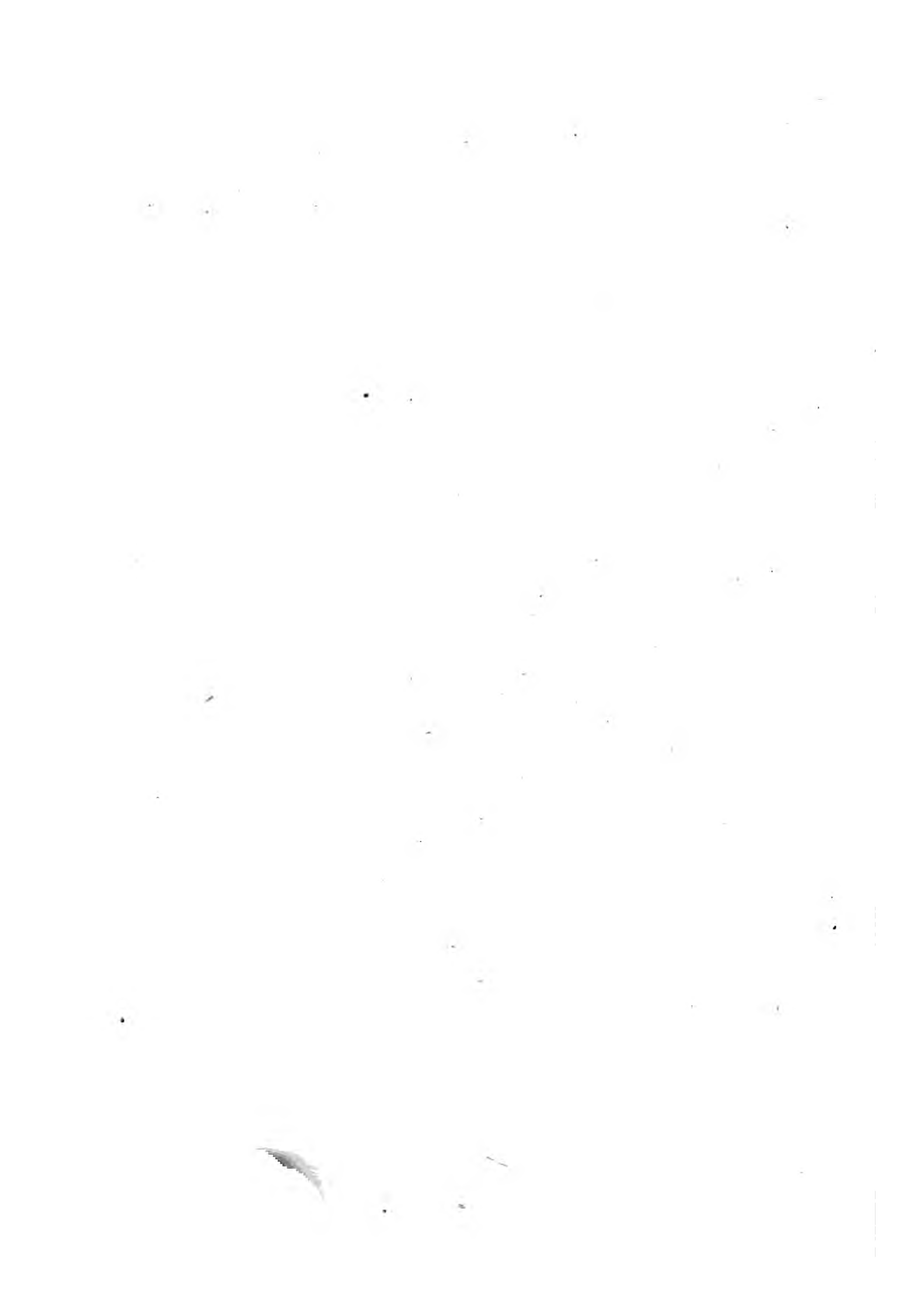


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FACTA NON VERBA



“This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.”—ACTS ix. 36.

# FACTA NON VERBA

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE GOOD  
WORKS PERFORMED BY THE LADIES IN ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CONVENTS IN ENGLAND, AND THE  
UNFETTERED EFFORTS OF THEIR PROTESTANT SISTERS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS"



W. ISBISTER & CO.  
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1874

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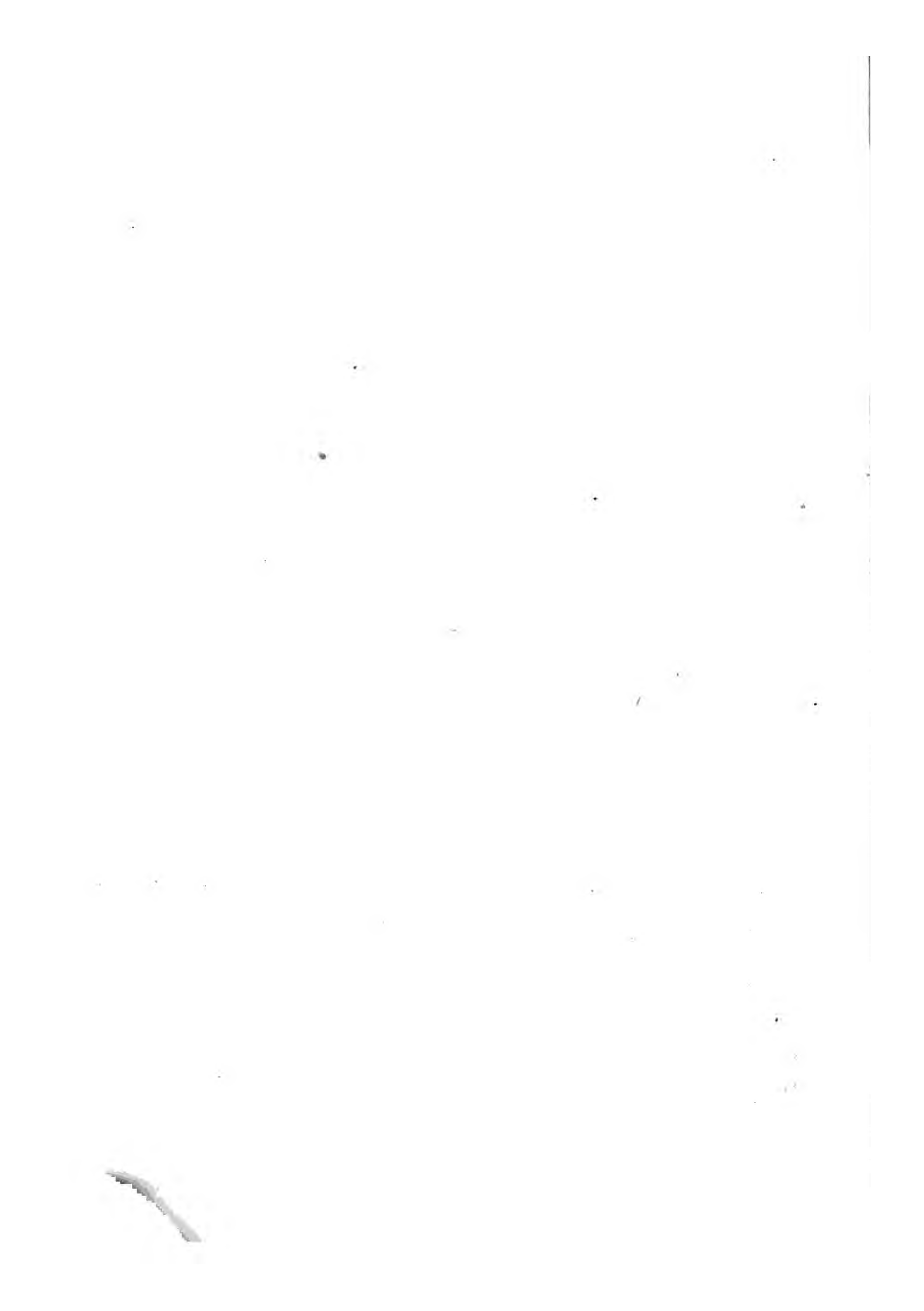
LONDON:  
PRINTED BY VIRTUE AND CO.,  
CITY ROAD.



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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

**H**OWEVER carefully the feeling may be concealed, there can be little doubt that the rapid advance Romanism has lately made in this country is a source of bitter regret to every true Protestant; and that regret is still further increased by the apparent indifference shown to the fact by our bishops and higher clergy. Nor can there be the slightest excuse for this apathy on their part. Ignorance certainly cannot be pleaded by them as an excuse for this want of energy in opposing the onward march of the Church of Rome. Unfortunately the fact is too apparent all over the country; more, it is true, in some parts than in others, but still sufficiently so in all as to thrust the truth on the minds of even the dullest. Again, in London especially, the great resort of our



bishops and legislators during at least half the year, is this sad fact noticeable, and that, too, in the very localities in which they reside. In the western and richer districts (for the higher Romish priesthood especially affect those localities where wealth is the more abundant, their numbers diminishing in proportion with the poverty of the district), the Church of Rome has certainly made its greatest progress.

It would occupy too much of my limited space to go at any length into the proofs of this unhappy increase of Romanism in the metropolis. A short description of its progress in one wealthy parish (Kensington) must suffice.

Some twenty years since the whole of this large and wealthy district contained but one Roman Catholic place of worship, situated in a locality at the back of High Street. It was small, capable of holding not more than two hundred persons, its external appearance unpretending in the extreme, nor was the interior much superior. The congregation consisted principally of a few Roman Catholic families resident in the parish, and a colony of Irish labourers congregated together in an unsavoury locality known as Jennings's Buildings. The chapel has remained in the state it now is almost since its erection, possibly some seventy

years since. And then arose in the metropolis the present Romish movement. Its partisans in Kensington first broke ground in the south ward. Some wealthy members of their communion purchased a schoolhouse, with a large garden attached to it, between the erection known as the Brompton Boilers and the church. The school-buildings were destroyed, and a monastery of the Oratorians, and chapel attached to it, were commenced, both on a very moderate scale. It was singular to notice how gradually Romanism took root in the locality. Nothing at first could be less obtrusive than the behaviour of the reverend fathers, nor did the chapel itself, architecturally speaking, offer any attractions. The service, however, soon became noted as being well performed, and the dresses of the priests on high occasions celebrated for their magnificence. Still the congregation was very sparse. Occasionally maid-servants, actuated by curiosity, might be seen entering the chapel, and, after a few minutes' stay, leaving it again. These, in their turn, sent others; and then, without any apparent cause or influence being brought to bear upon them, the younger members of different families (especially the females) joined the Roman Catholic Church. Great was the

grief this fact occasioned in many families, the parents being utterly unable to discover the influence that had caused their children to become apostates. Others from parishes in the neighbourhood soon joined the congregation, and in a short time the chapel, which had been at first almost without worshippers, became too limited for the numbers who now attended. Great alterations were effected, and both the chapel and monastery were considerably enlarged. The congregation again increased, the chapel was further enlarged, and an enthusiastic convert, a lady of quality, presented the fathers with a magnificent organ; and this building, which formerly had frequently at their services more priests officiating at the altar than worshippers in the body of the church, has now an average congregation of some two thousand persons; and there is a rumour afloat that, extensive as the building is, it is not sufficiently so for its requirements, and must be again enlarged, or possibly rebuilt. There are also in the south ward two convents and two schools.

In the town ward a magnificent pro-cathedral has been erected, also fully attended, a Carmelite monastery with large church attached, two convents and two schools, and the original chapel remains filled as before. In the north ward are

two magnificent churches, two convents, and two schools. In fact, it is stated, and I believe on good authority, that at the present moment there are nearly as many children of Protestant parents in the Roman Catholic schools as in those of the Church of England. Other districts in London might be mentioned where the increase of Romanism, in proportion with the number of the population residing in them, has been scarcely less apparent than in Kensington, but what I have already stated may be taken by the reader as sufficient proof of the lamentable progress of Popery among us, without any strenuous effort on the part of our clergy or authorities to stem it.

This is all very sad, but, alas! more remains to be told. Strongly as we may object to the open undisguised advance of Romanism under its proper name, there is too much reason to believe that other elements are at work still more dangerous and alarming. Setting aside the culpable indifference of a large proportion of our Protestant clergy, especially those of the Church of England (for to do the Dissenters justice, they are, as a rule, far more energetic for the protection of Protestantism than the clergy of our own church), there are many of its members who appear with scarcely the slightest

film of disguise on them, to do all in their power to smooth the path of their congregations to the Church of Rome, while there is too much reason to believe that the sole cause for their flimsy respect for Protestantism is their dread of losing the stipend which they are paid for its protection, and this too often without any remonstrance from their bishops.. The ceremonies of the Church of Rome are openly imitated without the slightest shadow of disguise; the confessional, with all its objectionable inquisitorial powers, is not only advocated, but "Guides to the Confessional" are published for the use of the clergy, and too frequently of their penitents, scarcely less objectionable than the mediæval works on the subject issued for the use of the Romish priests. Establishments, scarcely different from the Roman Catholic convents and nunneries, are built and endowed; mediæval ecclesiastical millinery is adopted in the costume of their inmates, and in every respect the Romish practice is carried out without any opposition or interference either on the part of the superior clergy or the Government.

Among the most dangerous innovations, from a Protestant point of view, is their practice of good works. It carries away our Englishwomen on the point in which, from their humanitarian



principles, they are the most likely to be affected. They are assured that by enrolling themselves in one of these Anglican sisterhoods they will be able to accomplish a far greater amount of good than by mixing openly and without restraint in the world. In support of this theory, our High-church clergy are apt to point to the vast amount of good performed by the Catholic sisterhoods, and the universal respect they are held in by the world. That a vast amount of good is performed by the Sisters of Charity and those of the *Bon Secours* and Mercy cannot for a moment be doubted, nor can too high praise be given them for the feeling actuating them; but while admitting the excellence of these ladies, and their devotion to the cause they have adopted, I deny that the good they accomplish is more effectual than that performed by ladies of the Protestant religion. On the contrary, proportionate numbers of the sisterhoods and nuns in convents being taken into consideration, the working of Protestant ladies in a good cause is fully as efficient as that of their Roman Catholic or Anglican sisters, and the amount of good effected even greater.

The Roman Catholic conventual system is in reality both cumbrous and expensive, and one-half the good which might be effected by its

inmates is lost by their seclusion and organization. To this also should be added the enormous expense occasioned by their conventual buildings, and the fitting-up of their churches, which alone, if distributed among the poor, would work an immense amount of benefit. It is frequently stated, with regard to the Sisters of Charity, that the dress they wear is a safeguard to them in whatever locality they may be visiting. But it may be asked whether they would not be equally safe without their peculiar costume? I maintain they can be, as has been proved by the Protestant ladies who, when on some good mission, visit without any particular costume, in the most degraded localities in London, and who have never met with either opposition or rudeness from any one, not even from the scum of London roughs—the worst of our population—who frequent the neighbourhoods. Of the truth of this statement I could produce many proofs; one or two, however, must suffice.

What is known as the Kent Street district, in the Borough, is, on the authority of the police, one of the most demoralised in the metropolis. It consists of congeries of small narrow streets of two and four-roomed houses, the most respectable of their inhabitants being costermongers and their families, and the lower

class of street hawkers. The remaining portion is made up of thieves of every description, women of bad repute, together with a strong sprinkling of the London rough. So lawless is the district, that policemen rarely enter it alone, but generally two in company. Yet, bad as the locality is, some ladies in the neighbourhood have formed themselves into a visiting society, under the leadership of the wife of an eminent medical practitioner, who assured me that never on a single occasion had she or her friends, when visiting the sick, or on other missions of mercy, met with the slightest insult or annoyance. Although neither this lady nor her friends adopted any peculiar dress, the demoralised inhabitants of the neighbourhood seemed to know instinctively the errand they were on, and always treated them with respect.

My other example is equally striking. In the year 1861, an association known as the Society for the Relief of Distress was organized in the west end of the metropolis. Its associates were principally members of wealthy families and the aristocracy, whose work was simply to relieve the necessitous, without any regard to the religious creed of the individual. Ladies, as well as gentlemen, were visiting members of the society. Two young married ladies, residing in Bel-



gravia, in conversation with one of the honorary secretaries, informed him that they visited, twice a week, a locality in the east end of the metropolis where the inhabitants were miserably poor. "Both men and women appear very degraded," was the remark of one of these ladies, "and yet we have never received from one of them the slightest insult or annoyance." On making further inquiries, the honorary secretary discovered that the localities visited by these ladies were no others than Tiger Bay and Bluegate Fields, if possible inhabited by a population still more degraded than that of the Kent Street district. They were of course advised by the secretary to discontinue their visits; but the anecdote is sufficient to prove that neither men nor women, even in their worst condition, are as infamous as they are painted by the Roman Catholic priesthood, and that any woman, on a mission of good, may be as safe from annoyance in the dress of ordinary life, as in that of the most eccentric ecclesiastical costume that could be invented.

It may be asked, however, how it is that the Catholic sisterhoods have gained so much more repute for efficiency in the performance of good works than their Protestant sisters? The question is very easily answered. The peculiarity

of their dress attracts the eye of the public, whereas the Protestant lady in her ordinary attire passes unobserved. But if the matter were gone into more deeply, it is more than probable that the number of Protestants engaged in works of the kind is far greater than is imagined, though still considerably less than those employed in Roman Catholic institutions, while the amount of good which results is at least equal. I am aware an objection may be raised to my statement—that a Protestant woman will frequently perform in her own person as much good as a whole convent of nuns. I may be told that the Protestants have the power of co-operating with others, and that the amount of good done should be set down as the work of the whole. At first sight this argument may appear valid; but a little reflection will show that it is utterly erroneous. That the ladies whose names I shall quote have received powerful co-operation from others, I unhesitatingly admit; nay more, that they would never have succeeded to the extent they have done, had it not been for the assistance they received from both male and female helpers. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that there is scarcely a convent in England—perhaps not one—that has not attached to it, or at any rate

working in its cause, a powerful band of lay helpers, who frequently do far more good than the inmates of the convent itself.

Another reason may also be given for the ignorance of the general public on the subject; and that is, our unfortunate habit of hero-worship. We are apt not only to place a certain individual on a pedestal, and worship him to the neglect of all others, but frequently we appear almost to suppress the deeds of those worthy of notice, whose credit might in any way affect the lustre of the idol for the moment.

Nor is this practice of hero-worship confined solely to the male sex. Women frequently suffer from its injustice as much as men, and to prove this statement is one object of the present little work. From mismanagement and bad organization, the sufferings of our troops in the Crimea were of the most dreadful description. By way of alleviating this disgraceful state of things, it was determined to send out a number of trained nurses to assist in the hospitals. These nurses, as is well known, were under the direction of the justly-celebrated Miss Florence Nightingale. The behaviour of that amiable lady needs no praise from my pen to do it justice. Great as were the obstacles in her way, by dint of unflinching energy, aided by the de-

sire to assist the unfortunate men—victims either to the foe or to Government mismanagement—she succeeded in reducing to something like order the immense mass of confusion which awaited her arrival. Grateful indeed was the country for her exertions, and high the praises she received. Yet, when the question is more minutely examined, it may appear that, richly as Miss Nightingale deserved the praises and gratitude of the nation, in the practice of our hero-worship we seem to have ignored a debt of gratitude scarcely less heavy due to others. In this case I allude to the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, both French and English, whose admirable conduct it would be difficult to laud too highly, yet whose names were scarcely ever heard. It may be said that the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity objected to any individual praise being bestowed on them. They were working to a good end, for the purpose of relieving the miseries of their fellow-creatures, and not in any manner for their own honour. But even taken as a whole, the amount of praise they received was certainly unequal to that they merited, and hardly a voice beyond those who profited by their kindness, skill and attention (and these were loud enough) was heard in their praise, although



they were as worthy of it as their Protestant sisters.\*

Nor have we in any manner whatever, even in the present day, or with respect to ladies, thrown off this objectionable system of hero-worship. While admitting, and with justice, the admirable efforts made by Miss Nightingale since the Crimean war for training nurses, and the ameliorations and improvements in hospital arrangements, we appear entirely to forget that there may be others whose reputation in the same line of good works is scarcely less worthy

\* A very interesting inquiry might be made as to the behaviour of the Sisters of Charity of the Greek Church, employed in the Russian service. From reports which I have heard from Russian officers engaged in the defence of Sebastopol, nothing could be more heroic than the behaviour of these women. And it must be remembered that noble as was the conduct of Miss Nightingale and her band of Protestant nurses, as well as the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, both French and English, neither were exposed to the terrible dangers which awaited the Greek Sisters of Charity; although I am fully convinced that, had they been subjected to the same ordeal, they would have come out of it as heroically as the others. Yet the privations and dangers they endured, severe as they might have been, were comparatively small when placed by the side of those of the Greek Sisters. It was no uncommon thing during the *feu d'enfer* mentioned by the French commander-in-chief in his despatches, for shell after shell to burst on the walls of the temporary hospital fitted up for the Russian wounded, or crash through the roof, causing fearful havoc to the inmates. Yet, not a single instance can be quoted in which any of those ladies can be accused of flinching from the danger she was in, or in the most remote manner neglecting the painful, yet self-imposed duties she was called upon to perform.

of respect. True, it may be said that the gigantic feats performed by Miss Nightingale have never been equalled; but it must at the same time be borne in mind that Miss Nightingale started on her duties with the powerful assistance of Mr. Sidney Herbert, the Minister of War, as well as the imperative, though indirect, orders of the whole nation that she should be supported and encouraged in her good work. Others, whose names are less known, and whose operations, though grand and important, are less so than the works of Miss Nightingale, instead of being taken by the hand by powerful protectors at the commencement, have worked on in silence and obscurity, gaining but slowly even the most trifling assistance. Then, as they became better known, others lent them their co-operation, till at length several enterprises, which at the commencement seemed small and unpromising, gradually became works of immense importance, doing a vast amount of good, and at last settling down into valuable institutions. Yet the names of the originators who performed these Herculean tasks are but little known beyond the private circle of their friends. Of these I shall quote two in the course of this work—Miss Mary Merryweather, the institutress of the celebrated nursing institu-

tion attached to the Royal Hospital at Liverpool, which has done such immense service in reforming the practice of hospital nursing; the other Miss Johanna Chandler, who, from a very small beginning, and aided by scarcely half-a-dozen friends, has succeeded, by dint of incessant labour, in establishing the admirable Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis, in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, perhaps the best institution of the kind in Europe.

Again, on the question of female education among the poorer classes, we find ladies on School Boards exerting themselves, doubtless with beneficial effect, to bring about something like civilisation, and advance education, among the wretched arab children of the metropolis. And yet, hitherto they have met with but scant success, judging from the fearful precocity and demoralisation of both boys and girls who thrust themselves so painfully on our notice in different parts of the metropolis. Not only in the poorer parts of Clerkenwell, Old Street Road, Kent Street in the Borough, is this sad fact to be detected; perhaps it is to be found still more glaringly in the dark arches of the Adelphi, or neighbourhood of the Charing Cross Metropolitan Railway Station, where language of the most fearful and revolting

description may often be heard from the lips of female children of nine and ten years of age, who, had they been properly instructed and cared for, would have been as pure and unsullied as the children of the respectable classes of society. Yet, while these ladies on the Metropolitan School Board are quoted week after week, and are justly honoured for the exertions they are making, though perchance somewhat slowly, for the reformation of these poor children, other ladies may be mentioned whose names are in comparison seldom heard of, but whose exertions are not less arduous, and certainly more successful. Great as the merit of the School Board may be in attempting the reclamation of these children, and numerous as have certainly been their discussions and meetings on the subject, it is doubtful whether the whole beneficial results of their labours are not surpassed by those of two ladies, Miss Maria S. Rye, and Miss Annie Macpherson, a description of whose exertions I shall give at some length in the two following chapters. Yet, while the Metropolitan School Board was acting under the direct authority, and with all the power of the Government, Miss Rye and Miss Macpherson were not only destitute of all assistance of the kind, but



in carrying out their projects had to work against prejudices and obstacles placed in their way, which would have deterred any but Protestant Englishwomen who had set themselves a moral task, and were determined to carry it out against all difficulties. It has been stated, and possibly with reason, that since the first idea of the formation of the School Board was entertained by Government, Miss Rye alone has saved from demoralisation and want more female children than the whole Metropolitan School Board put together. How far this may really be a fact I will not pretend to say. But this, however, is certain, that from our alleys and gutters, and the female orphans in parish schools, she has taken over to Canada no fewer than one thousand two hundred children, all of whom she has placed in respectable families, who have not only engaged to supply them with food, raiment, and payment, but also to superintend their spiritual instruction, training them in the way they should go, instead of allowing them to become the wretched, demoralised creatures who haunt our lower streets and alleys, living a life of vice unless, when children, death kindly interferes to relieve them from their degradation.

It may be said that there are many others who would have furnished me with good types

of the philanthropic Englishwoman, quite equal in the magnitude of their labours to those I shall mention. This I am perfectly ready to allow, and admit that such names as Lady Augusta Stanley, Lady Burdett Coutts, Mrs. Tait, and the Marchioness of Ailesbury, are as excellent types as any I have quoted. But these names would hardly serve my purpose; for, without in the slightest manner disallowing the admirable benefits derived from the exertions of these ladies, they are all in that position in society, which gives them a certain power to do good, and to claim the co-operation of influential friends. As I stated before, those whom I wish to take as my types are those who have had to fight their way up against difficulties, frequently themselves in restricted circumstances, and not those whose position and wealth render philanthropic efforts less onerous.

But another point I wish also to bring under the notice of the reader—the total absence of any extraordinary ability or power in my heroines beyond unbounded humanity, strong common sense applied with feminine delicacy, and a courage equal to any danger or difficulty in which they may be placed. I do not claim for any one of these ladies the power generally attributed by us to our heroes and heroines—

that of carrying through the operation under notice by their own unaided exertions or ability. Frequently our popular heroes or heroines are described as working with a power almost miraculous. By their presence alone outer darkness is changed into light, and order reigns where disorder had been rampant, and that solely by the magic of their bidding. One fact, on the contrary, I wish to point out, and that is, the willing co-operation given by men to ladies who are working assiduously in any good cause, when once they have proved by their good organization that they are worthy of support. And I maintain that this faculty of making friends is one of the most beautiful attributes of the ladies whose lives I have sketched. An individual may be actuated by excellent motives and possess excellent plans of operation, and yet fail to obtain co-operation by the absence of some amiable feature either in his character or mode of expression. I hold that the very power an amiable and benevolent woman possesses in enlisting the sympathies of shrewd and even suspicious men of the world is little less than a proof that the blessing of Heaven has fallen upon her work. And certainly, if the tree may be judged by its fruits, it would be difficult to deny that the

aggregate labours performed by the few ladies whose lives and exertions I shall briefly bring under the notice of the reader, must have had on them the benediction of Heaven to have obtained such wonderful results.

## CHAPTER II.

MARIA S. RYE.

WITHOUT the slightest wish to interfere in the vexed questions respecting the political rights of women, and the advantages or disadvantages to be derived from their taking an active part in the administration of public affairs, I maintain that the value of their personal services in philanthropic movements is greatly underrated by the community at large. In works of this description women certainly show as much ability as men, and in carrying out any scheme which they have, after mature deliberation, determined on, they generally show a far greater amount of perseverance, courage, and energy. And of the many examples which may be found, there is not one which bears out more fully this fact than the labours of the amiable lady whose name heads this chapter.

Although, at present, the name of Miss Rye

is principally connected with the movement for the emigration of what are graphically called our "gutter children," several years before she took up that movement her time and energies were usefully employed in the furtherance of good works, especially those bearing on the welfare of her own sex. When only sixteen years of age she was a most useful teacher in the Sunday-schools and other parochial institutions attached to Christ Church, Chelsea. She afterwards succeeded Miss Mary Howitt as secretary to the association for obtaining the Act of Parliament known as Sir Erskine Perry's Married Woman's Property Bill. She then edited for some years the *Englishwoman's Journal*. She also became an active member in the Woman's Employment Society, and other female enterprises, but, disapproving of the woman's political rights movement which then began to be entertained by many of the members, she separated from the Society, and determined to organize, single-handed, a new source of employment for women—law-copying; and for that purpose, after having made herself mistress of the business, she secured an office in Portugal Street, Chancery Lane.

Although considerable success attended the movement—many of the most celebrated soli-



citors' firms having consented to patronise it—the number of applicants for employment far exceeded the amount of work which the office was capable of affording. In some manner to alleviate the disappointments thus caused, especially among the young lady applicants of good education, Miss Rye, in conjunction with her friend Miss Jane Lewin, determined to find for them some other employment congenial to their habits and education. After a little consideration, having raised the sum of £750, they applied it to assist governesses to emigrate to Australia; first securing in the principal colonial cities the services of ladies willing to take them under their protection on landing. In the history of this movement, which was a decided success, a fact is noticeable which well merits publication, tending as it does to prove the strict integrity of the average class of English educated women.

The plan adopted by Miss Rye and Miss Lewin in assisting the governesses to emigrate was simply as follows:—The applicants were requested to raise from their friends as much money as they conveniently could, the surplus being contributed from the £750 capital in the hands of the promoters, they trusting to the integrity of the applicants to reimburse them

for the advance. Since this system came into operation, some twelve years ago, about one hundred and seventy governesses have been assisted to emigrate, all of whom found honourable occupation in the colonies. Of the £750 advanced to them in different sums as loans, there now remains a deficiency in the original capital of only £50, and the greater portion of that sum is accounted for in the cost of postage, stationery, and incidental office expenses.

From the success attending the governesses emigration movement, Miss Rye determined to extend it to female emigration in general. For this purpose she relinquished the law-copying business to her friend Miss Jane Lewin, and then, having raised sufficient funds, she took charge of a number of female emigrants of the class of domestic servants to New Zealand. These being comfortably established, she visited some of the principal towns in Australia for the purpose of forming committees to take under their protection the young women sent out from England, and she then returned to the mother country. It would occupy too much space to go further into the details of Miss Rye's female emigration movement. Suffice it to say, that from its commencement to the present time it has been the means of



finding respectable employment for no fewer than fifteen hundred women.

Miss Rye having been attacked by some press writers at home regarding the emigrants she sent out, they occasionally not being of a thoroughly respectable class, she defended herself in a most satisfactory manner. She clearly proved that in those comparatively few cases in which her protégées on their arrival in the colonies had misconducted themselves, she had, in every instance, been deceived by false characters for respectability given of them by ladies, who possibly might have thought that falsehoods, perpetrated in a cause of the kind, were more than absolved by the motive which instigated them—that of assisting a fallen woman to obtain respectable employment. But, apart from these few exceptions, the women assisted by Miss Rye to emigrate to Australia, having situations found for them, maintained an integrity and honourable reputation fully equal to that of the best class of female servants in the metropolis.

Miss Rye, possibly annoyed at the opposition she encountered, appears, with the exception of a short journey made with female emigrants to Canada, to have abstained for some months from any public philanthropic operations. During the time, however, she by no means

remained idle, but occupied herself in making many researches into the condition of the children of the poor population of the metropolis, especially those now known as "gutter children." Among these she found that, bad as was the condition of the boys, that of the girls was immeasurably worse. Being to a great extent hidden from the eye of the public, their condition was less known to the philanthropist. In fact, of all God's creatures, none seemed to be more cruelly or unjustly treated than these poor children. Few think, when they notice the swarms of ragged urchins crowding our streets and offering cheap newspapers, lucifer matches, and other small wares for sale, running the risk of breaking their necks or of being run over in the streets many times in the day, that for each of these poor boys there is at least one poor girl yet more ragged, and far less joyous, concealed in some wretched hovel, possibly tending children still more helpless than herself, or, what is worse, left uncared-for and uninstructed, to acquire prejudicial habits of thought, no matter how degraded, and too frequently witnessing scenes of the most revolting description! Yet, while the boys are to a certain extent cared for and invited into board and ragged schools and other benevolent establishments, these poor

girls seem to be passed over with utter indifference. The condition of these wretched children excited strong sympathy in the mind of Miss Rye, and she determined, if possible, to do something for the amelioration of their unhappy lot. But how to begin her mission was a difficult problem to solve.

While still in doubt when and how to commence her new labour, Miss Rye's attention was directed to a newspaper advertisement that on a certain evening the Reverend Mr. Van Meter, a Baptist missionary from Ohio, would lecture in St. James's Hall, on the condition of the destitute female orphans in New York, whose fathers had perished in the late terrible civil wars, and the steps which had been taken for their protection. Miss Rye naturally imagined that she might obtain from the lecturer some useful hints relative to the best plan she could adopt to carry out efficiently her newly self-imposed task. Nor was she disappointed in the result. Mr. Van Meter graphically described the lamentable condition of vast numbers of these poor children, living from hand to mouth on the casual charity of the humane. When their hunger was once satisfied, they would herd together in the worst localities till the fear of starvation again drove them forth to levy fresh contributions from the

benevolent. By degrees they became bolder, and the timidity which at first characterized them, and which had induced them to hide from the eye of day, gradually diminished as time passed on, while an objectionable indifference to the public gaze and an absence of all shame began rapidly to supply its place. Mr. Van Meter, shocked at the deplorable condition of these poor children, determined to attempt something for their relief. He at last resolved to establish a Home where those girls who were orphans or deserted could be sheltered, till means could be devised to find them respectable protection and occupation. To do this, funds were required, and he made an appeal to the benevolent in New York. This appeal, like most others, made to the sympathies of the American people, when the intentions of the promoter were good and practical, was liberally responded to.

Having funds now at his command, Mr. Van Meter hired a house, and in it he established what he called the Little Wanderers' Home. Here these girls, having gone through a salutary course of ablution, were decently dressed, and broken of some of their street-arab propensities. After giving them some slight instruction, literary and industrial, he established an agency in

the far West, through which he found for them homes in the houses of different farmers, who readily took the poor little creatures under their protection. At the time of his lecture, he had, he said, already found shelter in different families for more than two thousand poor children, who had formerly led a life little more civilised than the savage of the desert.

Mr. Van Meter's lecture had a powerful effect on the mind of Miss Rye. She determined, if on investigation she found the plan he had adopted to work as satisfactorily as he had described, to take him as her model. But before finally deciding, she resolved to test by her own experience whether it would be possible to organize, with safety, a scheme of the kind for the English "gutter children." About the date of the lecture she had been requested to take charge of a party of female emigrants to Canada. She now determined to accept the offer, and while in the Dominion not only to assure herself of the efficiency of Mr. Van Meter's system, but in case she found it all that he had described it to be, to apply it by way of experiment to some of the "gutter children" in England. After having found employment in Canada for the emigrants under her charge, she visited Chicago and different places in the West,



to inquire into the condition of the children whom Mr. Van Meter had taken under his protection. The result was most satisfactory, not a single objectionable feature presenting itself in the system adopted by him, though her investigation was made with the closest scrutiny.

Miss Rye having determined to carry out her project, left the States for Canada, and there inquired of those with whom she was intimate, whether they thought an immigration of these destitute poor children would be objected to by the Canadian population. The answers she received were of the most encouraging description. Not only was she assured that an enterprise of the kind would not be objected to by the population at large, but by many it would be accepted with satisfaction. Nor was this intended as a mere courteous, commonplace reply to Miss Rye's question, for, without exception, all to whom she addressed it volunteered to assist her by every means in their power, in finding for the children, on their arrival, shelter and employment in respectable families.

Miss Rye now returned to England with the intention of putting her scheme into practice. Although it was at first received with considerable suspicion, there were not only many who

encouraged her to proceed, but others went so far as to testify their approbation by assisting her with pecuniary means to carry out her project. Of course, the first thing necessary was to secure a temporary home for the children on their arrival, and she immediately returned to Canada for that purpose. Her good friends there now assisted her to find a fit and proper locality for the Children's Home, and after little difficulty they succeeded. A building formerly used as a prison, and capable of holding a hundred children, together with a piece of land of some acres surrounding it, were bought. Workmen were placed in the building, not only to change its prison aspect, but to put it into such an efficient state of repair as would fit it for the reception of the children on their arrival. After the furniture had been purchased and placed in the building, it was given into the charge of the custodian, and Miss Rye returned to England at once to commence active operations.

Although there was, unfortunately, no lack of materials, as far as "gutter children" were concerned, for Miss Rye to commence operations with, the other requisite, pecuniary means to carry it out effectually, was still wanting. Notwithstanding that many of her friends had

promised to assist her with money, and were perfectly ready to perform the promises they had made, still the aggregate sum subscribed was by no means equal to the amount required to carry out the project in a satisfactory manner. Miss Rye had calculated that her first batch of little emigrants should, if possible, number not less than one hundred, and the money placed at her disposal was hardly sufficient to cover the expenditure necessary for passage and outfit for half the number. At last a powerful friend came to her assistance, and very possibly to his kind agency no slight portion of the success which has attended the movement is to be attributed. The gentleman alluded to is William Rathbone, Esq., M.P. for Liverpool. He not only encouraged Miss Rye to proceed when her project appeared to all but herself likely to turn out a failure, but he took a personal interest in the matter. He applied on her behalf to the managers of the Kirkdale Industrial Schools at Liverpool, and advised them to entertain the question, pointing out to them the advantage which would accrue to the children should Miss Rye be able, as he had no doubt she would, to find situations for them in Canada, and to the ratepayers as well, by diminishing the amount of their rates. He went further, and by way of



rendering the sum necessary to be paid by the managers of the school for the emigration of the girls as little onerous as possible, he liberally proposed to contribute from his own pocket half the amount necessary for the passage-money and outfit of fifty children. The school managers accepted the offer, and fifty girls were placed under Miss Rye's care.

After a few weeks' delay, all was in readiness for Miss Rye's departure, and, accompanied by her friend and gratuitous assistant, Miss Geraldine Allaway, a pretty girl of twenty with the brains of a woman of fifty, she left Liverpool with her band of little pilgrims, averaging from seven to twelve years of age, for the New World, where they arrived in safety, not a single sinister incident occurring to any one of them during the whole voyage. In fact, I may state on Miss Rye's own authority, that as soon as the object of her mission was known, nothing could exceed the kindness, courtesy, and attention she received from the captain, officers, and crew of the ship, all of whom seemed to vie with each other in showing her party the greater attention. On landing she experienced the same kindness from all, and at last she had the satisfaction of arriving safely at her destination in Niagara.

On the 1st of December, 1869, the Home was opened. There were present Mr. Pasford, the mayor of Niagara; Mr. Tibbert Ball, the magistrate of the county, who, from the moment when Miss Rye mentioned the subject to him, on her previous visit to Canada, had not only encouraged her to proceed, but had since her departure, through his personal instrumentality, found homes for no fewer than twenty little emigrants; Judge Lauder, of St. Catherine's, Ontario; the Rev. Dr. Macmurray, rector of Niagara; the Rev. Mr. Burchall, rector of the Presbyterian church at St. Catherine's; the Rev. Mr. Holland, a clergyman of the Church of England, and many others. The meeting was opened with prayer, and afterwards the children were introduced to the visitors. All expressed themselves highly satisfied with the appearance and manners of the girls, and promised to do everything in their power to assist in finding homes for them. A few days afterwards, through the kind agency of the above-named gentlemen and others, homes in respectable families were found for many of the elder girls, and several of the younger were adopted by married couples without children. In fact, so numerous were the applications for these children, from persons of respectability, that in a

short time it was evident they would all be provided for.

Miss Rye, rightly judging that it would be better to keep the supply of little emigrants equal to the demand, left her friend Miss Allaway in charge of the Home, and returned to England to collect new recruits. On arriving at Liverpool she gave a detailed account of her mission to the managers of the Industrial Schools, and so pleased were they with her statements that they promised to place under her protection, when she again returned to Canada, as many children as they had on their books who were eligible for the purpose. The managers went still further, and unlike the former occasion, when one half the expense was borne by a private individual, this time they agreed to pay nine pounds for each child, that being the cost of the passage and outfit. Miss Rye thankfully accepted the offer. And it may here be stated that since that date the managers of the Kirkdale Schools have placed under her charge two other parties of little pilgrims.

Miss Rye now returned to London, where she was introduced to the guardians of the poor of St. George's, Hanover Square, who, after listening to her plans and well considering them, determined to follow the example of the Kirk-

dale Industrial Schools. They placed under her protection twenty children, and with these and another party from Wolverhampton she again returned to Canada. On arriving at Niagara, she received the most pleasing reports of the conduct of the children who had been placed in different families. But what perhaps pleased here more than all was that ten per cent. of the whole number, and these the youngest and most helpless, had been adopted by childless married couples, while others were employed as helps. Of these latter, three had quitted their situations and returned to the Home. Two of them, however, had since been provided with situations, while the other, a girl of twelve, still remained in the Home. Miss Rye questioned her as to her reason for quitting her situation, and her answer may strike the reader as, if not of great originality, certainly one which has never been given in England: "They gave her so often turkey for dinner that she got sick of it." As, in spite of Miss Rye's close cross-examination, she could obtain from the girl no other reason for quitting her situation, she gave her a sound lecture on her behaviour, and then told her that, although she would now find another home for her, if she did not keep it, or at least quit it with some better reason than the last, she should feel

inclined to take her back to England with her, where there would be little danger of her meeting with any cause of the kind to displease her. Whether the girl was convinced by Miss Rye's arguments, or whether on consideration she came to a better frame of mind, it would be difficult to determine. Suffice it to say that another situation was found for her, which she has kept, and where she gives perfect satisfaction.

To return to Miss Rye's second batch of emigrants. The whole party were soon provided for as helps in respectable families, or adopted, with the exception of one of very tender years, and possibly not of very prepossessing appearance. Miss Rye found her in tears one morning, and on inquiring the cause, was told by the child that she was afraid no one would "bopt" (adopt) her. She was in error, however, for before Miss Rye had quitted the colony to return to England, a very respectable childless woman had "bopted" the little creature as her own.

Having found situations for her second batch of emigrants, Miss Rye now returned to England, bringing with her not only satisfactory proofs of the perfect working of her system, but a number of letters from the children whom on her former journey she had provided with situa-



tions, narrating their adventures in the colony, and the kind treatment they experienced from the families with whom they were placed. Some of these letters, from which, if my space would allow me, I would willingly quote, are models of quaint composition. Nor must it be imagined that they were of the same style, and written under the same sort of supervision, as letters from children at school in England announcing the approach of the holidays. These, on the contrary, were written by young girls now perfectly at liberty, and explaining candidly their thoughts and opinions. Of these letters there is not one which does not speak in terms of high satisfaction of the kindness shown to the writers in the colony. Another fact well worthy of notice connected with these letters should be mentioned. They were most of them addressed to the matrons of the pauper schools, and similar industrial establishments in England, and the spontaneous terms of affection in which they were couched may be taken as a strong proof of the attention and kindness which, as a rule, is shown to these poor little creatures in well-regulated institutions of the kind, however strongly the public mind may lean to a contrary opinion.

Miss Rye, on her return to England, began to



prove the truth of the old French proverb that "Nothing succeeds like success." Many of those who, when she first applied for assistance, treated the idea with so much coldness as to have chilled any courage less ardent than her own, now became her warmest friends. Boards of guardians for the poor, who, when she first applied to them, regarded her application with suspicion almost amounting to discourtesy, now gave her their full confidence. Nor were the guardians to be blamed for their preliminary caution. To have delivered over to a comparative stranger a number of helpless orphan-girls confided to their care would, if the movement had proved a failure, have entailed on them a burst of popular indignation. Now all was changed. Not only have the two parishes of St. George's, Hanover Square, and Wolverhampton, which after Liverpool first placed confidence in Miss Rye, continued it to the present day, but several others have applied to her to take charge of their pauper girls. The parishes of Bristol, Reading, Cheltenham, Chichester, Fareham, and other towns, have given her their support. Up to the present time Miss Rye, in her endeavours to carry out this movement, has crossed the Atlantic no fewer than fifteen times, and has succeeded in

finding respectable homes and occupation for twelve hundred girls in the colony. Of the success which has attended her exertions, a better plan could not be devised of conveying it to the reader than to quote a description given in one of the local Canadian papers (the *Mail*), of an evening party given to the children and their patrons in Miss Rye's Home at Niagara:—

“A pleasing demonstration,” the report says, “of the successful results of Miss Rye's plan of emigration has just been witnessed here. It is now three years since she opened her Western Home in Niagara for the reception of female children, the waifs and strays from the streets of London, and other English cities and towns. The scheme of bringing out children of that kind has been the subject of many criticisms, favourable and unfavourable. But as regards its effects on the children themselves there can be no two opinions. It has been the most triumphantly successful of any scheme of emigration ever tried.

“After the lapse of three years, Miss Rye hit upon the happy thought of bringing together again as many of these children as possible, in order to mark the improvement effected in them by their transport to this country. She accordingly sent circulars to all persons who had taken

any of these children, inviting them to a réunion at the Western Home on the 3rd instant. Of course, at this inclement season of the year, those from a great distance could not be expected to be present, and Miss Rye's children are scattered all over the province. As it was, the surprising number of about one hundred and fifty children came in response to her invitation, and it would have filled with joy the hearts of those benevolent people in England who stand by and support Miss Rye, to witness the pleasant looks and demeanour of the once lost children of the street. The transformation was wonderful—almost incredible, to those who like myself had witnessed the landing here of those poor little girls when they first came out in their coarse pauper costume, clumping shoes, and cropped hair, rescued from the very lowest strata of society.

“They are now all healthy, blooming, and cheerful, as only happy children can be, neatly dressed like Canadian girls of their own age; while some who had been adopted into respectable families looked, with their long curls, fashionable attire, and nice manners, like little ladies. I can give them no other name, and, I may add, many of them are as pretty children as ever I saw. Every trace of the poorhouse had

gone from them, and those who had been out the longest had even lost their former English dialect, which you know is not the best English spoken in the world.

“A philosopher would have read in this change the immense power of circumstances over us all, and the innate vigour of our race. For after all these children are of our own flesh and blood. Poverty had been their misfortune, and, crushed by adverse circumstances, they became what Miss Rye found them—the most helpless and pitiable objects calling for Christian charity to be found in Britain. You have only to transplant them to a more fortunate soil, change their circumstances, lift them out of the slough of hopeless poverty—in a word, take them out of the streets of London, and place them in good, plentiful Canadian homes, and they at once take root there, and grow and bloom as if native to the soil, quite other beings to what they were.

“The Western Home was, on the occasion of this pleasing réunion, decorated with evergreens, presenting a truly festal appearance. Of course the great sight to a philanthropic eye was the children themselves. Miss Rye had provided a bountiful and elegant dinner. Mr. Ellison’s band was present to entertain them with music. There was a monster Christmas-

tree full of presents for the children, and a present for each one. Some of the young ladies of the town got up tableaux for their amusement. The children sang and danced, and played old-fashioned games, which some of the elders present remembered to have played on English greens long, long ago, pleased to think they were not forgotten.

“The festival was a great success in every way, and in this most of all—that it gave so complete, so satisfactory an answer to the question so often put in England: What becomes of the poor little emigrant children taken out by Miss Rye?”

“The air is full of the reports of emigration movements nowadays. Our Dominion and local Governments seem to be vying with one another in the promotion of emigration from Great Britain and Ireland. No little noise and self-laudation accompany some of the efforts that are made by societies here and there; but Miss Rye has, in the most quiet and unostentatious way, accomplished the greatest work of them all, and without obtaining from this country a farthing. The emigration of these children is the offspring of pure practical Christianity. Christian men and women could alone have conceived it and carried it out. When, in



fact, do we *ever* hear of other than Christian people taking up a great work of charity for the benefit of the poor and forsaken of the world? The keynote of this undertaking of Miss Rye is struck, I conceive, in a divine saying of Christ, which I read worked in evergreens upon the wall of the Western Home: 'It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.'

"Miss Rye's scheme goes to the root of the social misery that afflicts the poorest classes in Britain. It takes away its lost and orphan children before they grow up into an ignorant, idle, and vicious, and therefore dangerous class of society. It transplants them here where they find homes, and are cared for and trained up in useful and industrious habits, becoming part and parcel of our own people.

"I leave to others to make the moral reflections this subject is capable of, but one cannot help seeing what a missionary work accompanies this scheme of emigration!—what a lifting up of moral character, as well as improvement in outward circumstances, are effected in these children! If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, what joy must there not be over the rescue of so many little ones from a life of misery and vice! I do not know a



greater or nobler work than that of Miss Rye, and every one who has the heart to feel for these children will wish her God speed."

In addition to Miss Rye's Western Home in Canada, she has, by the kind assistance of certain philanthropic individuals in England, been enabled to purchase a commodious house and grounds at Peckham, in Surrey, for the reception of the children till their numbers are sufficient to take out as a party to Canada—a party, as before stated, generally averaging about one hundred. A visit to this establishment will well repay the reader the trouble it would entail. He would there have an excellent opportunity of judging of the amount of common sense, order, and good management which, apart from the Christian philanthropy actuating her, are among Miss Rye's principal attributes. Nor should it be imagined that Miss Rye is not indebted for her great success to the efficient aid she has received in Canada and London. Of those at Niagara I have already spoken. Efficient as they may be, they are not more so than those assisting her in London, especially the staff employed at the Home in Peckham—Miss Rye's sisters and her secretary, Miss Still.

But although common sense and sound organisation are, under the blessing of Heaven,

the principal means of success employed by Miss Rye, there is withal a vast amount of poetical feeling, and that of a beautiful character, to be found in her labours. Somewhere in Germany there is an old legend of an enchanter, who, annoyed by the children of the town, I believe Nuremberg, where he had been unfavourably received, drew, by his piping, the children after him till he had conducted them to a great river, where they were all drowned. A curious engraving is extant of this tradition, showing the children following the evil genius. Miss Rye's action is completely the reverse. She might be in the same manner drawn, attracting the starving and degraded little girls from our lanes and gutters to follow her, not to the river's brink, but across the wide ocean, where, in a land of plenty, they are placed under the care of Christian people, from whom they receive not only plentiful food and raiment, but are trained to become honourable members of society, in place of the degraded creatures they would have grown up, had death spared them, in the wretched localities of our crowded cities in England, from which they have been taken.

## CHAPTER III.

ANNIE MACPHERSON.

**G**REAT as has been the success of Miss Rye in the emigration of the "gutter children" of the metropolis to Canada, the labours of Miss Macpherson have been equally successful. I might possibly go even further, and say that the results of Miss Macpherson's labours, as far as regards the number of children emigrated, are the more wonderful of the two. Miss Rye also, before she had taken so many of the destitute girls of the metropolis under her protection, and found them good homes in Canada and the far West, had to a certain degree been inured to the dangers and difficulties of long sea-voyages when visiting Australia and New Zealand, whereas Miss Macpherson had not commenced her emigration of boys, or in fact had any experience in the matter, before the year 1866. Prior to that date her principal philanthropic

efforts had been among the agricultural labourers of Cambridgeshire, especially in the vicinity of the residence of her brother-in-law, Mr. Merry. Here she certainly effected great good, not only in attending to the physical wants of the agricultural labourer, but, through the co-operation of her friends, improving their dwellings and teaching their children.

On the occasion of her visiting London in 1866, in company with her brother-in-law and his wife, she exerted herself in the mission work connected with the Bedford Institute, a noble building erected by the Society of Friends for the help and instruction of the poorest of the population in the neighbourhood of Spitalfields. Here, on the week evenings, instruction in reading and writing were the principal inducements held out to them to attend. Miss Macpherson appears in a short time to have become a great favourite among the poorer inhabitants of the district, for it is stated in a well-written description of her labours, published in Canada, that when she first began her work, the very opening of her Bible or hymn-book would be the signal for all then in the building to rush round her to listen to her teaching. In the Institute she organised a Bible-class, which was one of remarkable interest; few have been more regu-

larly or numerously attended. In the large hall many were the tables filled with men, and others with women, frequently very aged, all with large-print Bibles before them, and each table headed by some earnest teacher, and at the close all gathered round Miss Macpherson to hear her final address.

Miss Macpherson's outdoor labours naturally introduced her to many scenes of misery. Of these none were more distressing than the destitution and misery existing among the poor children in the neighbourhood of Houndsditch, Spitalfields, and Whitechapel. Though conducting assiduously her labours among the adults, her sympathies seemed instinctively to a great degree to centralize themselves on "these little ones." In this land it seems hardly possible to realise that children of three years old should contribute to the support of the family, but it is most sorrowfully true. From their earliest age their ill-paid labour is so incessant that, excepting on a Sunday, no attempt to attend school could be made. Spiritually and morally they were left totally uncared for, while their physical wants were supplied with a parsimony which barely preserved existence.

The condition of the children employed in the manufacture of lucifer-match boxes appears to



have been the proximate cause of Miss Macpherson's efforts for the emigration of the poor children of the neighbourhood. Perhaps their condition would be better explained to the reader by quoting Miss Macpherson's own words from a little work she published on the subject. Speaking of the "little women who earn mother's bread," she says:—"Among the host of children labourers in the east of London, no trade seems so peculiarly to belong to them as matchbox-making, though all kinds of fancy boxes, cases, and envelopes are manufactured here. Light and pretty work it would be, did our law but compel the parent or the parish to educate the little ones during a portion of the day. As it is, hundreds of innocent suffering children, pining with disease and destitution, die yearly an untimely death, victims to making the rich manufacturer richer, or the idle thriftless mother more idle, and the besotted drunken father more wedded to his vice. Even the nursling, scarce out of its mother's arms, sits placing the sandpaper on the boxes, for this early practice is considered necessary to procure quick fingering in days to come. Children from eight to ten years of age are generally the swiftest matchbox makers."

A very graphic description is given by a cler-



gyman of the condition of these children, which I may quote at length, as, to my own knowledge, it gives a perfect and faithful picture of the condition of a matchmaker's family, and mode of life :—"The other day," he says, "I took upon my knees a little girl who is employed in this manner. She told me she was four years old. Her mother said she had earned her own living ever since she was three years of age. This infant now makes several hundred boxes every day of her life, and her earnings suffice to pay the rent of the miserable room which the family inhabits. The poor little woman, as might be expected, is grave and sad beyond her years. She has none of a child's vivacity; she does not seem to know what play means. All her thoughts are centred in the eternal round of lucifer-box making, in which her whole life is passed. She has never been beyond the dingy street in which she was born. She has never so much as seen a tree, a daisy, or a blade of grass. A poor sickly little thing, and yet a sweet obedient child, the dreadful pallor of her face proclaiming unmistakably that she will soon be mercifully taken away to a better world, where at last the weary little fingers shall be at rest. And this is only one case out of scores and hundreds. The mortality among

young children is perfectly frightful. It is a common thing for a mother to say she has buried six or eight children, and reared one or two. This mortality of the children is chiefly owing to the deadly overcrowding, and insufficiency of food and clothing. . . . Hardly a family in the parish possesses more than a single room, in which all the members live, and work, and sleep. For this room from three shillings to four shillings weekly is paid out of the scanty earnings, leaving a sum quite insufficient to provide the most necessary food. Last week my colleague went into a room where the father lay seriously ill, and asked the wife some question about the nourishment she gave him. 'I'll show you, sir, what we have,' was the reply. She opened a cupboard door; one slice of dry bread lay carefully treasured on the shelf. This was all that was left for the support of the sick man and the whole family, and not a half-penny did they possess to procure more. I believe I am under the mark when I affirm that not one family in twenty has a blanket of their own, and not one in twelve a sheet."

Another example may be quoted, tending to prove the wretched condition of the matchbox children, from the many hundred other instances which have come under Miss Mac-

pherson's notice:—"I have just left a house where the only earnings are those of a boy working at silk trimmings from eight A.M. to ten P.M. The boy's mother once kept a shop in a most distressed street in Bethnal Green, and told me children of four and five years old often came in for errands after ten P.M., and when she asked them to come earlier, said they had only just left work. These were poor little matchbox makers. Hours of daylight are wasted in waiting for the materials, and then the order must be finished, and night must be spent in work. Lately I found a poor girl of fourteen and her young brother had been up till five A.M., helping their father to finish an order for pipes. In another family left fatherless by cholera, the eldest, a boy of eleven, works twelve hours a day at paper-ruling, yet strives to attend evening school. It is most affecting to see the eagerness of these little ones to learn to read, and too often they have no clothes to attend Sunday-school."

But bad as was indisputably the condition of the children employed in the manufacture of lucifer-box making, Miss Macpherson found there were others whose condition was considerably worse—that in the lowest depths there was a lower deep. While the children employed

in the manufacture of these boxes were earning to some slight extent the necessaries of life in an honourable and honest manner, there were thousands of others, principally boys, whose days were passed in wandering about the streets, sometimes earning a penny with which to buy food ; and when the penny was not to be earned, and no charitable individual would give it, purloining it. In cases where neither by theft, honesty, nor gift could they obtain the means of existence as far as food was concerned, they would pick up the offal from the streets, and not only consume it with the eagerness of a wild beast,\* but even find it appetising ; while the only shelter they obtained at night was under a doorway, cart, or railway arch, and even there their slumbers were likely to be interrupted by a policeman with orders to " move on."

But it was not solely the unhappy condition of the boys which elicited Miss Macpherson's sympathy, for, if possible, the girls were even in a worse condition. Many of these, through her

\* That this is no exaggerated statement may be shown by the fact that when boys from these districts are sent to the Reformatory Schools, Feltham, where abundant food is supplied them, they are at first carefully watched to see they do not steal refuse from the hog-tubs, which forms the food they had been accustomed to, and which was far more to their taste than that supplied them by the school authorities. This habit, however, soon disappears.

instrumentality, have been released from the danger which attended them of death or demoralisation, either by finding them respectable employment in England, or placing them in different families in Canada. At the same time, it may be mentioned that while Miss Rye's labours in the Dominion have been principally in finding homes for the female gutter children, a large proportion of Miss Macpherson's protégés have been boys. Some of the instances she gives of the kindly feeling existing among these poor children for each other are exceedingly touching, the girls especially showing that, amidst the poverty and immorality surrounding them, sparks of the nascent pure spirit of womanhood will occasionally develop themselves with extraordinary splendour. One instance, given in Miss Macpherson's own language, must suffice:—

“On coming down-stairs one night, between ten and eleven o'clock, we saw standing in the door of the Home two little girls, one—quite a woman, though only three feet high, and eleven years of age—telling us quite composedly that although her own mother was dead, she had a father and a home, but for three weeks she had noticed, and could no longer bear to see the other girl sleeping on a doorstep, or any other



kind of shelter she could find, without trying to get her into some place; and on this night, when she saw rude big girls kicking her about, that they might have the place where she had chosen to sleep, she said, 'I couldn't bear it, so I told her to come along with me, and I would get her into somewhere.'

" 'And where did you think to get her taken in?'

" 'Well, first we went to the workhouse, but they banged the door and said she couldn't come in. So then I took her to a place where the Sisters of Mercy live, but they said 'twas too late, she couldn't come in there if she didn't apply at five o'clock. Well, then I went and spoke to a policeman about her, but she was so frightened of him that she ran down a side street; but she soon crept back to the same place, and then I said, 'Maggie, he says there's a place for you at Miss Macpherson's, if you can work.' 'Well, I can,' she says; 'take me there.'

" At eleven P.M. there they stood, one so self-possessed and proud to have brought the little wanderer to a place where there was a bright light, kindly faces, and gentle voices; the other wet, cold, and hungry, with dirty, tear-stained face, and hair looking as though it had never



known a comb. This little girl's mother had been dead three years, and now her father had sold all the things in the room, and gone away three weeks ago, since which time she had been sleeping about in the cold wet street, without a home. As the little boys and girls were all asleep, she was soon curled up in a corner of the room, fast asleep also. It may be here mentioned that Maggie Fritz, the girl alluded to, is now a smart, valuable little maiden, under the protection of a farmer's wife in Canada, giving infinite satisfaction from her industrious habits, quick perception, and obedient and docile temper."

With such examples as these constantly before her eyes, Miss Macpherson's wish to do something for the benefit of these poor children, became accumulative, and to such an extent, that she determined at once to commence operations. Beyond that, there can be no doubt the blessing of God was upon her work, though there was nothing miraculous or supernatural in her manner of carrying it out. The *modus operandi* was peculiarly Protestant-English. It did not start forth at once into its present proportions, but was the result of indefatigable industry and courage. She found what to the ordinary mind were insuperable difficulties in her way, but,

instead of being deterred by them, they seem rather to have acted as a stimulus to further exertion. Miss Macpherson first commenced her operations by opening every evening schools and clothing-clubs in various localities. Not only reading, but the art of mending their tattered garments was a new thing to them, and while making every effort to raise them from a hitherto almost helpless state, to use her own expression, her "heart yearned over the brothers of many." Some were employed as shoe-blacks, while others were not able to earn even that scanty wage, and were exposed to every temptation. The first of her public demonstrations appears to have been a tea-meeting given to many of those under her care, and other lads, in George Yard Ragged School. At this meeting, Miss Macpherson found so many homeless ones that the idea was forcibly impressed on her mind that it would be impossible permanently to raise their condition without receiving them into a Home, where they could be taught and trained to regular work. Those friends co-operating with her assisted in finding the funds, and a house was rented at Hackney, where thirty boys could be received at once. "In a few weeks," Miss Macpherson remarks, "on looking at these bright, intelligent young

faces, it was difficult to believe in the dark surroundings of their earlier years." So great was the encouragement in caring for them spiritually as well as physically, that Miss Macpherson could not rest without enlarging the work, and a dilapidated dwelling at the back of Shoreditch Church was fitted up to receive thirty more boys. A Refuge for Girls had been opened the previous year,\* and one for very little ones was now opened in the upper part of a mission-house where another branch of Miss Macpherson's work was carried on—mothers' meetings, and two widows' sewing classes, chiefly watched over by her sister Mrs. Merry, one like-minded with herself. In all these separate refuges the space was very limited, and a large hall was needed for the match-box makers' evening and Sunday-schools, as well as for the poor widows, and other branches of the continually increasing work. The building needed was provided—the Lord had gone before.

Along the great thoroughfare leading from the Docks to Shoreditch, lofty warehouses had been erected, to the great sorrow of some who longed to see the vacant space occupied by

\* Extracted from Miss Macpherson's "Work among the Little Ones."

model lodging-houses for the poor. How little could they imagine the varied use to which one of these warehouses was to be applied, and the blessing which was to flow from it. In 1866, the fearful visitation of cholera in the East-end of London, rendered a temporary hospital necessary, and one of these lofty buildings was fitted up for that purpose, under the direction of Sisters of Mercy. Water and gas were laid on to each of the five spacious floors, and every arrangement made for cooking and cleanliness. In November of that year the desolating scourge was wholly withdrawn, and the building was closed, many predicting that none would ever dare to enter it again. When, however, about a twelvemonth had passed, Mr. Holland, an energetic co-operator of Miss Macpherson, suggested how suitable it would be for a refuge, and a little company entered the silent and deserted building, and joined in supplication, that where death had been seen in all its terrors, there souls might be brought to God, and that the voice of praise and prayer might be heard within those walls, which had once resounded with the groans of the dying.

Admirable as the premises appeared to be for the desired purpose, an insuperable obstacle arose in Miss Macpherson's way—she had not

the funds in hand for an undertaking of the kind, and she and her friends were for the moment obliged to relinquish the idea. Not discouraged, however, they applied to those around them for assistance in this emergency; and, to use Miss Macpherson's own phraseology, "some gave of their abundance, some of their poverty," till at last she had sufficient funds in her hands to cover the rent demanded for the premises, £300 a year. Once in possession, operations commenced immediately, and a greater benefit in a poor neighbourhood than Miss Macpherson's Home of Industry, it would be impossible to imagine. How dense is the poverty of the locality of which the Home of Industry is the centre may be judged from the fact, that, on the square mile in which it is situated, reside no less than one hundred and twenty thousand of the poorest of our population. Continuing the little work already quoted: "On entering the refuge, the first sight is generally that of some wan face and form in threadbare garments, widowed or deserted mothers bringing their fatherless boys, and patiently waiting while each case is being inquired into. Sometimes a father out of work may be seen begging that his motherless little one may be sheltered, and a



child bringing another a little younger, but more helpless than herself. No form of election or seeking for subscribers' votes is needed here. Faith looks upwards to the God of the widow and the fatherless, and experiences, "Thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek Thee."

Some of the scenes witnessed in this Home of Industry are exceedingly curious and touching. In one part may be seen a party of young tailors doing their best, under direction, to make garments fit for the voyage and the new country to which they are all hopefully looking forward. On the floor above are many little match-box makers cheerfully at work, their present position contrasting strongly with their late work in their own crowded homes. On one spacious floor, undivided by any partition, hundreds of women are gathered, all busy with their needles. All of them are widows, and the state of their poverty may be imagined when it can be shown that many of them walk miles for the privilege of earning twopence an hour by needlework. Often friends of the Institution will drop in, and to the joy of the workers will contribute as much as will provide them with a tea. Orphans and others in this Home of Industry suited for domestic service, are trained as servants. Some idea of the amount of charity bestowed

on the industrious may be gathered from the fact that some three thousand five hundred to four thousand meals are distributed every week, to the wild arab lads, girls, widows, and starving men; and as a proof of the economy of charitable labour in charitable efforts, the whole of this establishment is conducted by merely five paid officials, supplemented by the gratuitous assistance and co-operation of the energetic friends Miss Macpherson has collected around her.

On the opening of the building, it was mentioned that the relief of distress by emigration would be one of the principal objects kept in view, and as this point is the one I wish particularly to impress upon the reader, I may be excused if I dwell somewhat emphatically on it. Some idea may be formed of the extent of its operations in that line, when it is stated that in the year 1869, less than two years after the opening of the Home of Industry, no fewer than five hundred persons were enabled to emigrate to Canada, at a cost of £2,687. The following year, Miss Macpherson determined to carry out the project she had originally conceived, of finding homes in Canada for the orphan boys and street arabs whom she had taken under her care. Her first pilgrimage was with a band of

one hundred of these poor children, with whom, in May, 1870, she left England, accompanied by Miss Bilborough and Mr. Thom. Everywhere on her road to the West, she and her party were received with most hospitable kindness and respect. Not a town did she visit where the greatest encouragement was not accorded her. This was the case especially at Belleville, where the authorities placed Marchmont, a most convenient dwelling, with gardens, pasture-ground, and view of the lovely Bay of Quinte, entirely at her disposal, the council of the county of Hastings generously paying the yearly rent. After disposing of her first venture of destitute lads in the homes of respectable Canadian farmers or tradesmen, Miss Macpherson and her friends returned to England, to cross the Atlantic a second time with young girls, and young widows, whom she had been invited to bring out. On her way homeward, she passed her brother-in-law, Mr. Merry, under whose care were seventy more lads, who arrived safely at Marchmont, the whole of whom were provided with situations before Miss Macpherson had returned to Canada with those under her charge.

Miss Macpherson's labours in Canada were yet far from being completed. She had now to

organize a full system for the reception and disposal of the children she brought with her from England, as she intended unremittingly to continue her labour of taking them from England, and finding them honourable occupation in the Dominion. Her friend Miss Bilborough, who had been a constant fellow-labourer with her in England, took upon herself the management of the Home at Marchmont, while Mr. Thom remained in Canada to visit the boys in their new situations, for the double purpose of seeing that ample justice was done to them by their employers, and in return impressing upon the boys the necessity of obedience and general good conduct. Miss Macpherson was now enabled to return to England, her mind all the more clear from the arrangements she had made in Canada. On arriving in England, her first step was to secure a Home for her boys at Hampton, twelve miles from London, where some attempt would be made to give the intended young emigrants a slight elementary knowledge of farm-work, as well as to test their mental and physical capabilities for an occupation of the kind. A short time after the Hampton Home was opened, one hundred and forty lads and little girls were afterwards taken by her to Canada, and from that time to

the present, her labour in the cause of destitute children especially, and suffering humanity generally, has gone on prosperously, every step she took being marked with success.

Since May, 1870, much has been accomplished. Six detachments have followed the first hundred, and now about eight hundred more are ready to start as soon as means and funds can be provided for the journey. A three-fold good is thus accomplished—benefit to the old country, in relieving it of those who, having no power to help themselves, must inevitably either come upon the poor-rate, or be a still greater tax upon the ratepayer as inmates of our prisons. They are of great advantage to the Canadians, where want of labour to cultivate their broad acres is severely felt, and who eagerly seek for some of our little ones to train up as their own. But the greatest benefit of all is to the children themselves. Taken from the streets, where they were exposed to every temptation, from protracted starvation, from want of food, or consumptive or strumous from atmospheric exposure on a debilitated constitution, they gradually recover in the Dominion, regain good constitutions, and become useful members of society.

No stronger contrast can be drawn of the



condition of the children who have emigrated under Miss Macpherson's auspices to Canada, than the description given of many of them in their homes in the Dominion by Miss Geldard, a friend of Miss Macpherson's, in her tour of inspection. It would occupy too much space to quote this at any length; but, as it was hardly possible to find one of the boys who, when residing in England, had not led a life of misery and privation, so in turn it seemed in Canada difficult to find one who, if industrious and obedient, was not only living in comfort and respectability, but with a good prospect of being in time a landed proprietor himself. With great tact and judgment, Miss Macpherson holds that the best home for these emigrant boys is in farmers' dwellings in Canada. Not only is a boy better nourished and better cared for there than in the towns, but he has a wider and better prospect of advancement to independence and comfort, apart from his not being exposed to the danger of finding associates who might lead him astray. On this point her friend Miss Geldard seems perfectly to agree with her. Speaking of a visit to a farmhouse at a pretty town on the Rideau, she says in a letter to Miss Macpherson: "Here we were cordially welcomed by old friends of yours, whose home is indeed a place of rest, with its

abundant books and pictures, and warm, vivid interest in the old country. One of our boys has been here a year, and his bright face and willing services show how valuable he may become. *No homes like farm homes* is a conclusion forced on us every day, for there is scope for the activity that, harmless in itself, may lead astray in town or village, where idle boys are apt to congregate."

Of the routine of life of the boys in Canada, Miss Clara Lowe, a friend and fellow-worker with Miss Macpherson, gives us, in a little work she published on the subject, some very interesting information:—"The first experience I had," she writes, "of a Canadian farm was in the neighbourhood of Stirling. Our drive was partly along the banks of the river Moira, which perhaps, from being the first with which I was acquainted, has appeared to me one of the loveliest in 'this land of broad rivers and streams.' After leaving the river our road passed through woods, in which we saw wild flowers of larger size and brighter colours than our own, but fewer in numbers; and from a rising ground we saw Stirling beneath us, and a few miles beyond reached the dwelling of one who had come out with no other riches than the strength of his own hands. His house was

humble in outward appearance, but containing every comfort, surrounded by orchard and garden, and many acres of cultivated land. Huge barns to hold the abundant produce are always the most conspicuous feature in every Canadian farm. Cattle, sheep, and poultry were all around, and all his own, and in his own power to leave to the sons growing up around him. In this family the sons were all following the father's occupation."

It must not be imagined that the work is carried on in Canada without proper supervision. Not only is Miss Macpherson's staff efficient in visiting the children in their separate homes, but she herself, on the occasions of her visits to Canada, makes a point of calling on as many as the time at her disposal will allow, cheering them with her presence, giving them good advice, and encouraging them to keep faithful to the honest and industrious mode of life they were engaged in. As a proof of this, the following short description may be given, extracted from the *Dominion Monthly Magazine* :—

“Miss Macpherson has been able to spend during the summer much of her time in visiting among the different farmers where our children are located, within some twenty or forty miles of

Belleville, in the counties of Hastings and Prince Edward. She would start some sunshiny morning on a week's tour, dining with one farmer, having tea with another, and passing the night at some special friend's. On these occasions, Charlie, the mission-horse, receives the best of fare; while next day the farmer harnesses his horse, and takes her round to the neighbouring farms where the little English emigrants have found a resting-place. And, oh! the joy of these children to see again the well-remembered face, and hear the cheery voice of her who had first seen and relieved their misery in the old country, and now bringing fresh cheer and comfort in the new. With what haste the table is spread, and soon loaded with substantial food, and afterwards, what opportunities arise for a few words of counsel! Some verses are read from the good old Book, and then, kneeling down, we and its new friends commit the child to the care of Him who has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'"

Again, Miss Macpherson, with the shrewd tact and strong common sense which is so plainly apparent in her undertakings, has established to a certain extent a co-operative movement among her fellow-workers and those under her charge. As a good example is the

best proof of an assertion, I will quote one:—  
“A young lady in the suburbs of London gathers together a few children on Saturday half-holiday afternoon. She cuts out little print frocks and aprons, and her own and the children’s fingers are soon busy at work, and ere long a useful parcel of clothing is sent to the Home of Industry.” Even those in Canada contribute also to the work. Miss Barber, a lady living at Knowlton, E.T., gives us the following description of the labours of a little community under her control:—“The children in the village,” she says, “meet together every Saturday afternoon in the schoolroom for work—some making shirts, frocks, aprons, &c., others knitting socks and mufflers. The boys wind wool, gather cones and acorns to ornament boxes, collect our beautiful autumnal leaves, which, when pressed and varnished, we hear are much esteemed in England. Every member pays a small admission fee, which goes to the purchase of materials, and each boy who is willing takes a collecting-card, while all deny themselves candy-money, &c., for the cause.”

The gross number of children who have emigrated to Canada under Miss Macpherson’s superintendence now amounts to no fewer than one thousand eight hundred, and of these all



have been provided with good employment. To say that all have turned out equally well would be an absurdity. Yet the relapses have been remarkably few in proportion to the total number of young emigrants, certainly not more than would have been the case with a similar number of young lads in any position in life. And this is the more wonderful when the class from whom they were selected, as well as their former wandering, thriftless habits, are taken into consideration. But a greater proof of the wonderful reformation effected remains to be quoted—that many of these children, whom no one, prior to their coming under Miss Macpherson's cognizance, would without scruple or fear have trusted with one shilling, have with the first money they earned reimbursed Miss Macpherson for their passage and outfit. In the present year alone, up to September, no fewer than seventy-five boys had acted in this noble manner—no indifferent proof of the reformation worked in them by the labours and teaching of Miss Macpherson and her associates.

It must not, however, be imagined that the remuneration received from these boys, or the industrial efforts of those attached to the Home of Industry in England, is sufficient for the

maintenance of the institution. A very large sum, on the contrary, has to be made up by private subscriptions, and these, if they do not flow in with sufficient abundance, are contributed, as before stated, from all orders of society. Then, again, others contribute with greater liberality, though still insufficient to carry out the good work to the proportions to which it might be developed were greater funds at Miss Macpherson's disposal. For example, Miss Macpherson tells us that lately a gentleman from Scotland has made a donation of ten thousand dollars towards a Home for the neglected children in his own city, who are to be taken in and educated, with special reference to emigration in the spring; and in Glasgow, as in London, are many found to assist in this most blessed work among the "little ones."

One more word, in conclusion. Let me ask the reader—Had Miss Macpherson been the inmate of the most efficient convent in the world, or the member of an Anglican sisterhood, could her labours have conferred greater benefit on mankind than she has effected among the ragged and starving juvenile population in the East-end of the metropolis?

## CHAPTER IV.

MARY MERRYWEATHER.

AMONG the many good works performed by the Catholic nuns, there are none more often quoted by their priests, as showing the efficacy of conventual institutions, than the order of the Sisters of Charity and Mercy; nor are they without ample justification for the credit they assume for these institutions. Nothing can be more admirable than the humanity and care of the sick and wounded exhibited by these sisterhoods. At the same time it should be borne in mind that their communication with the outer world is of a far more liberal and unrestrained description than of the Catholic sisterhoods in general—in fact, pertaining much more to what are known as the Protestant deaconesses than the ordinary seclusion of the convent.

While admitting the excellence of the labours

and organization of the Sisters of Charity, I greatly doubt if the stimulus put forward by their priests, as actuating them in their labours, is simply the idea of working out their own salvation, or, as it is usually called, in obedience to the wishes of their Heavenly Spouse. I have in my day seen a great deal of the working of the Sisters of Charity, and the most rigid Catholic could not admire more their devotion to the cause of suffering humanity than I do. I am, however, fully convinced that, whatever may be said by their priests to the contrary, the noble and innate womanly feeling,—that of a desire to succour the sick and wounded,—is not less forward in their thoughts than that of the selfish instigation of working good to their own souls. Most Protestants, at any rate, would consider the latter argument as derogatory to one of the most noble attributes of womankind. We hold that woman performing an act of mercy is simply obeying the dictates of her own nature, and her prayers to Heaven in the matter are solely dictated by a wish that its blessing may fall on her work, so as to lead it to a successful termination.

Not only is the organization of the Sisters of Charity honourable to the Roman Catholic creed, but it is a disgrace to ourselves, as Pro-

testants, that in this respect, and perhaps this alone, they are so far our superiors. Although private and family nursing was carried on to a degree among us, which it would be impossible to surpass in any country in the world, it is only of late years (scarcely, in fact, anterior to the date of the Crimean war) that we have attempted to institute anything like a public organized system of nursing. Since the Crimean war, it is true, we have made great improvements, and have already commenced more than one public school of nursing on a thoroughly organized principle, but there is still a lamentable void to be filled up before we can reach the efficiency of the Roman Catholic sisterhoods. The name of the originator of this movement, Florence Nightingale, is now a household word with us. At the same time, as I hinted in my opening chapter, the just respect and devotion in which we hold that lady has to a great extent drowned our gratitude—in fact, frequently ignored the labours of ladies who, if less celebrated than herself, are as earnest in the cause of suffering humanity. Of these, several might be named, but I must content myself with one alone from the many whose labours are as energetic, if not as extensive.

The philanthropic labours of Miss Mary



Merryweather commenced several years prior to the date when the subject of nursing was brought prominently before the public by the labours of Miss Nightingale. Indeed, from an early age she seems to have devoted her energies to the comfort, instruction, and elevation of those around her. For some time, however, she did not confine her exertions to any one definite object, but merely did what good she could, and wherever she found the opportunity. One day in the summer of 1847, a friend narrated to her the particulars of a fête she had witnessed a short time before, which had been given to the factory hands of some large silk-works situated near Halstead. Miss Merryweather was much interested in the recital, and asked many questions respecting the condition of the operatives employed. Her friend readily gave her a description of the extraordinary amount both of good and evil to be found among the silk-workers; yet the good and the evil seemed balanced in such equal proportions that it was difficult to say which predominated. The proprietors of the factory, she stated, were by no means to blame, for more liberal or kind-hearted people it would be difficult to find. They had already done what had been suggested for the improvement of their operatives, espe-

cially the girls, and they were now seeking for some lady who could undertake to read and lecture to them daily, as the Ten Hours Bill, which had lately come into operation, gave them far more leisure than they had hitherto enjoyed.

The graphic description Miss Merryweather's friend had given her of the condition of the factory-hands at Halstead greatly interested her. The more she thought over the subject, the more attractive did it grow, until at last she resolved to offer her services to Mr. Courtauld, the proprietor of the silk-works, in the capacity of reader and lecturer to the factory-girls in his employ. She had little difficulty in obtaining an introduction to Mrs. Courtauld, the wife of the proprietor, and that benevolent lady willingly accepted Miss Merryweather's offer. Having first spent some weeks at the normal school in the Borough Road, to make herself fully acquainted with the routine of the work on which she was about to enter, she left London for Halstead, where she received a most cordial reception from Mr. and Mrs. Courtauld, who immediately accompanied her to the scene of her future labours. The factory itself was a large brick building, very similar to others of the same description. It contained on the basement floor five hundred looms, which were

worked by steam-power, and each attended to by one woman. Above this were two stories, partly appropriated to the weaving of gauze for crape, and partly for other processes connected with the silk manufacture. At the time of her visit there were fully a thousand women and girls employed in the factory, besides the requisite number of men for performing the heavier portion of the work. Miss Merryweather found most of the women clean and tidily dressed, but, in spite of the pains taken by the overseers to enforce cleanliness, many were dirty and slovenly.

Having entered on her duties, she soon determined that her labours should not be confined to the instruction of the young girls, but that she would assist the adult females as well. She obtained from the overseers of the factory a list of those women absent from work on account of sickness, and she made it one portion of her daily work to visit cases of the kind. As may be imagined, she found singular instances of all that is honourable in woman side by side with gross immorality and incredibly uncleanly habits. Many seemed not to have the slightest idea of religion, while dirt and drunkenness appeared to have assumed complete control over them.

Hitherto there had been no schools in connection with the factory. The children were always more than thirteen years of age before they commenced working, and thus the masters were not required by Act of Parliament to supply them with the means of education. There was, however, a British school in the town which was liberally supported by the firm, and there were also two National schools connected with the two churches. The larger proportion of the children in the factory, however, had received little or no education from those schools, and it was one of Miss Merryweather's first endeavours to establish an evening school. In order to enlist some interest among the better-instructed of the young women in the factory, and to get them to co-operate with her, Miss Merryweather paid frequent visits to them while they were at work. She thus endeavoured, by conversing with them, and entering into their little domestic histories, to establish an intimacy with them which might afterwards be used with advantage. The system answered admirably, and Miss Merryweather in a short time obtained from them not only their confidence, but also the assurance of their hearty co-operation with her in the work she was engaged in.

Having organized her staff, Miss Merryweather

commenced operations, and in a short time opened her evening school. About a hundred and twenty scholars entered their names the first week; but a great many difficulties remained to be overcome before the movement could be looked upon as a success. The road to the schoolroom from the main street was by a narrow dirty path where there were no lamps. The schoolroom itself was without gas, and sad were the disasters which happened to the oil-lamps by which it was lighted. "Nothing could be more uncomfortable than all was at first," Miss Merryweather writes, "not only in the school, but in the dark, dirty, winding way which led to it; but I carried my own little lantern, and the more timid girls went and came with me. Again, our first school-nights were unsettled and exciting. A great many of the most disorderly girls were attracted by the novelty. They would come and see what this new teacher was like, and have some fun, as they thought. The managers of the factory, knowing the characters of most of these, asked me to have one or two of the overseers present to prevent disorder, but this I declined, and would do just the same thing again in the same circumstances. It was best to do what was possible with them on my own personal respon-



sibility. I was anxious, also, to disconnect in their minds the school from the factory. But it would have been better, and have made it much easier to manage at first, if all the weavers above seventeen had been made to pay at least a penny a week. The school being free, there was great crowding and crushing up to be classified. Some of those who came were coarse, noisy girls, with no womanly reserve or modesty; they pushed, jested, and even swore at each other."

The thorough organization of the school seems to have caused Miss Merryweather no little trouble. The better and more modest young women who had promised to assist her as monitors began to shrink from the undertaking, as they disliked to be subjected to the taunts and jeers of the ruder girls while engaged at their labours in the factory. By degrees, however, a better order of things began to prevail. Miss Merryweather had persisted in her systematic patience and mildness of manner, and at last experienced the fruits of the policy she had adopted. She began to be implicitly obeyed without even the necessity of using an angry or an impatient word to those who had hitherto been the most refractory. Her monitors, also, had more attention shown them. The school

building, too, underwent considerable repair and improvements. Gas was put on, and many other little comforts were attended to, and at last everything was got into good working order.

With the adults Miss Merryweather had far greater trouble than with the girls—the women as well as the men being in the habit of frequenting the numerous public-houses in the neighbourhood. There they not only wasted their own time and money, but enticed others, who were comparatively innocent, to imitate them. Another attraction against which Miss Merryweather had particularly to work were the penny dances, which were of course accompanied with immoderate drinking and low songs, and were generally got up in public-houses. By degrees, however, Miss Merryweather contrived to induce the women to leave them, and come to the school or the mothers' meetings. Still a vast amount of mischief remained untouched which no efforts of hers could subdue.

In the meantime the evening school progressed in a most satisfactory manner, and the elder girls began to take a great interest in it. Miss Merryweather would now frequently give them simple lectures on elementary portions of science, especially the first principles of physiology, the

great laws governing health, and the value of personal cleanliness. In this department she had, perhaps, more difficulty than in any other, but at last she succeeded. The admonition to wash themselves regularly and thoroughly every day seemed to be received by many as an absurd and impossible thing; indeed, one blunt girl declared she did not believe she had ever been in a bath since she was a baby. By degrees, however, not only did the truth of Miss Merryweather's lectures become apparent to them, but they also came to feel the comfort of following her advice; and at last her pupils became as cleanly in their persons as they had hitherto been the reverse.

It is not my intention to follow Miss Merryweather through her various philanthropic efforts in the neighbourhood of Halstead and its factory, deeply interesting as the subject would be. Should the reader wish for more information respecting her work, I would refer him to a little book written by her, entitled, "Experiences of Factory Life: being a Record of Fourteen Years' Work at Mr. Courtauld's Silk Mill at Halstead, Essex." I can assure the reader that the perusal of its pages will well repay the time it will take.

Notwithstanding the interest Miss Merryweather felt in her factory labours, she had still

a place in her heart for other kinds of work, and, like many other ladies, she took a great interest in the subject of nursing, and often wished she could employ herself in any way in furthering the movement. For some time, however, no opportunity presented itself to her, and she continued steadily and indefatigably to do her duties at Halstead. Chance, however, befriended her when she least expected it. A gentleman of fortune residing in Liverpool (whose name it is unnecessary to mention here) resolved to raise a monument *in memoriam* of a severe domestic affliction. He justly considered that none better could be erected than a building dedicated to the welfare of his fellow-creatures, and especially for the solace of the sick and wounded, and he decided on establishing a nurses' training-school and home. As soon as his intentions were made known, other benevolent individuals gathered round him and offered him their co-operation in the good work he was about to commence. In a short time a very handsome edifice was erected in the rear of the Royal Infirmary.

During the construction of the building, the subscribers employed themselves in organizing their working staff. The committee of the school was selected from the infirmary committee, the

chairman and treasurer being *ex-officio* members. The most difficult office, however, had yet to be filled up—that of a lady superintendent, and diligent indeed were the researches made to find a person fitted for the purpose. Many were proposed, and from these Miss Merryweather was at last chosen. Nor were the committee easily pleased in their choice, as a quotation from a report of their proceedings to the subscribers will show, which I insert the more readily as it will relieve me from the suspicion of any personal flattery of Miss Merryweather. The committee's report says: "To take charge of such an institution from its very commencement no ordinary qualities were required. A lady competent for such a post must be endowed with considerable energy and a hopeful spirit; must have strong religious principles, yet be free from anything like sectarian prejudice and bigotry; must possess a clear and sound judgment; must be devoted to her work, and have skill to select, and moral and mental power to control and inspire a number of young women brought together under circumstances affording them great opportunities of usefulness and self-improvement, but at the same time exposing them to considerable temptations. We were fortunate enough to find a lady who possessed



the requisite qualifications, and to prevail on her to undertake the work."

Even in Miss Merryweather's case an objection at first presented itself. Constant and kind as had been her attendance at the bedside of the sick at Halstead, she had as yet had no experience in nursing on a large scale, or in the management of such an institution. This objection, however, was speedily removed. Miss Merryweather, immediately on her appointment, attended at the Nightingale School in connection with St. Thomas's Hospital, and that of the Sisters of St. John's House, who have charge of King's College Hospital, and thus she made herself thoroughly acquainted with the system and organization of those two nursing schools, and their method of study, and the surgical and medical training therein pursued. The remaining portion of her duties was far more easy to acquire, her own innate ideas of order and discipline qualifying her admirably for regulating an establishment of the kind. The various officials having now been selected, it remained to draw up a code of rules to regulate the admission and instruction of the nurses, as well as to control them. To accomplish this, the separate elements of which the administration was composed, combined admirably; so far

as the scientific instruction and direction of the nurses was concerned, they were placed under the immediate control of the medical officers. When in the Home they were wholly under the control of Miss Merryweather; but when in the hospital she had no power beyond what the mistress of every establishment ought to maintain over those young women confided to her care; and this regulation has been rigidly submitted to by Miss Merryweather, whose only interference with the duties of the infirmary has been to see that the orders of the medical officers were rigorously carried out whenever there appeared any probability of their being neglected.

The general economy and business arrangements of the Home were to be regulated by the managing committee, while the direct superintendence and control of the nurses, when off duty and in the Home, were entrusted to Miss Merryweather. There her powers were to be absolute. While she was to be submissive to the medical officers, as far as regarded the duty of the nurses in the infirmary, they (the medical officers) again were equally without power in the Home, although, of course, their opinion as to any sanitary arrangements in it were to be strictly attended to. The success which has

attended this institution proves how great is the power of the male and female mind when actively employed together in good works, compared to what is seen when the sexes are separated into sisterhoods and fraternities; and, the former especially, domiciled in convents, and under the direction of their priests. Without wishing to say one disrespectful word of the different Protestant sisterhoods at present in England, or of the purity of their motives and strength of their zeal, I must still express my firm conviction that the success of the Liverpool Nurses' Home and Training School has been far greater than it would have been had Miss Merryweather, and the ladies co-operating with her, shut themselves up in a state of half-seclusion, and had communication only with their male fellow-workers on specified occasions, or through the clergyman attached to their particular establishment.

The rules for the regulation of the nurses were compiled with consummate ability. Candidates were to be chosen, if possible, of ages ranging from twenty-five to thirty-five. Although ladies were to be willingly admitted as probationers, it was considered that the classes of young women best adapted for the work were those of the lower middle orders, farmers'

daughters, and respectable and intelligent female servants. When a candidate applied for admission a printed form was to be given her to be filled up, and in this she was required to state her name, age, place of birth, where she had been educated, her previous occupation, and whether married, single, or a widow (if the latter, a marriage certificate was required), and if married or a widow, whether she had any children, and if so, how many, as well as give some good reference as to her respectability. Those applicants having been examined by the managing committee and lady superintendent, and the result admitted to be satisfactory, another paper was given to them to be filled up by some medical man well acquainted with her family, so as to prove her physical capabilities for the work she was about to undertake. The questions in this certificate, which is still in use, are of the most stringent character. The medical referee is required to state how long he has been acquainted with the applicant; whether she is intelligent and of active habits; what is her general appearance, configuration, height, weight, and general health; whether she has had any serious illness, and if so, when, and of what character; whether she is subject to head affections, or has any tendency to pulmonary disease; whether her

parents are living, and whether there has been insanity in her family. Should this certificate be filled up in a satisfactory manner, the applicant is required to attend before the committee, and having again expressed her willingness to be a probationer, she is asked a series of questions as to whether she has read the rules which she is expected to obey, whether she is willing to attend the poor as well as the rich, and whether she clearly understands that she is not to accept any present of value from patients or their friends without the consent of the committee. She is also informed that when in the Home she must always wear a dress prescribed by the committee, and that she is further to understand that, in case of her neglecting to strictly obey the regulations of the Home, she will be immediately dismissed.

That the reader may not imagine this reference to the costume of the nurses approaches in the slightest degree the dress of the convent, it would be better shortly to describe it. It has nothing of the appearance of that worn by a sisterhood, or the members of a conventual institution. It is simply a neat cotton gown of one regular pattern, such as a person in middle life would wear when engaged in any active employment. The regulation respecting the



dress of the nurses seems to have been adopted by the committee rather with a view of preventing any competition in their costumes, than to place on them any badge or uniform. Nor have the sick and wounded under the charge of the nurses lost in any manner by the enforced simplicity of their secular attire. If the cross is not worn by them as an emblem on their outward dress, their behaviour to those under their ministrations has hitherto proved that it is not the less deeply engraven on their hearts. Subject to their good behaviour and competency, the nurses are now engaged for three years, and during that time they are employed in hospital, district, and private nursing, according as their talents or the want of their services may render necessary.

When a probationer enters on her duties she is at first placed for two months in a surgical ward, and afterwards for two more in a medical ward. If sufficiently trained she is then placed for four months as nurse in a surgical ward, under one of the head nurses, and after that for four months more as nurse in a medical ward; subject, however, to such modifications as the lady superintendent may consider necessary. By the end of twelve months it is generally considered the curriculum of study necessary

to form an experienced nurse has been gone through.

The nurses have but a small share in the drudgery of a hospital. Their duties lie in the wards of their patients, save when they go to the dispensary for medicines, or to the matron for stores. There is no limit to the number of nurses employed, and as the Royal Infirmary is the training-school, it is not thought desirable to impose any. Some few of the nurses have never left the infirmary, being best suited for that work, or being left in charge there by request of the medical officers, who do not like too frequent changes; but all nurses are liable to be sent for any service at the discretion of the lady superintendent. Belonging to the Home there is also a superannuation fund, in which every nurse is allowed to participate after ten years' service, if no longer fit for duty; the scale of allowance rising in proportion with their length of service.

At present there are several hospitals in the kingdom supplied with nurses from the Liverpool Training School, and in which also the regulations with respect to the discipline and organization are observed. Among these may especially be named the hospital at Belfast, and the Westminster Hospital in London.

The whole of the district nursing in Liverpool is under the superintendence of the training-school, the whole of the nurses having been probationers in that institution.

The city of Liverpool is divided among them into nineteen districts, superintended by ladies of all religious denominations. Their labours are perfectly unsectarian, as it has been proved that on this basis alone could such a work be carried on. The regulations and working of the district nursing in Liverpool are truly admirable. Not only are the medical requirements of the sick efficiently performed, but a relief-staff has been added to each district, which is under the management of the above-mentioned ladies, whose duties are to supply all medical comforts and other necessaries for the relief of the patients not found by the Home. The average expense of this extra relief in each of the districts is about £150 a-year. Altogether the system works admirably. It would be impossible to find in England a town where the district nursing is more effectually and efficiently performed than in Liverpool.

To go further into details as to the general management of the Nurses' Home and the duties of the inmates, would far exceed my limits. Should the reader be interested in the

subject, I would refer him to an excellent *brochure* written by a member of the committee (unfortunately he has withheld his name, for he is deserving of great praise), "On the Organization of Nursing in Large Towns," in which, with justifiable pride, he draws his conclusions from the success which has attended the Liverpool Nurses' Training School and Home. The work is interesting as a narrative to the public at large, and also as a book of reference to those engaged in establishing similar institutions.

To return to Miss Merryweather. Aided by the efficient services of her sister Elizabeth, the Training School and Home for Nurses has become, under her immediate management, one of the most celebrated institutions in Liverpool. I have visited most of the best hospitals in Europe, but in none have I seen nursing carried to higher perfection than here. A more respectable and intelligent body of women than those attached to the Liverpool Training School it would be difficult to find: even their simple costume has its beneficial effect. It has none of that depressing tendency occasionally produced by the black dress of the Sisters seen in foreign hospitals. Miss Merryweather's nurses convey a cheering domestic impression rather than otherwise. They have about them a genial air,

which brings to the mind of the sick under their care more of the idea of skilful and kind home nurses, than of the organized business routine of a public institution. Yet it would be impossible for any women, no matter how strictly they may have bound themselves by vows, in carrying out their mission to the sick, to show greater courage, devotion, and patience, than were shown by the nurses under Miss Merryweather's care, during the last severe visitation of the cholera. Many of them were then prostrated by sickness from the severity of their labours, yet all unhesitatingly resumed them as soon as their health was re-established, while two of them actually fell victims to the faithful performance of their duties.

My latest visit to the Liverpool Nursing Institution was in the autumn of last year. I found the most perfect order and cleanliness pervading both the Infirmary and the Home. Not a thing seemed wanting, nor was anything out of its place. The Home itself, in all its arrangements, appeared a perfect model of what an institution of the kind ought to be. The private rooms of the nurses and probationers (for each had her own room) were not only well-furnished and supplied with every comfort, but an order was observable in them which could not have been



surpassed in any private establishment, no matter how well regulated. At present the number of nurses and probationers attached to the School and Home is about ninety. Of these a considerable number are engaged in the Infirmary; others are employed in private and district nursing. In the establishment is always a sufficient number ready to be sent out to private families on any emergency. In one large storeroom I noticed several japanned iron boxes, such as are at present used by ladies for travelling, all of the same size and pattern. These, I was informed, contained the ready-packed outfit of a nurse who should be called out to attend in any private family. Round the room, also, were large closed compartments, each bearing a name on it, and these contained the surplus clothes and effects of those nurses who were on duty at a distance from the Home. Altogether, a visit to the Home would well repay any philanthropist interested in institutions of the kind, and I am certain the impression he will bring away with him will be the same that I experienced when quitting the building—that while other institutions may equal it in excellence of management, it would be difficult indeed to find one to exceed it.

Before closing this chapter, I cannot avoid expressing my great surprise that the district nursing of the Liverpool Institution has not been taken up as a model for parochial and poor-law nursing in large towns. The cost would be trifling, and the benefits enormous. Some hold that under our poor-law guardians such a system would be impossible, and that the miserable parsimony they habitually exercise in the fulfilment of their duties would make them reject, without proper consideration, any proposition that would be likely to increase the rates, no matter to how trifling a degree. There can be no doubt in the mind of any person accustomed to watch the poor-law administration, in the metropolis for example, that considerable injustice is frequently done its administrators in this particular. Of the statistics of Liverpool I know but little, but a very short calculation may prove that in the metropolis a system of nursing similar to that carried out by Miss Merryweather and her coadjutors in Liverpool, might be adopted in London at a very trifling cost. A lady superintendent with £500 a year, two assistants with £250 a year each, one hundred head nurses at £100 a year each, and one thousand trained nurses at £50 a year each, would not cost more

than one-halfpenny in the pound on the rating of the metropolis. From this, also, should be deducted the amounts at present paid to the parish nurses, as well as the benefits added to be derived from their services in reducing the parochial expenditure. The whole cost, therefore, of an establishment of the kind, would possibly be reduced to a little more than a farthing in the pound. I do not offer this as a scheme to be adopted; I merely throw it out as a suggestion worthy to be entertained. An objection might be raised that to place a system of the kind under the poor-law administration would be to deprive the present system of one of its most beautiful attributes—that of spontaneous benevolence and charity. But those likely to take up such an argument should remember that our poor-law, in its origin and intention, was merely the regulated alms-giving of the community or parish. Nor need there be any fear that if the system were adopted there would be no scope for the practice of private benevolence, for we are told “The poor ye have always with you.” Were the Liverpool system of district nursing adopted over the whole of the metropolis, the philanthropist would still have abundant means left him for exercising his charity.

## CHAPTER V.

JOHANNA CHANDLER.

HAVING given a description of the results of Miss Merryweather's labours as showing the power of an energetic, clear-headed, and amiable woman in training nurses for our hospitals, I will next quote the efforts of another lady in establishing, from a very small commencement, and against apparently insuperable difficulties, an admirable hospital for the reception of patients suffering under those terrible maladies, paralysis and epilepsy—I allude to Miss Johanna Chandler.

This lady was one of a family of several orphan children, who were brought up under the care of their grandparents. About fifteen years ago her grandmother left her home on a visit. She returned to it in a few days; but how great was the change which had taken place in the interim! She had left her house a hale, active,

clear-minded woman, of remarkably strong will ; she was carried back to it struck down by paralysis, and utterly helpless. The sight of the relative they had so lately taken leave of in such vigour, both of mind and body, and who had returned to them suffering so severely, had a great and painful effect, both on Johanna Chandler and her sister Louisa, since deceased. They felt deeply grieved for her misfortune, but their sorrow was not of that morbid kind which, feeding on itself, is content with pitying the sufferer. While sympathizing deeply with their grandmother, they exerted themselves physically to render the invalid every attention and relief in their power, so as to reduce to its minimum the severity of the stroke which had fallen on her. And to a great extent they succeeded. They soon saw that by good nursing and incessant care, the old lady received great benefit. While employed in these duties, they were led to think of the amount of discomfort and fatigue a case of paralysis or epilepsy must entail on a poor family, and also of the misery which must accrue to the afflicted person from the inability of those surrounding him to offer the required attention, irrespective of the heavy expense, both of time and labour, such an affliction must occasion.



Miss Chandler had soon an opportunity of testing, by actual experiment, the idea she had formed as to the heavy burden a case of paralysis or epilepsy must be in a poor man's family. An operative carpenter had been stricken down by paralysis; his only nurse was his wife, and she was almost dying of consumption at the time. The poor people had heard that Miss Chandler's grandmother had been afflicted with the same disease, and they sent to ask her for a little advice and assistance in their strait. Without hesitation Miss Chandler visited the poor man's home, and a sad scene it was that presented itself to her on entering. In a small back room, hardly large enough to contain a bedstead and a few necessary articles of furniture, a poor woman lay suffering acutely in the last stage of consumption. Her husband, a man in the prime of life, was helplessly stricken with paralysis, having lost the entire use of his right side; while a group of four small children looked pitifully at their parents. The family were in a state of the most distressing poverty. In their need they had applied to the parish for assistance, and the parish in reply had offered them admission into the house, possibly with the certainty that the offer would be refused. At all events such was the case, for they preferred

starving to being separated from each other. Miss Chandler assisted them to the best of her ability, and called on them frequently afterwards. One evening, however, a few weeks after her first visit, she found that death had relieved the poor woman from her sufferings. Miss Chandler, in a note she made on the occasion, says,—“Mentally I repeated ‘These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”

The funeral over, Miss Chandler attempted to relieve the miseries of the bereaved family, and especially those of the husband. She applied to several hospitals and other charitable institutions for his admission as an in-patient; but, to her great surprise, grief, and indignation, she found there was not one in the metropolis which would receive cases of the kind. “Although,” she writes, “there are charities in London for the relief of almost every class of human affliction, yet the sufferings of the paralyzed have been most strangely overlooked; and with that thought came the strong resolve that, God helping me, I would devote my life in endeavouring to supply this great want.”

Although the infirm health of her grandmother prevented her for a time from making

any very energetic attempts to carry out her resolves, it was never for a moment absent from Miss Chandler's mind, and she and her sister Louisa frequently occupied themselves in sketching out the plan of operation they should follow when they should have the opportunity. The time at last arrived, and the two ladies set themselves to work with all that energy and single-mindedness which women so often display when occupied in any labour of mercy they have determined to carry out. Never for a moment did they lose sight of the object they had in view, or allow any extraneous circumstance or temptation to divert them from it. Their first necessity was, of course, money, but how to raise it was indeed a difficult question. Although of a highly respectable family, they could hardly be considered in affluent circumstances; yet they resolved that energy alone should not be their contribution to the cause, and they took from their own moderate resources the sum of £200 as a nucleus for the fund they proposed raising. Nor was this done without difficulty, for to accomplish it they deprived themselves of many comforts they might otherwise have enjoyed. They now began to appeal publicly to the benevolent for aid, but without the slightest good effects attending their efforts. Greatly

disappointed, but not discouraged, they then resolved to address letters to all the leading philanthropists of the day for the purpose of eliciting their patronage and support to the proposed charity. They received a variety of replies to their letters, some approving of the object they had in view, and others objecting. Many thought the idea a good one, but wished to have no trouble in the matter. Some praised them highly, but nobody promised or offered a shilling to assist them. Still they resolved to persevere, but an unexpected trouble arose. The younger sister's health gave way under the accumulation of fatigue and anxiety, and she was declared to be in a hopeless state of consumption.

It was now five years since Miss Chandler had first determined on raising a hospital for the relief of the paralyzed and epileptic; but beyond the money she and her sister had themselves subscribed, and a certain amount of notoriety which had accrued from their unceasing efforts, the realisation of the object they had in view seemed as far distant as ever. Suddenly, however, the "little cloud" which had hitherto appeared no larger than the palm of a man's hand, began to expand. Miss Chandler, when almost in despair, received one morning

a letter from the Lord Mayor (Mr. Alderman Wire), requesting to see her at the Mansion House concerning her proposed institution for the paralyzed and epileptic. At this interview he remarked that he knew from personal experience that much could be done for the cure of paralysis, as he himself had suffered from that malady. He promised her that he would not only give the undertaking his support, as well as receive subscriptions for it, but that he would also preside at a public meeting which he proposed should be held for it at the Mansion House.

It is needless to attempt a description of the effect this kind offer of Alderman Wire had on the mind and heart of Miss Chandler. In warm terms she expressed her gratitude to him for his sympathy in the cause in which she was so deeply interested, and she then hurried home to inform her brothers, sister and friends of the change which one short interview with a benevolent and influential gentleman had made in prospects which the most sanguine among them had begun to consider hopeless. Arrangements had now to be made by them for the public meeting, the Lord Mayor having left the order of the proceedings to be settled by Miss Chandler. Letters innumerable were written to persons



likely to take an interest in the cause, inviting their attendance, and advertisements were drawn up and inserted in the public papers. All the family circle, as well as some of their intimate friends, worked unremittingly in making preparations for the forthcoming event, in order that nothing might be wanting to ensure its success. Even poor Louisa Chandler, whose hopeless condition was now fully known to herself and her family, insisted in taking part in the labour with the others, sealing and directing letters, and assisting them in every way in her power.

The day for the public meeting was now rapidly drawing near; but even before it arrived Miss Chandler received an earnest of the success which was shortly to attend her. Lady Burdett Coutts having seen the advertisements for the public meeting in the papers, wrote to the Lord Mayor, requesting further particulars respecting the proposed hospital, and she was so pleased with the answer she received that she immediately sent a cheque for £100 towards the building fund, promising in the same letter a subscription of £50 a year for the first five years after the hospital should be opened for the reception of patients.

On the morning of the public meeting, Miss

Chandler and her brother left their home to attend it with feelings which it would be difficult to describe. Their sister Louisa, who, under the stimulus of the mental exertions she had lately experienced, had appeared to be in somewhat better health, had that morning suffered so severe a relapse, that her life for some hours was almost despaired of. True, she had partially recovered when the time of the meeting drew near, but more than once during the day's proceedings a terrible fear crossed the mind of both brother and sister as to the condition they should find her in on their return home. As to the meeting itself, it was a perfect success. The Lord Mayor, from the chair, put to the meeting a resolution to the effect that a National Hospital for the Paralyzed and Epileptic should be established in the metropolis; and it was carried unanimously. Various other resolutions were also proposed and carried, and among them one accepting the services of E. H. Chandler, Esq., the brother of Miss Johanna, as honorary secretary—an office, the duties of which he has continued to fulfil with unremitting earnestness and ability. Before the meeting separated, the Lord Mayor had the satisfaction of announcing that subscriptions exceeding £800 had already been received by him in aid of the institution; and

he added that he should have much pleasure in taking charge of any sums which might be forwarded to him for the same purpose. The meeting over, Miss Chandler and her brother returned home with feelings of a singularly mixed description. While more than merely satisfied with the success of the day's operations, their anxiety as to the condition in which they might find their sister on their arrival was very great. Fortunately their alarm was for the moment dispelled when they entered, for they found Louisa somewhat better, though they rightly feared that the improvement they saw in her was in no small degree to be accounted for by the excitement of her eagerness to know the result of the meeting. Johanna narrated to her the good fortune which had attended them. "Thank God!" said the dying girl; "thank God! May the success which has now begun to attend your exertions prove a consolation to you when I am gone." Louisa Chandler died a few days afterwards. The public meeting at the Mansion House was held on the 2nd of November, 1859, and she expired on the 22nd day of the same month.

The name of the new hospital having been determined on, it now remained to provide or find a building in which it could be established.

This was a difficult matter, but at last a house was found situated in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, which appeared in every way admirably adapted for the purpose. Not only was the main building most commodious, but it had also an adjunct of two very large rooms in the rear, which with perfect facility could be arranged for wards. In the month of May, 1860, a meeting was held in the building, and the hospital was declared open. With the energy and kind feeling habitually shown by the medical profession in furthering all good works intended to relieve the physical misfortunes of their fellow-creatures, a most efficient staff of physicians of eminence (especially those experienced in the diseases of paralysis and epilepsy) enrolled themselves as the medical officers of the institution, and a vast number of out-patients soon flocked to them for advice and assistance. In the meantime the work of furnishing the wards progressed rapidly, or at least as much so as the limited finances of the charity would allow; for although fresh subscriptions continued to flow in, they hardly yet were sufficient to do all the good the benevolent promoters desired. A short time after the opening of the hospital the first ward (for women) was opened, and as a graceful compliment to the

Misses Chandler, it was called the "Sisters' Ward."

In June, 1860, the first in-patient was admitted into the hospital. The poor woman, when she found herself alone in the large ward, burst into tears, so depressing was the feeling of loneliness which came over her. She was comforted, however, by the assurance that she would soon have many companions, and the promise was kept to the letter. During the first year of its existence, the Hospital was the means of doing a vast amount of good; so much so, in fact, that its reputation in consequence became fully established. During that period the president of the committee (Mr. Alderman Wire) had been unceasing in his efforts to promote the prosperity of the institution. When the first anniversary festival was held, he was unfortunately absent from ill health. Miss Chandler sent him a letter of congratulation on the success of an enterprise which had received such excellent support at his hands. The letter was read to him, and he expressed his great satisfaction at its contents. He was too unwell at the moment to dictate an answer, and three days afterwards this good man was no more.

The promoters of the charity had originally determined on having a mixed board of ma-



nagement, composed of ladies and gentlemen. Objections were, however, raised to this plan, and it was resolved that the institution should be worked by two separate committees—one of gentlemen, who should superintend the general economy and police of the hospital; the other of ladies, who should control the domestic arrangements, including the nursing, the latter of course under the direction of the medical officers. To this committee Miss Johanna Chandler was appointed honorary secretary, the duties of which office, although suffering from great weakness of constitution, she has admirably fulfilled to the present time. A more devoted sisterhood than this little band of ladies have proved themselves could not be named. With the liberality of our Protestant institutions, they have maintained a discipline and organization which could not have been surpassed by any sisterhood in the Roman Catholic Church. Unlike the lady patronesses of too many of our charities, the committee of ladies attached to this hospital do not content themselves with giving it the prestige of their names, and possibly paying it occasionally a formal visit; they not only personally superintend the arrangements, but bestow on it no small amount of practical exertion as well. They are also the

administrators of a Samaritan fund and a pension fund attached to the charity, the whole of the money raised for these purposes being obtained by their energy as canvassers. From a very small beginning, the pension fund is already developing itself into an important portion of the institution. Yet, notwithstanding all the exertions of the ladies, the pensions are still far in arrear of the necessities they are intended to alleviate. Possibly no class of diseases requires more assistance in a pecuniary way than those for which this charity was intended, or causes a greater drain on the limited resources of the poor patients and their families.\*

\* The following pensions are already founded :—

1. The "Wire" pension, of £10, in memory of the late Alderman Wire.

2 to 5. The "Sister's Memorial," of four pensions of £10 each, in memory of the late Louisa Chandler.

6 and 7. The "Joseph Silver." Two pensions of £15 each, founded by Mrs. Joseph Silver, in memory of her late husband, a sufferer from paralysis.

8. The "Harford" pension, of £10. Founded by Mrs. Harford, in memory of her late husband.

9. The "E. H. Chandler" pension, of £10.

10 The "Roll's" pension, of £10.

11. The "In Memoriam" pension, of £20. Founded by Miss M. S. Buckley.

12 and 13. Two pensions of £10 each, by kind friends.

14. The "Gondhurst" pension, of £10.

15. The "Pilcher" pension, of £10.

16. The "Bath" pension, of £10.

17. The "Surrage" pension, of £10. Founded by Miss Surrage, in memory of her late brother.

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Another branch, and a most useful one too, is also under the direction of these ladies. From the nature of their complaints, paralytic and epileptic patients require a continued supply of warm clothing. To meet this want, the ladies, by application among their personal friends, succeeded in obtaining a large amount of clothing, though by no means equal to the need. In winter, also, the Samaritan fund enables them, to a considerable extent, to supply the out patients with coals, blankets, and other articles necessary for the season. It may, perhaps, appear invidious to name one of these ladies in preference to the others, where all are equally benevolent and energetic; still, as on the occasion of a visit I paid some years since to the institution I was so struck with the activity and solicitude displayed by one I met there (Miss Bevington), I may consider myself fully

18. The "Memorial" pension, of £10. By Mrs. Sparks.

19. A pension of £20. Founded by Miss Gibbins.

20. A pension of £10. Founded by Mrs. Back, in memory of her late husband.

21. The "Grandmother's" pension, of £10. In memory of Mrs. Johanna Pinnock, whose sufferings from paralysis led to the foundation of the hospital.

22. An "In Memoriam" pension, of £10, and twenty-five others, varying from £10 to £20 a year, principally founded by benevolent individuals, most of whom have had beloved relatives suffering from paralysis or epilepsy. Many other pensions are in course of formation.

justified in offering her as a type of the rest. Of the gentlemen's committee, beyond stating that their duties are most efficiently performed, I shall not speak, the object of my paper being solely to show the value of well-regulated female co-operation in the promotion of charitable undertakings.

To return now to the Hospital. From the number of patients who flocked to it for relief, it was soon found that better provision must be made in it for their reception. The waiting-rooms, from being too small, were crowded to inconvenience, and more beds were required for the in-patients. As the expense which would attend the necessary enlargement of the premises would be very great, and as to lay out the money on a building held only on a yearly tenancy would be improvident, it was resolved to purchase the freehold. To do this, however, a further sum of £2,000 was required. The labour of raising this amount was undertaken without hesitation by Miss Chandler and the Ladies' Committee. Having succeeded in raising the money, they enlisted the services of Mr. M. P. Manning, an eminent architect, to advise them on the desired alterations. This gentleman soon decided that the space in the building was sufficient for the accommodation proposed.

At this juncture the Board of Management heard that the freehold of the adjoining house was for sale, but how to procure the money to purchase it was indeed a difficult problem to solve. Johanna Chandler and her little band of lady helpers were, however, by no means dismayed at the difficulty which had appeared so formidable to the gentlemen's committee. They set themselves resolutely to work, and through their agency the sum necessary for the purchase was in a short time added to the funds of the Hospital. Not content with their success, the ladies now applied themselves to raise the money for the required alterations, as well as for the purchase of new furniture, and through their canvassing alone the object was accomplished. The whole funds, including the cost of the freehold, with the alterations and furniture, amounting altogether to more than £6,000, was obtained directly or indirectly through the agency of Miss Chandler and the Ladies' Committee, a result which furnished another proof, if any were wanting, of the value of unfettered female co-operation in works of public benevolence.

For some three or four years the hospital now worked steadily on, its funds in the meantime increasing with considerable rapidity; in



fact, to such an extent as to compare most favourably with any special hospital in the metropolis. The medical staff, as well as both ladies' and gentlemen's committees, worked on together with perfect unanimity of feeling—none of those dreaded antagonisms or jealousies, which have been so often predicted in societies where ladies and gentlemen acted together, being developed. On the contrary, nothing could be more satisfactory or unanimous than their proceedings. But the ability and assiduity of the medical staff, and the excellent management of the committees, brought with them, if not other inconveniences, at least liabilities which have been difficult to surmount. The higher in favour the hospital became with the public at large, and the sick and paralytic in particular, the greater became the number of applicants for relief; and this, too, in a manner exceeding the increase in the funds, liberal as that undoubtedly was. So many were the applications for admission into the house—all of them cases well entitled to relief—that how to accomplish it was a matter of great difficulty to the committee. Their present building would hold no more, and to purchase another at a distance from the parent institution would be attended with great difficulty and inconvenience.

Here, however, good fortune again befriended them, and the next house to their present building, possessing some large out-premises, was offered for sale. With little difficulty the money was raised, and the property purchased. The alterations were commenced, and, as soon as finished, the new wards, with additional furniture, were opened for the reception of patients. Altogether the institution may be considered unique of its kind, for I believe it would be difficult to mention any in Europe of a similar description, which approaches it for skill in attendance, liberality in treatment, and efficiency and good management in its organization.

The Hospital, with its hundred beds, may be considered as now completed, and a more admirable specimen of human ingenuity applied to the relief of suffering, it would be difficult to imagine. Every mechanical appliance which could advantageously be brought into action to cure the patient, or mitigate his sufferings, has been provided for him with most praiseworthy foresight and liberality. Not only are there in every ward the ordinary warm and cold baths, but on the basement floor are to be found baths of every conceivable variety, including douche, Turkish, vapour, needle, and sulphur. Round the fireplace in each ward is constructed a broad

and high fender, to prevent any poor patient, who may have been suddenly struck by an epileptic fit, from falling into the fire. For the use of the paralysed are wheeled chairs of every description. Electricity now being much used as a curative power, both in paralytic and epileptic cases, an electrical room of large dimensions has been fitted up, which contains, perhaps, the finest electrical apparatus in Europe. Gymnasiums, both for male and female patients, have also been provided. In these are not only dumb-bells, Indian clubs, and other simple instruments, but every other apparatus which can tend to develop the muscular power of the particular part or limb affected. In the practice of these gymnastics, of course the greatest caution is necessary to keep the patient from inflicting injury on himself from accident or misapplication of the special movements required, for any slight blow or strain which to the healthy would have little or no prejudicial effect, might prove of serious consequence to one of the hospital patients. To prevent any occurrence of the kind, the whole of the gymnastic rooms are placed under the control of Mr. J. N. Radcliffe, F.R.C.S., the medical superintendent of the hospital, who directs the particular exercise applicable to the patient's case. I believe there is no

other hospital in England which has a gymnasium attached to it. In Paris there are two or three, but a difference exists between these and the gymnasium in Queen Square. In Paris the gymnastic exercises are of the general description used by persons in health, while those under the direction of Mr. Radcliffe are solely applicable to the diseases they are intended to alleviate. The wards are large, lofty, and well ventilated. In this hospital may also be noticed another improvement, for which the patients are entirely indebted to the ladies' committee. Knowing full well how great a relief it is to the mind of a convalescent patient to quit, at least for some hours in the day, the room in which he has slept, a large, commodious day-room is attached to every ward. There is in every day-room a good library, and in some of the female wards pianos even—many of the female patients being ladies of good education, though in distressed circumstances. The walls, not only of the sitting-rooms, but of the wards, are also hung with admirable prints in great profusion, principally Scripture subjects. In fact, everything that ingenuity could suggest, and kindness or good-will perform or provide, for the welfare of this particular class of patients, may be seen here.

The reader may easily imagine that provision for the comfort and benefit of unfortunate individuals suffering from epilepsy and paralysis could not be carried further. Such, however, would be far from the case. Admirable as all the arrangements indisputably were, another want was still felt, but which has lately been provided—a branch establishment in the country, having airing grounds for the use of the convalescent patients. And this was the more necessary, for, as a rule, epileptic patients are rigidly excluded from all existing convalescent charities. I am not able to say whether through the sole agency of the ladies' committee, though more probably it was through the combined action of both ladies' and gentlemen's committees, but an admirable convalescent home has at last been provided. The committee having heard that some premises, eligible for the purpose, were for sale at Finchley, after due inspection, made an offer for their purchase. The premises consisted of two private semi-detached dwelling-houses, with large garden and grounds, situated near the railway-station at Finchley. It would be difficult to imagine a Home better suited, in appearance and comfort, for convalescent patients than this. The rooms, instead of being arranged in stereotyped hospital fashion, have



more the appearance of the well-furnished house of a private gentleman. Here, also, are abundant day-rooms, so that the patients quit their bedrooms in the morning, and, unless under extraordinary circumstances, do not return to them again until the evening. Every attempt has been made to give the sitting-rooms the appearance of a private house—no more patients here, as well as in the Hospital in Queen Square, using a sitting-room, than would make a somewhat large family circle at home. To this Convalescent Home the patients from Queen Square are from time to time sent to reside, while the others frequently in fine weather are in turns driven down to pass the day in the country, a waggonette being provided for the purpose, and maintained by a separate fund, set apart and known as the Waggonette Fund.

And now I respectfully submit to the reader that in this little sketch of the life and labours of Miss Johanna Chandler, and the success of the Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy, I have again, to a considerable extent, not only shown how powerful is the co-operation of woman in all good works, but how much more advantageously it can be used when free and unfettered from any conventual regulations and discipline. That philanthropic idea which, some

fourteen or fifteen years since, entered the mind of Johanna Chandler, has now, without any priestly direction or conventual regulations, resulted under God's blessing in one of the most useful and admirable charities in the country. And all this has been effected by the energy, common-sense, and charitable feeling of a small band of women who, while keeping up their relations with the world, and entering into the duties of ordinary family life and general society, devoted themselves the while to the furtherance of a good cause, without jealousy of each other. Again, in the success of the National Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy, my lady readers may learn another lesson, especially those who are inclined to hold that separation and seclusion are conducive to the fuller furtherance of good works—how easy it is for them to obtain the affectionate and respectful co-operation of men when the object they engage in is really useful and practicable. Thanks to the direct energy of women, with *assistance* from men, this charity is acknowledged to be one of the most efficient special hospitals in the country. A strong prejudice, and in many cases not unjustifiably so, exists against special hospitals by a large portion of the medical profession; but not the slightest opposition has

been shown by them to this. On the contrary, immediately it was started, physicians of the highest eminence offered it their support, and it now possesses a medical staff unsurpassed for ability by any hospital in the world, and eliciting at the same time the good-will and respect of all acquainted with the institution and its labours.

## CHAPTER VI.

ELIZABETH GILBERT.

ALTHOUGH the lady who is the subject of this notice might, from the position in society her family hold, be at first considered as an exception to the general rule of my heroines, who for the most part have worked their way onward without powerful friends to assist them, it will be shown that none among them have had to surmount greater difficulties; and these difficulties not only of the ordinary description which surround an amiable, yet retiring woman in carrying out her self-imposed labours of love, but from physical disabilities which would have deterred any but one who conscientiously believed she had a mission of good to fulfil, and which it was her duty to accomplish.

Miss Elizabeth Gilbert was born at Oxford some time in the second quarter of the present century. She was the third of ten children of

the Right Rev. Ashurst Turner Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Chichester. At the time of her birth her father was the Principal of Brazenose College, and in the years 1836 and 1840 he served the office of Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. In 1842 the Rev. Dr. Gilbert was, at the instance of Sir Robert Peel, ordained Bishop of Chichester, and continued to hold the see till his death, which occurred in 1870, at the venerable age of eighty-three, greatly regretted and esteemed.

Although born in the lap of prosperity, at a very early period of her existence a terrible misfortune befell my heroine. At the age of four Miss Gilbert had the misfortune to be attacked by scarlet fever, and that of such severity as to make for several weeks her recovery very doubtful. The intensity of the fever at last subsided, but it left her irrecoverably deprived of sight. During her severe and prolonged illness she received the most assiduous attention from her family and friends. It may easily be imagined that her lamentable deprivation of sight was a source of grief to all her family, but to none more so than to her father. But the heavy affliction which had fallen on Miss Gilbert possibly brought with it one good effect, as it appeared to cement more strongly than ever the tie



between the parent and child, which appeared to increase in intensity as he advanced in years.

In Miss Gilbert's education every advantage was taken of the special inventions for the use of the blind which had been recently introduced into this country. Possessed of great natural intelligence, the poor child profited rapidly by the instructions she received, so much so as to keep her place in the same class with her sisters. As years passed on Miss Gilbert, after acquiring the ordinary elements of an English education, applied herself to the acquisition of modern languages, and notwithstanding the great difficulties in her way, she became well acquainted with those of France, Italy, and Germany. In common with most of the educated blind, she was passionately fond of music. Some of her earlier compositions have been published, and betray an amount of natural ability and science rarely met with in an amateur. Much, however, as she respected the accomplishments of educated society, she was especially interested in all works of benevolence. By degrees, as she became older, these sentiments centralized themselves in one absorbing idea—in what manner could she benefit those unfortunate individuals who were labouring under the same calamity as herself, but without equal means of

supporting the affliction? She now began to make herself better acquainted with the condition of the blind among the working classes, and the deeper she went into the matter, the more lamentable did it appear. In her own case, surrounded by every luxury, and with the benefit of an instruction in the highest degree efficient, she could not disguise from herself the vast amount of attention she required in excess of that necessary for a sighted lady in her own position in society. What, then, must be the condition of poor families, where every member is obliged to obtain by the labours of his own hands the means of existence, and who are called upon to supply the deficiencies of others unable to assist themselves? True, there were excellent schools for the instruction of the blind, but all had greater or smaller inconveniences attached to them. If in these blind schools children were taught some handicraft to enable them to obtain a living, when once the term of their pupilage was over, they were cast adrift in the world, apart from those capable of assisting them, to find employment, their very existence rendered the more painful by the contrast of comfort and care they received in the institution in which they were educated.

From reliable information Miss Gilbert re-

ceived, she found that the greater number of blind persons among the working classes were either inmates of workhouses, or compelled to obtain a livelihood by begging in the streets,—for the institutions then existing in England for the benefit of the blind did not provide any means by which they might obtain remunerative employment. And thus the very money spent on their education was utterly lost, instead of being turned to profitable account.

After reflecting for some time on the position of these unfortunate creatures, and from frequently giving pecuniary assistance to those who came immediately under her notice, Miss Gilbert at length determined to do something to remedy the existing unhappy state of things. Quite unaided, she commenced in the year 1854 to give constant employment to six blind working men, and to make such arrangements for the sale of their work as, if not to insure sufficient for their maintenance, at least in great part to relieve them from being the heavy load they were to their friends and relations, or to remove them from the degradation of the workhouse or mendicity. To do this, however, in an effectual manner, she had to organize a staff. She first engaged a manager and secretary. And here may be noticed the first adaptation of the prin-

ciple under which she has since acted, that of assisting the blind to assist each other—the gentleman who obtained the appointment, Mr. William Hanks Levy, suffering himself from loss of sight. So well did the experiment succeed that in a short time she found employment for four additional blind persons, thus increasing their number to ten. Her plan of operation was simply as follows : From her own moderate personal resources she purchased the raw materials, distributing through her agent certain quantities to the different workmen to make up at their own homes ; and when the work was completed, they brought it on a fixed day in the week to a depôt she had established for the purpose, where they received the amount due for their labour. The full retail price was paid to the workers, and the sale or distribution of the articles left to the exertions of their benevolent employer and her agent.

At first Miss Gilbert's business operations were conducted in a very modest manner. The depôt was merely a cellar in New Turnstile, Holborn, and its unpretending character may be realised when it is stated that the rent was only eighteenpence a week. At the commencement of her undertaking, Miss Gilbert hoped that the goods made by her workpeople might

be sold for an amount equal to their cost at first hand, and thus the only outlay that would have to be met by charity would be the expenses connected with the management. It was soon found, however, that the average quality and kind of work produced would prevent for a long time the realisation of such a hope. And the causes for this disappointment were not far to seek. Some of the men had been badly taught, others had almost forgotten their trade, and all had only learnt to make such articles as were almost out of date. Under these circumstances, Miss Gilbert, on balancing her accounts at the end of the first year, found that the deficiency in the returns was heavy to an unlooked-for extent, amounting to no less than three hundred pounds. This was a far heavier sacrifice than she had calculated on. Still, she was determined to continue the work, and if no one assisted her, to maintain the pecuniary burden alone and unaided. Fortunately the sacrifice on her part was not needed. Several of her intimate friends, struck by the self-devotion she exhibited, came forward, unasked, to offer both pecuniary and personal assistance to carry out her project, and Miss Gilbert, though bashful in asking for their services, gratefully accepted them when offered. A subscription list was



opened in 1855 for the receipt of contributions for the employment of the blind, and four additional blind workers were employed. The donations for the year 1856 amounted to about £450, including a contribution of £50 from her Majesty the Queen, who was pleased to examine the details laid before her, and to express her approval of the work.

Having now some moderate capital to start on, which enabled Miss Gilbert, without imprudence, to remove the business from the humble cellar in New Turnstile to a better position, a respectable shop was taken at 127, Euston Road. Although the locality was by no means the best adapted for the purpose, it was still a vast improvement on the other, as it enabled the poor workmen to display their labours to the public, and to start a workshop on a regular principle. It also became a technical school for many operative arts adapted to the abilities of the blind. So much success attended the movement, and so quickly were the sympathies aroused of those under whose notice it came, that Miss Gilbert's friends determined to assist her in extending the field of her labours. In December, 1856, a meeting of her friends took place in the schoolroom, Southampton Street, Euston Square, the late Dean Dale, better

known as Canon Dale, presiding on the occasion. Before they separated the meeting formed themselves into an "Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind," which, on the 1st of January in the following year, commenced operations.

Encouraged by the success of her enterprise, Miss Gilbert entered on her labours with, if possible, greater energy than before. Not only did she devote the whole of her time and ability to its success, but from her moderate fortune she endowed the society with the sum of £2,000. She now entered into an extensive correspondence to obtain the patronage of the public, not simply to collect pecuniary contributions, but to find customers for the goods made by her blind protégés, superintending the minutest financial details and general working of the society. She went further, and assisted by her advice in the establishment of similar institutions in different localities, all of which have to a greater or less extent succeeded. Many influential persons have since joined the society, among whom may be mentioned the Duke of Teck, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Earls of Carnarvon and Chichester, Lords Ebury, Houghton, and Hatherley, Professor Fawcett, and many others. Up to the present

time Miss Gilbert has continued to attend the whole of the meetings of her committee, except on those few occasions in which her health precluded her from being present. And even then not a proposition respecting the institution was passed into law, or acted upon, until submitted to her for inspection and approval.

The grain of mustard seed which was sown by Miss Gilbert in the year 1854 has now grown up into a flourishing tree, if not greater than others of the same kind, certainly meriting, as well as carrying with it, the respect of all who know it. Nor is its reputation limited to England; its results are frequently quoted with admiration among the nations of Europe. The States of America have also given their testimony to the admirable labours of this amiable lady. The view taken in that country may be gathered from a passage that occurs in the Report of the Principal of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, presented to the Board of Managers, and read at the Annual Meeting of the Corporators, December 20, 1866. The extract is as follows: "While we are gratified to report the successful working of the literary and musical branches of the institution, and also the favourable progress of our manufacturing department in

teaching and employing blind persons in useful trades, experience every year confirms the necessity of a house of industry for the regular employment of pupils whose term of instruction has terminated, and of the adult blind.

“The education of the blind is a simple matter; nor is it susceptible of much improvement in the way of securing their future welfare. The great idea which encourages the establishment and support of all such institutions is the preparation of the blind for future usefulness and happiness by self-dependence. Their misfortune unfits them for the large number of industrial and professional pursuits open to the seeing; but there are mechanical arts in which they become good, if not rapid, workers. The difficulty with many, especially those without friends and homes, is in securing employment, and in earning fully enough for their support. Without this, the failure, idleness, and demoralisation which too often follow, prove how imperfect is their previous instruction in this direction.”

After alluding to other institutions of a similar description, the report goes on to quote:—“The Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, founded in London by Miss E. Gilbert, is an example of a very practical orga-

nization for the employment of the blind, which has been alluded to in our former reports.”

In 1869, during the agitation preceding the passing of the Education Act, it was urged that the blind ought not to be precluded from the benefits of the measure; but, on the contrary, that special advantages should be accorded them. By way of supporting the interest of her protégés, Miss Gilbert had an interview with the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, the Vice-President of the Council of Education, in Downing Street, who, at her request, undertook to receive a deputation from the Institutions for the Blind of the United Kingdom. The deputation, with a memorial signed by 372 members of the committees of the twenty-nine institutions, were received by the Marquis, then the Earl de Grey and Ripon, and Mr. Forster. Although the deputation were personally introduced by Lord Houghton, and were very numerous and influentially attended, the result sought for was unfortunately not attained, even in the slightest degree, notwithstanding that the deputation produced several very powerful arguments for obtaining special sympathy in their favour from Government. To quote the whole of the memorial would occupy too much space—some of the clauses must suffice:—



“That there are at present no fewer than thirty thousand blind in the kingdom, the greater number of whom pass their lives in the greatest misery and degradation.

“That while the sighted children of the poor are to a great extent supplied with primary education at the expense of the State, no governmental aid whatever is afforded to the blind children of the poor.

“That the assistance rendered to blind children by various institutions, supported by the contributions of the benevolent, is altogether inadequate to meet the necessities of the case.

“That if the same government aid were given to schools for the education of blind children as is now afforded to ordinary national and other schools, it would supplement the efforts of the charitable, and greatly conduce to the proper education of blind children.

“That the various blind schools, while being left to adopt any improvement in apparatus and management which might appear desirable, should still be under the inspection of an officer appointed by the State for that purpose.

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“That as an unusually large proportion of the blind are above the age of twenty-one years, the advantages of national aid should be

extended to adult educational and industrial schools.

“That, seeing that these institutions, which afford regular employment to blind workpeople, thereby to a great extent relieve the streets from vagrants, prevent the increase of the criminal classes, and keep the blind people, their wives and children, from being burdens on the parochial rates, it is therefore humbly prayed that the shield of governmental protection may be cast over such institutions, and that they may be furnished with pecuniary aid such as is given to ordinary reformatories and similar establishments.”

Of course, it would ill become me to criticize the wisdom of the Government decision in refusing to grant the prayer of the petitioners. At the same time, the reader will doubtless admit with me, that other applications of a less apparently meritorious character have met with not only approval, but support.

And now a few words with respect to the organization and working of the Institution. At a meeting held in St. James's Hall, in the year 1863, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, speaking of this Institution, said “that its rule and practice were in harmony with political economy, for political economy was founded

in truth. It might, like other institutions, be misunderstood and misapplied; but if its principles were neglected, even under the impulse of philanthropic feeling, they would be sure to vindicate themselves. He felt sure, however, that the rules of political economy would have no cause to vindicate themselves against this Association. On the contrary, he believed that its rules were based on the laws which regulated the accumulation and distribution of the means of subsistence. In this Association they had a union of what the coldest and most prudent would dictate, and what the most affectionate and Christian heart would desire."

Had the words of Mr. Gladstone been uttered prior to the formation of the Institution, and Miss Gilbert had adopted them, their purport could not have been more perfectly carried out. To go at any length into the full working of the Institution would far exceed my limits. A very short description, however, will suffice to convey to the reader the truth of my conclusion. Should he be in any doubt on the subject, I would earnestly advise him to pay a short visit either to the parent Institution, in the Euston Road, or the principal depôt for the sale of goods, in Oxford Street. Either would pay him good interest for his trouble, especially the former, which, as I

before said, is the technical school of the Association. In it also may be seen a lamentable proof of the fact that, notwithstanding the liberality of Miss Gilbert's immediate friends and acquaintances, the general public have exhibited towards her the most miserable parsimony.

Although the buildings are extensive, it would be impossible to imagine any worse adapted to a purpose of the kind. The rooms are narrow and inconvenient, the staircase abrupt to a degree which renders it difficult even for a sighted person to ascend without danger either of falling or of striking his head against projecting beams or other obstructions, while the passages are narrow and tortuous. Altogether it is little to the credit of the public that Miss Gilbert has not had placed in her hands the power to erect a more fitting institution for the unhappy persons she and her Association have taken under their care. Among the industrial arts carried on in this building are the following : by the men, the manufacture of brushes, brooms, baskets, carpentry, mats, rugs, chair-cane and rush work, nets, beadwork, hassocks, and firewood ; the women are also employed in brush-making, baskets, knitting, beadwork, firewood, and needlework. Most of these are undergoing their technical education ; some of the most

expert, as before stated, carry on their labours at their own homes, especially when of that description which would not occupy too much space in their usually limited dwelling-room. A singular point remains to be noticed with respect to the class of officials employed in this Institution. As before stated, the director, Mr. Hanks Levy,\* is himself blind; but what is more marvellous still, the teachers of the arts of brushmaking, carpentry, beadwork, and rugs are also blind. The town traveller and housemaid are also blind.

There is something particularly attractive and interesting at the sight of so many individuals employed in these narrow, inconvenient workshops, some of them at labours of the most dangerous description, with scarcely an accident—certainly not more than among sighted workmen—occurring among them. This is especially remarkable in the departments for firewood cutting and carpentry, where sharp tools are not only constantly used, but the workmen, it might be thought, would run still greater danger from their being left carelessly about, and thus liable to cause acci-

\* This gentleman is the author of an admirable work on the Blind, published by Chapman and Hall, London, 1872: and has, I am sorry to say, passed away since this sketch was written.



dents of a more or less serious nature. This, however, I was informed, never occurs, the skill of the workmen, under their blind teachers, obviating the former difficulty, while the latter is avoided by impressing on the pupils the old proverb, "A place for everything, and everything in its place." Again, while working, one of the first lessons they receive is to remember the spot on which they have momentarily placed any tool, and by practice this becomes so natural to them that they place their hands instinctively on it with a certainty not less than that of a sighted person, although in the interim they had risen from their seat and left the room in which they were at work. One of the most singular sights is to see them employed at a circular saw, two powerful men turning the wheel, while a third cuts through the thick blocks of wood, the proper length for firewood cutting. Dangerous as this occupation may seem, I was assured on my visit, that not one accident had ever occurred among them. In the wood-cutting rooms, also, it was not without a certain degree of nervous trepidation that I watched the blind men chopping wood with sharp axes, and with a celerity that could not have been surpassed by sighted individuals, the labour being, from its rapidity, appa-

rently performed in a somewhat incautious manner.

In the carpenters' shops, if the celerity was less, the address was greater, and the neatness of the workmanship occasionally displayed in the backs of brushes, and other skilled handicraft, could not have been surpassed. But one of the most singular sights was to find four men sitting round a caldron of boiling pitch, their occupation being to dip bristles in the pitch, and then insert them in the holes made in the frames for brushes. Although this was done with great celerity, and the danger of scalding appeared imminent, I was assured not an accident of any kind had occurred, nor was a drop of pitch ever spilt in the room. I was so much struck with the neatness of the operation, that I asked my guide to inform me in what manner it was done. He showed me that half-way between the sides and centre of the caldron, to the right hand of each man, was a piece of round metal about the thickness of a finger, which rose, perhaps, two inches above the boiling pitch. The workman, when he had collected a sufficient number of bristles, after bending them, placed his little finger on the top of this piece of metal, which indicated to him the depth the boiling pitch was below him, and thus enabled him to place

the bristles exactly as deep as required, without danger to himself or injury to his work.

At the depôt of the Institution in Oxford Street, I also saw several men at work. These, however, were accomplished artisans, and work with singular dexterity and exactitude. Although, with one exception,\* the operations carried on in the Oxford Street establishment are not of as interesting a description as those in the Euston Road, a visit there might afford the reader great satisfaction, as proving how skilful may be made those afflicted with blindness, if trained under proper and judicious instruction.

As I before stated, the great object of this Institution was to take the Blind from the streets, either as beggars or wandering musicians, and to teach them instead some honourable occupation, by which they might maintain themselves and their families in comfort and respectability. But this fact, pure and simple, was not the only object of the Institution. It

\* The exception alluded to is that of a poor man who, when about thirty years of age, became totally deaf, dumb, and blind. He is an admirable example of the efficient teaching of the Institution. Naturally intelligent, he is now the most expert workman in the shop. The foreman is able to communicate to him, by divers pressures of the fingers, any question the visitor may be pleased to ask, and the poor man will write the answer on paper. He is also very expert in writing any text from Scripture the visitor may desire.

was also to supplement as far as possible, by charitable donations and subscriptions, the deficit between the amount of their earnings and the sum required for the individual's weekly support. The last Report of the Association tells us that of the total number of men and women employed in their own homes and at the workshops, eight earned from £1 1s. to £1 5s. per week, sixteen from 16s. to £1 per week, thirteen from 12s. to 15s. per week, sixteen from 6s. to 11s. per week, and forty-three from 3s. to 5s. per week. And there is mentioned in the Report a terrible fact, which shows how worthy of support is this institution, and liberal as the contributions may be, how totally insufficient they are to perform the work required. Of the total number of persons assisted, the Report continues, about sixty-two are married, and have more than ninety children dependent on them for support. Of those employed at their own homes and at the society's workshops, thirty-two are women, who earn respectively from 4s. to 10s. a week.

“The various articles made by the blind,” the Report continues, and with perfect truth, “are quite equal in quality to those produced by the sighted, but the blind cannot work as quickly as other mechanics, and to compensate for their

want of speed the Association pays them double the wages usually given by manufacturers to ordinary workpeople. In addition to this high rate of wages, the Society continues to supply the blind with work, whether the articles sell or not, which is contrary to the general practice in the labour market, and makes great demands on the funds of the institution: but the object of affording remunerative employment for the blind without excessive labour, is productive of so much good to those deprived of sight, and to the community at large, that your committee feel the expenditure is well bestowed.

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“ The importance of giving work to the blind at their own homes is constantly being more forcibly illustrated. By this plan the blind are enabled to reside with their friends in whatever part of the country they may be located, and thus family ties are strengthened instead of being rudely snapped, as is too often the case where persons deprived of sight have to leave all that is dear to them in this world to obtain daily bread in some distant town. The cementing of social bonds is highly necessary for every class of the community; but in the case of those persons who labour under the heavy affliction of blindness, its importance can scarcely be calcu-



lated. As fully half the blind live in rural districts, the establishment of workshops in large towns is obviously insufficient to meet the circumstances of the case. Illustrations of how ardently some of the blind are attached to their relatives are constantly occurring. Several cases are known in which persons have willingly accepted smaller wages in order that they might be enabled to live with their friends, instead of being separated from them by continuing to work in London."

Few persons would imagine over how large a space the operations of this most useful, yet unpretending society extend. Instead of its operations being confined to its two establishments in the Euston Road and Oxford Street, they extend over many widely distant parts of the kingdom.\*

Of the class of poor benefited by this Associa-

\* Some idea of the operations of the society may be gathered from the following list of counties, in which blind persons now reside, who are supplied by the Association with work at their own homes :—

Berkshire.	Hertfordshire.	Suffolk.
Cumberland.	Kent.	Surrey.
Dorsetshire.	Middlesex.	Sussex.
Essex.	Northamptonshire.	Wiltshire.
Gloucestershire.	Oxfordshire.	Worcestershire.
Hampshire.	Shropshire.	Yorkshire.
Herefordshire.	Somersetshire.	

tion, some idea may be gathered from the following examples quoted from their Report for 1871 :—

“A” became blind when a child, and was educated in two Blind schools, but from want of work was obliged to beg through the country with his wife (also blind) and three young children. He is now supplied with constant work by the Association; and the whole family is thus rescued from vice. “B” lost his sight in infancy, and was an inmate of a workhouse for several years, where he had the character of being generally insubordinate. Proper instruction, however, and employment have not only made him docile, but have also transformed him into a really useful member of society. “C” lost his sight at the age of seventeen, and in the following year became totally deaf. In this forlorn condition he was entirely dependent for the necessaries of life on two sisters, who had no other resource but needlework. His feelings under these trying circumstances are best given in his own words: “I am very wretched, very wretched.” This poor blind and deaf man has now been taught to read and write, and to work at brush-making, by which he now earns 18s. a week. His sisters are both well married, and he himself rejoices in being able to maintain a

wife and child. "D" was a foreign sailor who lost his sight in the English service. He became entirely dependent on charity, and must have sunk lower and lower had he not been rescued by this Association, which now supplies him with work to the extent of 16s. per week. "E" became totally blind while a servant; her dependent position exposed her to great temptation. She was happily rescued by this society, and now supports herself by the labour of her hands.

It must not, however, be imagined that the temporal welfare of the Blind is alone cared for by this Association. In the parishes of Westminster, Marylebone, and St. Luke's, Old Street, classes are established for the Blind, who are instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. These classes are superintended by members of the parochial clergy, who kindly lend their schoolrooms for the occasion, as well as a staff of ladies who occupy themselves among the Blind as Christian readers.

Of the extent of the operations carried on by this society some idea may be formed by the fact, that in the year 1871, alone, the society received for goods made by their blind protégés, no less a sum than £4,370. But on the other side of the account it would appear that the

expenses far exceeded the income, no less a sum than £3,630 having to be made up by private subscription. The working expenses of the society, even with the most scrupulous economy practised, are no less than £8,000 a year.

But, alas! this is not all. In addition to the one hundred and seventy-eight persons at present profiting to a greater or less degree by the operations of the society, there are no fewer than three hundred more applying to it for help, to whom no assistance can be given for want of funds. These three hundred men and women are sunk in the same wretched condition as those mentioned above were in before they came under the protection of the society. Great alterations and improvements might also be made in the present arrangements with advantage to the Blind. At present Miss Gilbert and her Society have set themselves as a task to raise the sum of £5,000 for the purpose of extending the benefits of the Association. One great object they have in view is to purchase permanent premises, in order that the outlay of £285 per annum for rent may be saved, the leases of the premises they now hold being about to expire. It would be indeed a disgrace to us as a Christian community if this sum were

long wanting. Among the many useful charities in London, there is not one more worthy of support than the Association for the Blind, apart from the fact that it is worthy of all respect as a monument tending to prove how vast an amount of good may be effected by a pious, energetic woman, though labouring under fearful difficulties, when assisted by a willing and intelligent band of fellow-workers.



## CHAPTER VII.

MARIE HILTON.

ON reading the Registrar-General's reports of births and deaths in the metropolis, we are continually reminded of the great increase of the former over the latter, and from that assume that we are going on in a very satisfactory manner. There are, however, two sides to the question—a brighter and a darker. While the death-rate appears, by the reports, to be kept down, it should be borne in mind that the calculation, like most averages, is made up from many different elements, and, in this case, may be shown by the comparative duration of life in different parts of London. For example, Kensington is esteemed one of the healthiest districts within the bills of mortality, and the average duration of life, if not higher than in any other, is certainly one of the highest. Yet, most remarkable contrasts may

be detected in the average duration of life in this one parish. In Palace Gardens, and the different squares and terraces in the vicinity, the duration of life is not less than forty-five years; in the locality near High Street, known as Jennings's Buildings, the duration of life does not exceed fourteen years; while in another locality, known as the Potteries, it only reaches fifteen. Among the principal employers of labour in Bethnal Green, the duration of life is about forty-two years; and among the Spitalfields weavers, and other ill-paid handicrafts, it is under eighteen. This discrepancy in the duration of life is occasioned principally by the mortality among children. For example, in the healthy parish of Lewisham, the average death-rate among children under five is only one in five; in the courts and alleys in St. Giles's, the Borough, Shoreditch, Ratcliff, and some of the more densely populated portions of Limehouse and Stepney, not more than one child in five reaches the age of five years.

This terrible fact, little known to the public at large, has long baffled the efforts of the sanitary reformer, and others acquainted with it. But how to avert, or even modify it, was a difficult task indeed. True, laws have been made regulating lodging-houses, and prohibit-

ing overcrowding, under pain of fine or imprisonment. And now and then the law has been put in force: but punishments, as a rule, were of the most lenient description, and the abuse went on increasing rather than diminishing. Nor were the magistrates to blame for this. As honest men, and men of humanity, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that, while on the one hand the governing bodies had made laws for the suppression of the abuse, on the other, by permitting the enormous destruction of the dwellings of the poor, for railroads and other improvements, they did all in their power to increase it. The poor, the magistrates justly argued, must be lodged somewhere, and if their own dwellings were destroyed, it was not to be wondered that they crowded together in others too confined for their accommodation.

Of the many plans attempted to put a stop to the evils of overcrowding, the only one which has hitherto been of any practical use—although one of the highest importance—is the diminution effected in infant mortality in several of the overcrowded poorer districts, by the establishment of a Crèche\*—a most fitting name for so Christian an institution. In these establishments poor mothers employed in labour during

\* Manger.

the day can place their infants in the morning, and receive them again in the evening, after having been well fed, nursed, and washed. And for all this they pay but a nominal sum, the rest being supplemented by voluntary contributions. At present there are several of these establishments in different parts of London, though by no means as many as are needed. All are admirably conducted, and none better than the one originated by Mrs. Hilton in Ratcliff, and at present conducted by that lady and her daughter.

My principal reason for selecting the Ratcliff Crèche as the groundwork of the present chapter, is, that many of the difficulties attending its formation were greater, *cæteris paribus*, than any other I am acquainted with in the metropolis. It also offers another convincing proof of the wonderful results which may be obtained by a talented, amiable, and energetic Protestant woman, actuated by the wish to further a good cause, and determined to overcome whatever difficulties she may find in her way. Not only was the locality chosen by her one of the poorest in London, but it was so far separated from those mines of wealth, the City and West-end, as to increase immensely the difficulty of obtaining powerful patrons, and influential and

wealthy co-operators. Mrs. Hilton, however, succeeded in both ; and although her good work is not yet what it may be, from the success which has hitherto attended its operations, the institution holds out great promise of becoming one of the most flourishing, as well as useful, charitable institutions in London.

Mrs. Marie Hilton, a member of the Society of Friends, and wife of Mr. Hilton, the well-known Temperance advocate, and one of the most energetic agents of the Alliance, commenced at a very early age the practice of good works. When quite young, scarcely out of her girlhood, she became an active Sunday-school teacher, and assisted in different Dorcas societies. She was afterwards a member of the Brighton Ladies' Temperance Committee, and also of a Dorcas society at Bromley, Middlesex. About ten years since she became much interested in the poor in the neighbourhood of the Friends' Meeting House at Ratcliff, and she and her husband removed from Brighton to the East-end of the metropolis. It being a season of great distress, Mrs. Hilton spent nearly all her time in visiting the sick and needy, and relieving their wants. Through the aid of Friends she provided from one hundred to two hundred dinners daily to poor people



in the neighbourhood, and opened an invalid kitchen.

While relieving the sick and distressed, however, she emphatically impressed upon them the necessity of helping themselves. It might naturally have been expected that with the distress which, in 1863, existed in the metropolis, the female portion of the labouring poor would have been able to a considerable degree to assist, if not in finding means for the maintenance of their families, at least, by due economy and exertion, to diminish their expenditure. But although there were among them many most honourable exceptions, the great mass were helpless and indifferent to an extraordinary degree. One of the first of Mrs. Hilton's most useful labours was the establishment of a sewing-class. It may be supposed that in such a district, where so many needlewomen existed, it would be difficult to find one not capable of using her needle. But great as the numbers of that class were, they were small in comparison to those who were ignorant of this most useful attribute of the well-managed poor man's home. And it was to remedy this defect that Mrs. Hilton established at the Meeting House a sewing-class. Perhaps the better method of conveying to the reader an idea of its manage-

ment would be by giving verbatim an extract from Mrs. Hilton's Report to the Friends' Committee at the end of the first year of its organization.

"The women work," she says, "for what they receive; though, as only the cost price of the material can be obtained in selling articles made up, all the wages are given from our funds as relief. Two women are employed in selling the made-up clothing on commission. During the winter 120 women were employed twice a week: and through the summer 60 or 70, including 34 widows, have been kept on. The East-end Mission and Relief Association contributed upwards of £100 towards the cost of these classes. By this means the women are for several hours a week brought under good influence, and we have many pleasing instances of serious impressions received in the classes. The improvement in the conduct, character, and appearance of the women is highly encouraging. Clothing made by these classes to the amount of £126 has been sold during the year. As many of the most necessitous have really to be taught the use of the needle, many of the articles were badly made, and had to be given away as unsaleable. Many a garment has been given that a loved one dead might be

decently buried. A good deal has been given to persons going into situations. Some has been used to replenish worn-out articles in the maternity bags, and some are being lent to invalids. Very few Friends have purchased from our stock, and yet orders for made-up clothing for the poor so much help us. One Friend, however, purchased £4 worth for distribution. We are now making up flock-beds, which members of the class purchase by instalments. The members of the class have had one tea, which was attended by several Friends from the country."

Mrs. Hilton also speaks in terms of high approbation as to the integrity shown by poor mothers in returning intact the whole of the articles contained in the maternity bags lent out to them during their confinements. Not a single article had been lost, and in every case the clothes had been returned so well washed that they were ready for lending again the next month.

I will not go at any length into the different labours of Mrs. Hilton in mission work, and general exertions on behalf of the poor in the neighbourhood of Ratcliff and Stepney. Admirable as they were, and beneficial to those on whose behalf she exerted herself, they would hardly point the moral of my tale—that a

good Protestant woman taking up a difficult cause, may, by the co-operation of her friends, carry it out to maturity; and this has certainly been done by Mrs. Hilton in the establishment of the Crèche at Ratcliff. Nor was there a locality in London that offered greater necessity for the adoption of an institution of the kind. The whole neighbourhood abounded with dirty, ragged, under-fed children of most dilapidated constitutions, partly arising from want, partly neglect, and partly from congenital weakness, in too many cases brought on by the intemperate habits of their parents. Possibly this description may appear somewhat exaggerated in the eyes of those who have merely passed the broader thoroughfares of Ratcliff, Stepney, and Limehouse; but it was not in the broad thoroughfares and the glare of day that these poor neglected little ones were to be found. In the lanes and alleys, where resided the worst paid or the most demoralised of the population, they were to be looked for. During Mrs. Hilton's visits to these squalid homes, the poor children she saw seemed mutely, but emphatically, appealing to her for relief. Amidst her many avocations, it seemed almost wrong to apply herself specially to one, and she continued on her general labours. The spirit of

motherhood, however, was strong within her, and by degrees the wish to aid these poor little ones became so earnest that it resulted in being the dominant feature in her philanthropic labours. The proximate cause of her determination to found the Crèche, Mrs. Hilton describes in the following manner :\*—

“ During the time I occupied myself in mission work at Ratcliff, I had witnessed sad sights of neglect of little infants whose mothers were at work, and absent from home from other causes, and I longed with an intense longing to help and care for those little ones, but no way opened, and I saw them fade and go out like lamps untimely quenched. The little ones who had passed the age of infancy also claimed my sympathy, for it is no unusual thing in these districts to hear baby lips utter oaths and blasphemies, and I earnestly desired to shelter some of them from the pollution of the streets. In the summer of 1870 I visited the Crèche at Brussels, and until doing so I had not fully comprehended the scope of such an institution. I knew that infants were cared for in those Continental establishments, but here I found there were from five hundred to six hundred children in the

\* “The First Year’s Report of the Crèche at Ratcliff.” By Marie Hilton. Tweedie, Strand.



Crèche, from one month to fourteen or fifteen years old, many having passed from the cradle to the first class. Others I found with satisfaction had gone out into the world, and were filling honourable positions. . . . In inspecting the infant department I found that the cots were presented by individuals as in children's hospitals, and on my return sent out appeals for cots in Ratcliff, and speedily obtained promises of thirty. I then had to expend a considerable sum in fitting up and adapting premises. This part of my work had been done in faith, as I could not obtain funds for an *idea*. I was obliged to develop my plans, trusting that funds would come, and this to a large extent has been realised; and I feel certain that my balance-sheet would not show any deficiency had not so many hearts and hands been engaged in aiding our suffering brethren and sisters on the Continent. In some cases it might have been prudent to wait, but children were being sacrificed daily, and I had too much faith in the loving hearts of Christian mothers to doubt that ultimate success would crown this effort. I also hoped that others might be induced to give more attention to the awfully neglected state of the little ones in our great cities, and this hope has been abundantly realised."

Having now enlisted in her cause many energetic and useful co-operators, Mrs. Hilton selected a building for the purpose, and commenced its furnishing. Among other powerful agencies in her hands were a large portion of the public press. Thanks to its notices, the establishment, while in course of preparation, was visited by more than five hundred persons, including many eminent philanthropists, as well as friends of education, and twenty deputations from different parts of England, to obtain information as to its intended working; and the result of their reports has been the establishment of many similar institutions on the same plan.

To continue from Mrs. Hilton's Report of the first year's proceedings:—"The Crèche was opened on Monday the 22nd of February, and it would be impossible to convey to any one the experiences of the first week. We did not admit more than ten infants and fifteen young children, but the state in which some of the children were brought was indescribable. Their condition morally was also most deplorable. One lovely little child about four years old tore his hair and flesh, bit and kicked every one who approached him, and finished by pouring forth such fearful oaths that we were obliged to send

for his mother to remove him. Several dear friends came to assist in reducing these little ones to order, my dear daughter and I spending the whole of our time there. By the second week we had peace, and bright joyous faces; the mothers seemed to realise that our thoughts towards them were thoughts of love, and although the washing question was a difficulty it was soon overcome, and they were quite proud of telling us how good the children were at home. In one case the mother told us that her fellow-lodgers, who were going to leave if the landlord retained her, thought she must have changed her child: he went to bed without any trouble. The child was but two years old. To most of the dear children, the Crèche is the happiest place on earth. We found, in translating the Report of the Brussels Crèche, that the same fears and objections to such an institution had been started as we have occasionally met with, such as 'the mother ought to take care of her own child,' and that 'the love that rightly belonged to the mother would be diverted.' To the first objection we answer that we never take a child that the mother can care for herself; and to the second I have found, as they did at Brussels, that the loving arms of the mother fully compensated for the change of circum-

stances. It must also be remembered that great care is taken to ascertain that on the mother devolved the chief task of providing for the family, and that she had no one to leave the children with during her absence. We have liberated many children to attend school, who had been kept at home to nurse babies. I have this week received a visit from a vice-chairman of a School Board, who said that they found the nursing of the babies by the children one of their greatest difficulties, and that he had come up over one hundred miles to London to inspect the Crèche, with a view to establish one under a committee to assist the working of the School Board."

It was from reading Mrs. Hilton's Report of the first year's proceedings of the Crèche (now opened two years) that I was induced to visit it; and well did it repay the time I spent in doing so. It is situated in Stepney Causeway, some twenty doors from the high Blackwall road. The building is certainly not well adapted for the purpose; still, it was the best that could be obtained in the neighbourhood, and has been made as convenient as the circumstances of the case would allow. I was first shown the baby department, in which, I suppose, there must have been about fifty inmates. Some were

seated in little chairs in such a manner that, while their limbs were at liberty, they could not fall, and amusing themselves with toys upon a slab running before the whole. Others were on the floor, or seated in different parts of the room, all appearing happy and contented, and not a cry was heard among them. In another room were placed iron cots—and really handsome ones too—all of the same pattern, and in which some of the babies were sleeping. The arrangement of these cots also deserves notice, as possessing a peculiarity which might be adopted with admirable effect in some of our large metropolitan schools. A small piece of iron projected from the top, on which was placed the baby's towel. Simple as it may appear, the idea of each infant having a towel for its own use, as a sanitary precaution, and as preventing the spread of ophthalmia, is an admirable one. In the Foundling Hospital at Moscow, as soon as a child is attacked by ophthalmia it is immediately separated from the others, and there no two children are washed with the same towel; the moment the operation is over for one, the towel is thrown into a basket by the side of the nurse, and the next child has a clean one for its own use. All the towels are washed within two hours afterwards, and brought back



clean for the next day's use. Noticing from the complexion of the children that they were of the delicate-constitution class in which ophthalmia is most to be dreaded, I inquired whether there were any cases of the kind in the Crèche, and was told that, with the exception of two the first year the establishment was open, there had been none whatever.

The ground-floor of the house seemed to be specially appropriated to the senior children. Here I found some thirty or forty, averaging from two to five years of age. They were amusing themselves with different toys, or playing together, and a happier community than they presented it would be impossible to imagine. Still, their happiness was not yet at its height. Mrs. Hilton and her daughter, who had accompanied me on my rounds, each carried in her hand a paper bag full of small cakes, which a benevolent lady in the neighbourhood had placed at their disposal for the children. No sooner was the happy fact made known to them than those at play immediately left their games, and with the rest congregated round Mrs. Hilton in anticipation of the delicacies they were about to receive. And here another element struck me as tending to prove the habitual kindness the children received

in the Crèche. Instead of regarding Mrs. Hilton with the respectful alarm frequently visible among young children when in the presence of the senior authority of their school, they rushed round her, and clung to her skirts and those of her daughter in a manner that showed that the discipline they were under was certainly not caused by a reign of terror.

Mrs. Hilton now advanced, with the cakes in her hand, into a room used as a schoolroom, where the children were to have their tea, and a proportion of the cakes was appropriated to each. When seated at the table, and before the meal began, they sang a short childish hymn of extreme simplicity. If occasionally the fastidious ear of the listener might have discovered a want of tune, the most severe critic would not have discovered any absence of energy. They evidently seemed to consider, after the fashion of the musical celebrities in Ratcliff Highway and Stepney, that strength of voice and melody were synonymous terms. One musical attribute they certainly possessed, and showed it emphatically—the knowledge of time—as was proved by their accompanying themselves by clapping their hands in measure during their singing. This over, the meal commenced; and the only marvel was in what manner they managed to

stow away such a quantity of food in the small space each seemed by nature to have provided for it.

We now left the children to visit other portions of the establishment. One feature particularly struck me—the extraordinary and perfect cleanliness existing throughout the whole. There was not a child present whose features were not in a sufficient state of cleanliness to be brought for inspection into any drawing-room. Their clothes, also, though certainly of a somewhat coarse description, were as spotless as if they had just come from the wash. On remarking on this to Mrs. Hilton, and complimenting the children's mothers on the cleanly condition of their offspring, she said to me—

“You have not had much experience with the working-classes in the lower and poorer districts of Ratcliff and its neighbourhood. So far from keeping their children in a cleanly condition, their carelessness on that point reaches to a degree almost incredible. At the same time, it is only justice to state that a considerable reformation is taking place among them in that respect. Some of the children arrive here in the morning in such a dirty condition it would be impossible to allow them to mix with those of the cleaner class; so when they first come they are all

stripped of their clothes and washed, and then dressed in clothing we have here in the house. You see those bags," she continued, pointing to possibly one hundred small ones hanging up on the walls of the room in which we then were; "all those contain the clothes of the children at present in the house. They were taken off this morning, and when the mothers come for them in the evening, the children will be again dressed in their own clothes, and the same course adopted to-morrow."

But the arrangements destined for the benefit of the children in the Crèche are not yet complete. Mrs. Hilton is endeavouring to establish an infirmary on the top floor of the house, in which will be placed a few cots, so that if a child should be attacked by illness in the course of the day which would render it objectionable to carry it through the streets, it could remain for the night, or till it was sufficiently recovered to be removed.

Noticing, besides a few grown-up women who acted as assistants to Mrs. Hilton, several girls of thirteen or fourteen years of age, it struck me at the moment that an establishment such as the Crèche would form an excellent school for training young girls as nursemaids; indeed, it would be impossible to find one better adapted

for the purpose. Mrs. Hilton informed me it was her intention to establish one if she obtained sufficient funds to carry it out. Many young girls at present loafing about the neighbourhood, unable to earn their own living, and on the road to become idle, slatternly wives and wretched mothers, or take to a life of infamy, might be brought up in a course of instruction that would make them honourable members of society, and enable them to find good and remunerative employment in private families. Could such an institution be annexed to the Crèche, these girls would have an opportunity of learning cooking, laundry-work, house-cleaning, needle-work, and nursing. And certainly, judging from the handy manner in which the girls at present employed in the Crèche conducted themselves, no institution that could be established would give greater promise of success, or be made more useful to the community at large, than a training school of the description. So admirable was the nursing I noticed in the Crèche, that I was almost tempted to believe the accusation I have so frequently heard in private families concerning the natural fractiousness of babies is little less than a slander, for during the whole two hours I spent there, out of the hundred babies it contained, I did not hear one cry.



Mrs. Hilton's description of the early days of the institution is exceedingly graphic. Speaking of the price paid by the mothers, she says:—  
“We commenced with the charge of one penny a day; but some friends thought this not sufficient, while others were surprised that the mothers paid so much, and hoped they would not be pressed for more. We have asked all fresh applicants for twopence, which many cheerfully pay; but circumstances are continually arising which make the payment of even this small sum seem difficult—such as illness, or time lost in seeking for work—and therefore no rule can be strictly adhered to. Some have suggested that we should take children at the high price of eightpence or one shilling a day, but we have felt that this would be taking charge of children whose mothers ought to attend to their own. We have in one or two instances refused applications. One hope I had in opening the Crèche was that, by giving the children good nourishing food, they would be safe from sickness and premature death; but I had no idea of the extraordinary diet these children are reared on. One woman, whose child was six months old, said: ‘If I don't come, you can feed her; she can eat meat, potatoes and greens.’ Another, with a child

of nine months old, said, 'My child was hungry, and he ate a fried mackerel.' Another, a fragile, delicate child of six months, was able to eat half a pound of fat bacon. Our task is often difficult, and our battle with ignorance and prejudice discouraging."

To combat all the ignorance and prejudice Mrs. Hilton must have had opposed to her in those districts, must have damped the courage of any one less determined to carry out a good cause than herself. In some cases she met with women who were perfectly willing to send their children to the Crèche, but under the stipulated condition they should not be washed. This, however, as may easily be supposed, was not acceded to by Mrs. Hilton, and the mothers, in some cases, refused to allow their children to attend. Others unwillingly left them, and yet afterwards these very women were most grateful that their objection had not been attended to. Again, many strongly demurred to the penny a day for their child, not calculating that the bare expense of feeding one at home in the humblest manner would far exceed that sum. Again, so badly is female labour paid in the eastern districts, that even a penny a day was often found more than a poor woman with a family could well afford. One widow sent three children to

the Crèche, while she worked in some factory near, and she proved that 1s. 6d. a week was fully as much as she could afford to pay out of her limited earnings. Some cases Mrs. Hilton quotes, in which the refusal to admit a child into the Crèche was, though necessary, exceedingly painful. A father and mother, both drunkards, wished to send their infant to the Crèche, but pleaded poverty as an excuse for not paying the trifle demanded. "Although," Mrs. Hilton remarked, "we declined to take the child without payment, we felt, when delivering it to the tender mercies of its parents, as though we were offering it up for sacrifice."

"A few weeks afterwards," she continued, "I was visiting the wretched court where this infant's parents lived, and seeing the shutters closed at their miserable dwelling, I entered, and saw the baby in its coffin. I inquired the cause of its death, and this was the mother's account: 'That boy' (pointing to a child of seven) 'let it fall down five stone steps, and then it crawled into the gutter, and ate some peashucks. I carried it to the Ratcliff Cross Hospital, but they could not take it in; but two ladies came from them, and sat here nearly all day, and when they went they told me to go on doing as they had done; but Mrs. B—— came in, and she

said, "That child is bound to die ; don't go a-torturing on it any more," and so I didn't, and so the dear child died.' I again looked on baby, then at its father, who was not sober, and then at its mother, who, in her selfishness and ignorance, had cast away one of God's best gifts, and I could not but feel that it was well with the child."

Mrs. Hilton, however, in her Report, paints in far brighter colours the womanly and amiable attributes frequently found among the mothers of these poor children. But even here is to be found a most objectionable feature—their firm belief in the remedial value of stimulants. And this is the more distressing, as their belief in the efficacy of alcohol is not solely derived from the degraded atmosphere in which they live. It has been taught them — ay, and impressed upon them too—if not directly, at least indirectly, by those who ought to have known far better—the medical profession. It is scarcely credible to what a pernicious extent this faith in alcoholic stimulants prevails even among honourable women, and women of all grades in society—the working, middle, and higher classes. Of these, the least to blame are the working classes. A poor woman has been suffering from sickness, and obliged to enter the hospital, or receive attendance at home. Recovering

from her disease, with enfeebled physical powers, she is obliged to return to her domestic duties, not only the ordinary ones of her house, but the arrears of labour which have accrued during her indisposition. Finding herself sinking under her exertions, she remembers the stimulating remedies given her in her illness, and flies to the public-house for brandy, gin, or wine, which she had been accustomed to receive in the hospital, or by the prescription of the medical man during her illness. The stimulant for the moment acts beneficially, but then comes the reaction, and she finds herself weaker than before. She again applies to the same remedy for relief, and in the end it too frequently happens she becomes an habitual drunkard. It must not be imagined that this is a solitary exception. The parish nurses and district visitors in localities inhabited by the working classes can quote similar cases by hundreds.

To return to Mrs. Hilton. Speaking of the kindness of the poor to one another, and the affectionate attention habitually given by these poor mothers to their offspring, she says: "I have also found when visiting, how utterly the people around them lose all self-reliance, and are ready to adopt the most absurd suggestions of their neighbours. In visiting the children of



the Crèche in times of sickness, I have been much pleased with the love and devotion of the mothers to their suffering little ones, and to see how cheered they have been by our visits. One dear child who had been with us four months previous to her last illness, and had suffered from measles, followed by whooping-cough and bronchitis, was in convulsions four days previous to her death. The poor mother was worn out with watching. She described how she passed the night previous to my calling :—‘Do you know, ma’am, I tried so to recollect the prayer my mother taught me, but I could not, so you see I got the Prayer-book and I stood by her bed, and read every prayer I could find, hoping that God would hear me ; by three o’clock I was that tired that I could read no more. I then woke Bella (a girl of eight), and said, “Get up, my dear, and read these prayers over your poor sister.” Still the dear child writhed and quivered in convulsions.’ So the poor mother concluded that her prayers were not heard.”

Without attempting to canvass in any manner for funds for Mrs. Hilton’s, or any other institution, I may still remark that a vast amount of good might be done by ladies sending to the Crèche the cast-off clothing of their infants. In Mrs. Hilton’s hands articles of the kind would

be most valuable, and the donors might be perfectly certain that the great dread which might naturally be expected were they given to the mothers of the children—that of their being turned into gin—would be avoided. Any playthings also used in a nursery would be a perfect God-send to the poor children in the Crèche. No compunction need deter the would-be donors from sending articles of the kind in consequence of their dilapidated condition, for toys which would be considered too much blemished for the nurseries of the rich, would be most highly esteemed by the poor child whose hitherto most cherished plaything may have been a dead kitten or an oyster-shell.

Another purely Protestant element in Mrs. Hilton's establishment, and the principle on which it is conducted, is its totally unsectarian character. Without any attempt to proselytize, she accepts children of all denominations, of all religious persuasions, or none. All are received most willingly, and treated with equal kindness. Altogether, a more admirable institution, or one better tending to prove the increased power in philanthropic efforts attained by unrestrained liberty of action being given to a good woman, could not be found than is to be seen in the Ratcliff Crèche.

## CHAPTER VIII.

MARY CARPENTER.

I TRUST the reader will admit that no greater proof could be adduced of the unsectarian Christian principle of good works, than in the following short sketch of the life and labours of Miss Carpenter. In her case, like most of the others I have mentioned, her family, though of great respectability, was neither endowed by fortune, position in society, nor with those facilities to command success which would be likely to bring them under the notice of the general public. In Miss Carpenter's case her difficulties were great indeed, for, combined with other obstacles in her way of claiming the support of the public, she had one still greater than all the rest, even to be found in the minds of those who considered themselves unprejudiced Protestants—she was a member of the Unitarian persuasion.

Miss Carpenter is the daughter of the late Lant Carpenter, LL.D., a most eloquent preacher, and a man greatly beloved and respected in every phase of his life by all who knew him, whether as a biblical scholar, a man of learning, or a faithful friend and affectionate father. Dr. Carpenter resided for many years in Exeter, and afterwards removed to Bristol, where he opened a school for young gentlemen, which, in a short time, was filled with pupils. Miss Carpenter at an early age evinced considerable ability for study, not solely in the ordinary branches of female education of the day, but in classics and mathematics as well. Before she had attained her sixteenth year, she had made especial progress in the Greek language, but was afterwards obliged to relinquish her studies from ill-health. As the duties of the house were more onerous in Bristol than when the family lived at Exeter, Miss Carpenter assisted her mother in its management. When her health was restored, however, the old love for study again took possession of her mind, and, assisted by her father, an excellent classical scholar, she took up her former occupations. Her life, however, was not doomed even at that early age to pass without utilitarian employment. Her father, finding the number of his pupils increase, pro-

posed to her that she should assist in the education of the younger scholars. Any employment more congenial to Miss Carpenter's taste it would have been difficult to imagine. She took her place in the schoolroom, and had assigned to her a class, which she taught with great conscientiousness and assiduity. And from this time may, perhaps, be traced that one feature in Miss Carpenter's life which adapts itself so admirably to my moral. I wish especially to prove in this work—that the Romish restraint placed upon the admixture of the sexes in carrying out any laudable work, is not only degrading to womankind, but insulting to manhood as well. During the whole of her life, Miss Carpenter has firmly adhered to this principle, whether employed at the time in the reformation of convicts, the formation of industrial schools, or any other similar labour. She has worked hand in hand with both male and female co-operators, not only without the slightest animadversion, but eliciting the greatest respect from those who witnessed or participated in her labours.

The whole of Miss Carpenter's duties were not, however, simply confined to her father's school, for she was a diligent teacher in the Sunday-school, of which she was superintendent



for some years. Her father having given up his school, Miss Carpenter and her sister went to Paris to perfect themselves in the French language, with the intention of afterwards keeping a young ladies' school, which on their return they opened in conjunction with their mother, and conducted it with considerable success. It was during this time that Miss Carpenter conceived the idea that it was the duty of England to do something for the education of females in India. Possibly this idea was instilled in her mind by her friend the Rajah Rammohun Roy, who himself took enthusiastic interest in the subject. He died, however, in the year 1833, and Miss Carpenter's intention of taking the matter up remained for some time in abeyance. Possibly her relinquishment of the scheme of Hindoo Female Education was, to a certain extent, aided by a visit from Dr. Tuckerman to Bristol in the early part of the year 1834. This gentleman, an eminent philanthropist, brought under her notice the state of degradation of many of the lower working classes of Bristol and their families. He impressed upon her mind the necessity of something being done to remove them from the moral slough they were in. He argued, and with great reason, that it was not merely the respectable portion of the working

classes whose wants and education ought to be attended to, but that the deeper you went in the scale of society, the more such attention was needed, and the less they received. The result was the institution of a Working and Visiting Society, in connection with the Lewin's Mead Chapel. In the year 1839 Miss Carpenter, aided by her father, established a Domestic Mission in the locality, in which for some months both laboured assiduously. The following year Miss Carpenter had the misfortune to lose her father. His death had so painful an effect on her that she appears to have given over all out-door labour, and confined herself solely to the duties of her school; but even this rest was not sufficient, and she was obliged to take a journey on the Continent for several weeks to recover the tone of her mind.

In the year 1846 Miss Carpenter again commenced mission work, and established a ragged school in Lewin's Mead, Bristol. Her first efforts, like those of many other ladies, were on a very limited scale. At the opening of the school she had only five boys, and these the children of the poorest and most degraded of that poor and degraded locality. Small as this beginning was, like the grain of mustard-seed, it afterwards grew up and spread out into many

of the most useful and philanthropic institutions in Bristol.

It would occupy too much space to go to any length into the various earlier labours of Miss Carpenter in Bristol. In 1848 her sister married, and their school was given up. Miss Carpenter, however, continued her out-door duties with unceasing energy, and in 1851 took part in the Reformatory Conference at Birmingham, and again in 1853 at the second conference. She published also at this time several volumes; one, "Morning and Evening Meditations," was so much esteemed that it has already gone through five editions; another on "Reformatory Schools;" another, "Juvenile Delinquents," "The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy," and several more, all of which were received with great favour by the public, and highly complimented by the press.

In the year 1854 Miss Carpenter, in co-operation with Mr. Russell Scott, commenced what may be fairly termed her first great work—the Reformatory Schools at Ringwood. After working these up to their present state of efficiency, the Reformatory Act became law, and they were taken under Government authority. Although Miss Carpenter has now no further influence in the work, it is one in which she continues to

take great interest. And certainly few institutions begun by a woman have borne more favourable fruit. It is now one of the most celebrated institutions of the kind, not only in the county, but in the whole of England.

In the year 1854 Miss Carpenter commenced her Reformatory School for Criminal Girls, which, unlike the Ringwood Reformatory for Boys, is still under her sole management, and which, also, is an admirable institution of the kind. Unfortunately her labours did not go on without impediments arising in her way, and at this time, the very period of her life when her energies were being called out into operation, she had the misfortune to lose her mother, and was herself attacked by a dangerous rheumatic fever, which confined her for many months to the house.

From its very commencement Miss Carpenter has been a member of the Social Science Association, and attended each of its congresses with solely one exception, on which occasion she was absent from ill-health. She continued steadily to superintend and conduct the different establishments organized by her in Bristol till the year 1866, when, shortly after the publication of the "Last Days of Rajah Rammohun Roy," she determined to visit India and commence her

labours in female native education in that country. She returned to England again the next year, after having to a certain extent organized the movement in Bombay. She has visited India three times since, and on the second occasion was obliged to leave, owing to a dangerous attack of illness. She had no sooner recovered, however, than she again returned, and at last succeeded in establishing the "Indian Association for the Instruction of Native Women," which has done so much to promote the education and the welfare of Indian women. She exercised sufficient influence there to induce some of the most enlightened natives to visit this country, all of whom have returned deeply impressed with the necessity of furthering the objects of this Association.

Of the various institutions established by Miss Carpenter in Bristol, two only remain absolutely under her management—the Red Lodge Reformatory for Girls, and, on the opposite side of the road, a flourishing Industrial School for Boys. Miss Carpenter had also established in Lewin's Mead an excellent Industrial Ragged School, to give education and training to the wild lawless children in the neighbourhood, many of whom were frequently incarcerated for theft. In the language of the first report of the



newly-organized day-school, in 1872, Miss Carpenter says :—“Such children could not desire to be admitted into the ordinary schools, nor would they have been admitted had they desired to be so, on account of their undisciplined, rough habits, and their dirty tattered clothing. The school continued to be confined to this class of children for some years, and the committee had the satisfaction of knowing that many of them became respectable men and women, bringing up their children in an orderly manner. The Bridewell no longer swarmed with children as before. Gradually, however, as the school became more orderly, the wild and very miserable children ceased to attend. Efforts were made to bring the school within the regulations of the Committee of Council on Education, which were framed for the National and British Schools, and the school was frequented by children who were indeed very poor, and by most of whose parents the boon of a free education was much valued; these were not, however, the children for whom the school was originally intended.

“A ‘Children’s Agent’ was established in this city in 1864, whose duty it was to penetrate into the most loathsome dwellings, many not fit for human habitation, and to bring the children, if possible, to the school. It was frequently not

practical even to take them through the streets, so complete was the nudity of many of the poor children thus discovered. Some of these were, however, induced to attend by the aid given in food and clothing; but they were extremely irregular, made very little progress, and were often a hindrance to the school. This kind of attendance produced so little real effect, that in March, 1871, Mr. Grant found, from a house to house visitation, that out of four courts in Redcross Street, which had been visited by him for six years, of eighty-four children between the ages of three and twelve, twenty-four attended no school."

Miss Carpenter now found, that although the children who attended the day-school could be provided with a free education, if necessary, by the School Board, the thoroughly neglected and destitute children were not reached by the system. In order, therefore, to reach this very lowest class of children, it was found that an entirely new plan must be adopted to produce on them any real and permanent effect. It was evidently necessary to keep them the greater part of the day on the school premises, where there is an excellent playground, as well as the means of giving them industrial work; but to do this effectually, food must be provided. In

order to secure the right class of children, Mr. Grant, who was now appointed superintendent of the school, was instructed to admit new children only temporarily, and to submit all the cases to the School Board for investigation. The committee then determined to admit only such cases as those for whom the School Board paid a school fee, and this plan appears to have acted admirably.

Miss Carpenter's authority, however, is not altogether superseded here. The Educational Department is under the direction of Government, but the Industrial School remains solely under the management of Miss Carpenter. As before stated, Lewin's Mead was, at the time the Ragged School was first established in 1846, one of the lowest, most densely-populated, and demoralised portions of Bristol. Since then, undoubtedly, many excellent municipal alterations have been made, though it still remains one of the poorest localities. Its moral condition has certainly vastly improved; and this can be traced, to an enormous extent, to Miss Carpenter's and her friends' labours in the neighbourhood. Many of the adults now residing there were formerly pupils under her charge.

Much, however, as the morality of the neighbourhood has been improved by this school

having been established in its centre, the poverty of the people, judging from the appearance of many of the children, could hardly have been greater than it was at the time of my visit. There were in the school—a lofty, well-aired building (formerly a Presbyterian Chapel)—some one hundred or one hundred and twenty children, of whom certainly a third, if not half, the number had neither shoes nor stockings; while the nether garments of almost the whole were in rags. Still, at first sight, the children seemed to have a remarkably cleanly appearance, all wearing brown holland pinafores, and hands, face and feet carefully washed. I was informed, however, by Mr. Grant, Miss Carpenter's principal agent in Bristol, that the appearance was deceptive; that although the clothing of many of the children, though poverty-stricken in the extreme, was cleanly, a very large proportion was so filthy, that the pinafores were worn, not solely for the sake of convenience, but to screen the others who were cleanly from any contamination from their vicinity. The cleanly appearance of their hands, faces and feet was also fully accounted for, every child being washed before entering the schoolroom. The poverty of the parents of these children, or possibly their want of prudence and care, was

lamentably distinguishable in the features of a greater portion of them. In the establishment of this school Miss Carpenter has shown an extraordinary amount of tact, combined with charitable feeling. To tempt the children to come regularly to school, she raised, with the assistance of friends, sufficient funds to give them daily their breakfast and dinner. Yet, notwithstanding this liberal treatment, the children are in too many cases suffering from want, though possibly rather of fresh air than of food.

Nor is the establishment of the Ragged and Industrial Schools the only benefit Miss Carpenter and her friends have conferred on the neighbourhood of Lewin's Mead. They have erected a stone building of considerable pretensions in appearance, in which are carried on several branch philanthropic movements. One of them, a club and reading-room for working-men, is well frequented by those residing in the neighbourhood. Here most of the refreshments of a workmen's club may be had at very moderate prices, while an ample supply of periodical literature and newspapers is also provided. Above is a large lecture-room, in which addresses and lectures on social and moral subjects are frequently given; as well as meetings held by the Temperance Society and Good



Templars. There is also another excellent department in this building—a sleeping and mess-room for boys of some fifteen or sixteen years of age, who are employed during the day in different occupations for which they are receiving wages. From the confined tenements and bad house accommodation in the neighbourhood, families are frequently obliged to live together, herded in a most objectionable and crowded manner, where it is impossible to maintain even the most common observance of decency, however well inclined they may be. Many examples were given me, on the occasion of my visit, by Mr. Grant, the superintendent, on the state of degradation in which many of the poorer families are obliged to live, the details of which would be somewhat out of place in the present volume, as well as painful to the reader. Of the inmates of these crowded rooms, of course the most objectionable are lads of sixteen or seventeen years of age, and these the parents would willingly have dispensed with, but there existed an insuperable objection to their absence—the wage they earned was insufficient for their board and lodging in other places. Again, even among those of the better paid, prudent parents object to their residing in common lodging-houses, where,

with even less regard to decency than would be maintained at home, they were often exposed to the demoralising influence of associates of the worst character.

The Sleeping and Mess-room for Boys, established by Miss Carpenter, have also conferred an immense amount of benefit on the neighbourhood of Lewin's Mead. For the sum of one shilling a week each boy has a good bed in a well-aired room, in which they sleep alone, a small wicket opening into the apartment of the superintendent, placing them to a certain degree under his authority and surveillance, so that perfect order among them may be maintained. In a room below were a number of small cupboards or lockers, perhaps one foot square, corresponding with the number of the boys admitted into the establishment. On opening some of these, I found they contained remnants of the boy's breakfast of bread, which had been set apart for his dinner, as well as some meat. I inquired of Mr. Grant what might be the average earnings of the boys under his charge, and he told me from six shillings to ten shillings a week.

"And are they able," I inquired, "to pay one shilling for rent, and maintain themselves completely on the remainder?"

"Not only that," he replied, "but with strict

economy they are able to dress themselves, especially on Sundays, in a far better manner than you would imagine. Beyond that again, several of them have accounts, and good ones too, in the savings-bank."

There is a bath-room provided for the accommodation of the boys, and I was assured that, although personal cleanliness was far from being one of their best points when they entered the institution, they now not only practised it, but appeared to take positive delight in it.

The two other establishments instituted by, and at present under the superintendence of, Miss Carpenter, are—the Park Row Certified Industrial School, and the Red Lodge Girls' Reformatory. The former, that for boys, was formerly a mansion of considerable pretensions, inhabited by one of the old Bristol merchants. It is situated on the brow of a hill in Park Row, and ascended from the road by a long flight of steps, terminating in a garden in front of the house. In this school are at present lodged about one hundred boys, all taken from the lowest and poorest of the population of Bristol, young wandering arabs, who, although not having been convicted of theft, have been known to be the associates of reputed thieves or idle

wanderers, living upon the refuse to be found in the streets, and sleeping in carts, under doorways, or any temporary shelter they could find. I was somewhat prepared, not only to be satisfied, but to admire all I should find in the building—less from what I had heard in Bristol, and my own personal knowledge of the excellence of the different institutions under Miss Carpenter's control, than the following official report of a Government school inspector:—  
“Found everything in clean and comfortable order. The boys well employed in their various occupations. I was much gratified with their manner and appearance. They looked clean, and very healthy, and I am glad to testify to the excellent tone and spirit of the institution, which I attribute to thorough experience in the proper management of an industrial school on the part of the directors, combined with kindness and good judgment in the administration. The boys passed a very fair examination, and showed remarkable intelligence. There was a want of accuracy in the arithmetic. My visit has given me much satisfaction.”—(Signed) Henry Rogers, 15, Parliament Street.

The complimentary notice of Mr. Rogers was certainly not more than in strict honesty the establishment deserved. But a certain note-

worthy feature is omitted. I allude to the strictly economical manner in which the establishment is conducted, affording another instance of the enormous waste of power permitted, by want of foresight and good management, not only in many of our large charities, but even in our pauper institutions as well. This may be shown by the following extract from the Sixteenth Report of the Government Commissioners on Industrial Schools :—“ The school, which united the most economical management with the highest state of economy, was for boys” (Park Row, Bristol). That this was no undeserved compliment, may be judged by comparing its expenditure with those of our pauper schools in the metropolis. The average cost of these last, according to the latest Poor Law return, will be about £26 per head; that of the Hanwell Schools £29 per head; while that of the Park Row Industrial School is £14 5s. 8d. per head, being less than half the cost of a child in the last-mentioned pauper school.

On visiting the school, I was invited by Mr. Langabeer, the head master, to ask any question I pleased, and he would answer it candidly. My first inquiry was as to the manner the school was maintained at so small a sum when compared with that of the average pauper schools.



“Because,” he replied, “in our curriculum of education we not only instruct the boys in all the subjects taught in Government schools, but we also impress on them the necessity of being able to help themselves, and we teach them the means of doing so. Let me begin with their physical requirements. Possibly a portion of the economical cost of the boys may be traced to the small amount of house-rent they incur. These premises were purchased by the late Lady Byron, who was, in almost all Miss Carpenter’s philanthropic endeavours, her constant co-operator. The house is let to the trustees of the school at a very moderate rent; at the same time, not so much so as to make any very perceptible difference in the average cost. Well, the first point we will take up is the boys’ cleanliness. You will perceive, as we go round, that it would be difficult to find any body of boys, no matter how well trained, whose cleanly appearance is greater than those you meet with here.” (And I may add that the result of my visit proved this statement to be a fact.) “But apart from their personal cleanliness, clean linen and clothes are also necessary, and in this we teach the boys to act for themselves; come with me,” he continued, “and I will give you ocular proof of what I say.”

Mr. Langabeer now conducted me into a large room fitted up as a laundry, in which I found perhaps half-a-dozen boys standing at wash-tubs, their sleeves tucked up, and rubbing away at the linen as expertly as the respectable woman—the technical professor on this subject—who superintended them could have done herself. The linen, after it was hung up to dry, was shown me, and any more scrupulously clean it would be impossible to find.

“And now for the clothing,” said Mr. Langabeer. “Come with me to the tailor’s shop.”

Here I found some ten or twelve boys busily employed in sewing garments cut out for them by a working tailor, then superintending their operations. I will not state that the fit or workmanship was such as would have given satisfaction to any of our first-rate London tailors, but still it was creditably performed, and judging from some of the other boys whom I saw in their best clothes, the fit was far better than I had expected. Of the quality of the material used there was nothing left to desire. But this was not all—their shoes had to be accounted for. I was next led into a workshop where, under the direction of a master-shoemaker, some half-a-dozen boys were employed in making shoes for the others—all the shoes worn in this juvenile,

really co-operative society being made on the premises.

“And not only,” said Mr. Langabeer, “is the art useful to the boys when in the school, but they seldom forget it afterwards. Of this I had a curious example a few days since. A very respectable-looking young man rang the bell of the house, and asked to see me. ‘I’ve got a favour to ask of you, sir,’ he said to me. ‘Coming along, the heel of my boot has got loose, and it’s very inconvenient, as I’ve to walk a long way. If you would let me go into the workshop, I could put it right in a minute. I was brought up in this school, and know well what I’m about.’ Of course I granted his request, and went with him into the shoemaker’s room, and stood by him while he arranged the heel of his boot. When done, after thanking me, he said, ‘You see, sir, I’ve not forgotten the lessons learnt here, and yet I have never used that tool since I left school.’ And now,” continued Mr. Langabeer, “since we have washed and clothed the boys, I will show you our arrangements for feeding them. Of course we don’t grow our own corn, or make our own flour, but we make our own bread.”

He now conducted me into the bakehouse, where I saw in an oven a number of loaves

which appeared of excellent quality, all of which had been made by the boys. I asked whether the lads were generally expert at it.

“Very much so,” he replied. “You would scarcely imagine to what an extent. By means of their labour this baker’s shop has yielded a profit of £1 per week through the year; and there has been a continual and increasing demand for boys to work at private houses during a portion of the day. Come with me now into the garden, and I think you will admit it to be in excellent order and well managed. It is not large, as you will see; yet we take from it not only sufficient vegetables to supply the house, but the sale of the surplus has been a source of income, though not a large one, to the school. Another source of income to us is by the sale of firewood. When the boys have nothing else to do, and are not at play, rather than allow them to be idle we set them to this occupation, subdividing the labour according to the strength and ability of the children.”

I inquired of Mr. Langabeer what was the appearance of the boys on their first arriving at school.

“The majority of them,” he replied, “were very small, and in a deplorable state of igno-

rance, as well as badly developed physically. Upon such cases, the effect of a few months regular living is very striking. For example, during the last year, seventeen boys have left the school, of whom two found employment near Bristol, four were apprenticed to the sea, and eleven emigrated, all being placed in such employments as it would have been impossible for them to have undertaken had it not been for the care and attention paid them in this school."

Altogether, a more decided success than this Industrial School it would be impossible to find in England, and it certainly reflects great credit both to Miss Carpenter, and those energetic philanthropists who have acted so assiduously with her.

But perhaps the most interesting, both to the psychologist and philanthropist, of Miss Carpenter's present institutions at Bristol, is the Red Lodge Girls' Reformatory. Not only is this establishment interesting from these points of view, but as a local curiosity as well. Of the history of the house I could obtain but little information. Its extent, and particularly the costly elaborate wood-carvings in it, are of such a finished description as to tell that its former owners must have been men of great wealth and



taste. The house would now be but ill adapted for the mansion of a modern family; its rooms, though large, being somewhat inconvenient for that purpose. As a public institution, however, it suits admirably. Of the perfect cleanliness and order of this reformatory, it would be impossible to speak in too high praise. There are at present in it fifty-four girls, many of them only nine or ten years of age, the eldest about fifteen, all of whom have been convicted of some crime, generally theft. One of the first ideas which strikes a visitor when he sees them is the really respectable, and even amiable appearance which many of these girls possess, and judging from their behaviour in the Reformatory their appearance is no bad mirror of the mind, for better discipline it would be impossible to maintain, even in a well-regulated family. The girls are here taught, besides the usual subjects of a national school education, needlework, baking, cooking, and other household occupations. The ordinary routine of the penitents' life is described by Miss Carpenter as follows:—

“As soon as the Cathedral clock strikes six, the matron's bell arouses the household to another day of life and duty. The summons is quickly obeyed, teachers and children all rise. Each dormitory being under suitable supervi-

sion, care is taken that proper attention is paid by every one of the inmates to personal neatness and cleanliness; then every girl, kneeling by the side of her own little bed, offers in silence her humble prayer to Him who has watched over her during the defenceless hours of sleep. The beds are then neatly turned down; the windows thrown open to admit the fresh morning air, and all the girls are ready at the morning bell, five minutes before half-past six, to accompany their teachers down-stairs to the schoolroom. A few have risen a little earlier than the rest, and have prepared the rooms for the reception of the others. \* \* \* \*

“We deem the morning hours to be those that give a tone to the day, and wish to secure them for the improvement of such girls especially as are engaged in industrial work during the day. When the girls are assembled in the schoolroom, then, at half-past six, the house-girls, and perhaps a few of the older ones who require extra teaching, accompany the schoolmistress and her assistant into a separate room, while the schoolgirls remain with the sewing mistress, to repair their clothes, and arrange the needlework and knitting for the day. The backward girls receive an extra lesson from our steady young monitor, an orphan girl, who was

rescued by some benevolent ladies from a dreadful scene of vice, and who means to make this her home. Some of the older schoolgirls begin now to learn housework, by doing various domestic offices in the house preparatory to the morning meal. We have no separate dining-room, so when the schoolroom requires to be prepared for breakfast, our little maids get a brisk run in the garden to their hearts' content. The class-room for the older girls, some five-and-twenty perhaps, presents meanwhile a very pleasing spectacle to the visitor who will look in on them at that early hour. \* \* \* \*

It is delightful and encouraging to see how much interest these girls take in their lessons, reciprocating that felt by their teacher, and almost seeming proud of their newly-acquired faculties. Their copybooks are handed to the visitor with much pleasure, to show the result of their patient application.

“The prayer-bell rings at eight, the girls are all marshalled in order together, each having in her hand her school hymn-book, and those who can read, the Bibles which they have purchased with their little earnings. Quietly do they walk with their teachers up that fine old oaken staircase to the grand carved oak drawing-room. Few houses or even royal palaces can boast so

noble a remnant of antiquity as this. It was probably added to the original building by the merchant, its proprietor, in the Elizabethan age, and evidently no expense had been spared by him to make it as perfect a specimen of the taste of that era, as genius and the best material could effect.

“Prayers being over, the matron then conducts the girls to their simple breakfast, over which she presides, as well as over their other meals, having previously finished her own, and the teachers now take theirs alone in comfort. \* \* The girls are not allowed to converse with each other during meals, and strict propriety is required from them in their mode of taking them. To obtain this is at first no easy task. Many have never been accustomed previously to use a knife and fork properly, nor to take food from a plate placed on a table-cloth. \* \* \* Breakfast ended, the real work of the day commences. The older girls go to their laundry duties, which occupy them till tea-time; by these they are learning to exercise their muscles, to gain that mastery over bodily labour which will make toil a pleasure, and thus to earn their bread honestly in the world when they leave our care.

“The ten o'clock bell assembles the school-

girls, neat and clean, into the schoolroom, ready for the morning lessons, which continue till half-past twelve. At one o'clock they dine, and then the girls are allowed to amuse themselves in the garden until they prepare for the afternoon duties. \* \* \* At two the girls are settled in the schoolroom for the afternoon sewing. We make a great point of this branch of our girls' training. A thorough knowledge of the use of the needle is essential to every woman, and especially to those who, in whatever position they may be placed, will have domestic duties to perform for themselves and others; besides, by acquiring the power of doing good needlework, they have in their hands at all times the means of earning a livelihood. The girls are able to earn small sums of money by good and diligent work; these are placed in the matron's hands, but they are allowed to draw it for any purpose approved by her, and they have the satisfaction of feeling, often for the first time in their lives, not only that they are contributing by their work something towards their own maintenance, but that they are able to have the well-earned pleasure of obtaining some useful article of clothing for themselves when they leave school and go into the world. \* \* \*

The supper bell again assembles all together



to their simple meal, at the close of which the whole of the inmates remain together under the charge of the matron or schoolmistress until bed-time. On some evenings, the elder girls attend to their sewing, and the repairing of their clothes, while the younger ones are busy knitting warm strong socks for a boys' reformatory, or in finishing a pressing order for shirts for the same object. At eight the gas is lighted; the schoolgirls come cheerfully in with the matron, quietly take their places, sweetly sing their evening hymn, listen with reverence to some words of Holy Writ, and join in supplications at the throne of grace. Then, quietly and in order, the girls of each dormitory retire with their monitors to their own appointed places, where perfect silence is enjoined, and where, after offering their own private prayer, they soon sink into healthful slumber after the duties of the day, to rise refreshed by sleep on the morrow."

I might have dwelt much longer on the admirable labours of Miss Carpenter in Bristol, Canada, and India; but I submit, in the short description I have given, that I have placed before the reader abundant proof of the enormous amount of good a talented woman may perform, and without scandal, when allowed the free use of her energies and abilities.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ADELINE COOPER.

**A**LTHOUGH the labours of Miss Adeline Cooper (now Mrs. Harrison) are possibly, in point of magnitude, less imposing than those of Miss Carpenter, they are not less conclusive in showing that an energetic woman will often perform an amount of good work which it would be difficult for her to effect had she been an inmate of a nunnery, or member of a strict Anglican sisterhood. And this fact becomes the more apparent in the case of Miss Cooper, as the scene of her labours has been principally confined to a district in London which the Roman Catholic priesthood consider as one of their strongholds—Westminster.

Vast as are the changes which have of late years taken place in the aspect of London by the formation of new streets, railway termini,

and other improvements, perhaps there is not a district which has undergone a more complete metamorphosis than that of St. Margaret's, Westminster. Thirty or forty years ago there was not a parish in the metropolis which had obtained (and perhaps justly) a wider reputation for poverty and degradation. A large proportion of the land was held by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster—a body which in those days was composed of a very different order of men from the gentlemen who fortunately have succeeded them. They and their predecessors appear to have taken but little interest in the spiritual and social condition of their tenants; things being allowed pretty much to take their own course, provided the quit-rents and the heavy fines imposed on the renewal of leases were regularly paid. These fines were so onerous, and the duration of the leases on which the houses were let so short, that their tenants and sub-lessees were to a great degree precluded from building good houses on the ground. The result was that the quarter was crowded with streets, alleys, and courts of a most miserable and squalid description, while the inhabitants who flocked to them, in consequence of the demolition of houses in the western parts of the metropolis, and the natural increase of

the population, were of a character only too well suited to the dwellings which had been erected for their reception. In the meantime the parochial authorities took little interest in the matter. The guardians of the poor, though nominally elected from the parishioners at large, were in fact no better than self-elected. They were generally chosen from small tradesmen in the locality, who, so long as they could enjoy their parish dinners in peace and comfort, cared but little about the moral condition of the poor under their guardianship; and if occasionally a member, somewhat more public-spirited than his brethren, proposed some amelioration of the disgraceful state of things then existing, his attempts were soon stopped by the indifference which pervaded the majority.

By degrees, however, a different state of feeling began to develop itself among the parochial authorities. Some innovators, who were looked upon by the old parish magnates as little better than disturbers of the public peace, began to take exception to the amounts recorded in the parish balance-sheet for feasting and other outlays. Again, another most disagreeable fact began to thrust itself upon the notice of the guardians. Although they admitted that a large proportion of the inhabitants were

most demoralised, still vice could not go on without the expenditure of money, and as tradesmen they had hitherto had but little to complain of. But fresh population continued to flow into their parish, and the new-comers were invariably of the poorest order, so that, although retail trade continued to flourish, the poor-rate increased in a still greater ratio; and while they benefited as traders by the increase in the number of the inhabitants, as ratepayers they suffered in a still greater proportion.

The parochial authorities now roused themselves in good earnest to meet the difficulty, although the plan they adopted was hardly of a nature to be commended. The sole object they seemed to have in view was to drive the poor out of their parish, and that by the exceedingly simple process of destroying their dwellings. To effect this, by aid of an Act of Parliament an arrangement was entered into with the Dean and Chapter, on whose estate the worst portion of the poor were congregated, for the formation of a broad new street reaching from Westminster Abbey to Pimlico. Great difficulties, however, had to be encountered before the scheme could be carried out, but at last they succeeded, and many thousands of the poorest individuals to be found in the metro-



poliſ were driven out of the pariſh. Still, in a moral point of view, the movement was not ſo ſucceſsful as its promoters had anticipated. Although the poor-rate was certainly to a great degree reduced by it, and a vaſt number of bad characters got rid of, yet many—and thoſe of the worſt claſs—remained behind, and from the ſcarcity of houſe accommodation they became more crowded, and in conſequence more demoralised. The overcrowding—as ſhown by the returns of the medical officer of health—is even at the preſent day utterly diſgraceful. Model lodging-houſes on a grand ſcale have certainly been built, but regulations were eſta- bliſhed by their promoters very adverſe to their being really ſucceſsful. All perſons getting their means of living in the ſtreets—ſuch as petty hawkers, coſtermongers, and others of the ſame claſs—were precluded from being tenants, and thus the great evil remained almoſt un- touched. Not the ſlighteſt better provision was made for theſe poor creatures, and the reſult was that, both physically and morally, they fell from bad to worſe, till at laſt, to be as great a thief as a Tothill Fields coſtermonger, became a common phrase of abuſe among the loweſt and moſt degraded.

But while miſery and vice thus continued to

exist with little apparent abatement, there was no lack of effort on the part of the resident clergy of all denominations for the reformation of the inhabitants. But these efforts had comparatively little good effect when compared with the vast amount of labour employed. Nor was this to be wondered at while the magistrates licensed gin-palaces by the score; and the authorities, governmental or parochial, availed themselves of every pretext for destroying the dwellings of the poor to carry out some contemplated improvement.

Those who were already overcrowded were thus packed still closer together, and the moral and social evils, already too notorious, were greatly increased. Notwithstanding this unfavourable state of affairs, there were still many benevolent persons who believed that the population of the district was as capable of being raised to respectability as any portion of the community, if only common justice were done them. And, considering the injustice of municipal legislation, and the increased number of public-house licences, they were probably right. Still, nothing very conclusive was done in the matter till a young lady—Miss Adeline Cooper—undertook to prove the truth of this opinion; and most triumphantly

has she succeeded in her honourable, self-imposed mission.

The history of Miss Cooper's labours among the poor of Westminster furnishes a singular example of that tenacity of purpose so often found among our Protestant countrywomen. No opposition seems to terrify them, no obstacle too vast for them to surmount. About ten years ago some benevolent persons interested in a ragged school at Westminster were on the point of closing its doors for want of funds. One of them, however, proposed that before doing so they should apply to her friend, Miss Cooper, for advice and assistance on the subject, as she (Miss Cooper) had had great experience in the management of schools for the children of the poor in the neighbourhood of Pimlico. The lady's advice was acted on; Miss Cooper readily accepted the invitation given her, and by dint of united efforts the school was kept open. While engaged in teaching these poor children, Miss Cooper had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with many of the inhabitants of the district, and she resolved to do something to raise them out of the abject poverty and degradation in which they were sunk. For this purpose she rented two little cottages in a court in old Pye Street—since

swept away by the Improvement Commissioners—and she there commenced day and night Sunday-schools, as well as a mothers' meeting. Not only had she plenty of applicants, but the rooms became so overcrowded that she was obliged to look for more extensive accommodation. She had some difficulty in succeeding, but she at last found a building which for size and situation was admirably adapted for the purpose. Singularly enough, in this new building she found an opportunity to point a moral, and a forcible one too. The house she had selected had formerly been the "One Tun," a notorious public-house, which was then vacant in consequence of the tenants having decamped without paying their rent, and stealing everything they could possibly take away with them. At the outset, Miss Cooper experienced great opposition from a number of roughs who had been accustomed to drink and gamble at the "One Tun." They voted the school a nuisance, and openly threatened the teachers that if they did not "clear out of it," they should be driven away by force. No notice was taken of this threat, and Miss Cooper and her assistants kept steadily on their course, when the angry feeling among the roughs began gradually to subside, and they afterwards

did many acts of kindness to the resident teachers.

Noticing the terrible effects of intemperance in the neighbourhood, both on old and young, Miss Cooper, after taking the temperance pledge herself, established a Band of Hope for the children, which was also attended with marked success. The reason she gave for becoming a teetotaller was, not that at the time she considered the moderate use of fermented drinks objectionable, but that it would not be right on her part to ask persons who were badly fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed, exposed to drenching rain or burning heat, and subjected to every kind of temptation, to give up the habit, while she herself had every comfort. Her efforts to inculcate sobriety on the adults were not so encouraging as she could have wished. True, they advised their children to abstain, and even admitted that her arguments as applied to themselves were worthy of grave consideration; but, unfortunately, as they generally chose the tap-room as the locality for discussing the matter, it may be easily imagined that, in such an atmosphere, Miss Cooper's reasoning lost a considerable portion of its effect. She attempted to induce the men to attend her meetings in the schoolroom at the "One Tun." They were



all civil enough when invited, but they still stayed away, while the room was nearly filled with women and children. By degrees, Miss Cooper ascertained some of the reasons which operated against her. First, it was thought *infra dig.* to go to a school; secondly, on that special evening some might have to work all night; others might have had a bad day in selling their wares, and were obliged to try again in the evening; while the majority, when asked, gave for an excuse that they had forgotten all about it.

Miss Cooper determined to try another plan to induce the men to become sober. She resolved on establishing a club in a different locality, where the men might have full opportunity of meeting together in commodious, well-lighted rooms, and where they might be free from the temptation of the public-house, and be able to reason coolly on the advantages of sobriety. For some time she could find no house suitable, but at last she heard that a piece of ground in Duck Lane, Westminster, was to be let on a building lease. This, with the assistance of some friends, she took a lease of, and on it was built a handsome, lofty room, well-lighted, warmed, and ventilated, and with every convenience attached to

it. In this building Miss Cooper established her costermongers' club. In its organization she was considerably assisted by several gentlemen who had always been her warm supporters. Possibly the regulations which Miss Cooper would have liked to have seen carried into effect might have been somewhat more stringent than those advised by her male friends, several of whom, having had experience of the working of the West-end clubs, advised her to allow the members to form their own code of regulations, unbiassed by any surveillance or restrictions whatever. Miss Cooper readily agreed to this suggestion; and one of her friends, a civil engineer, assisted in drawing up a code of regulations somewhat like those of the Reform Club, of which he was a member. These rules were merely offered to the members for their guidance in forming their own laws, for the power was left them to adopt or accept these as they might think fit.

A meeting of the members was now called to take into consideration the formation of a code of rules by which the affairs of the club were to be regulated, a sufficient number of members having enrolled themselves to allow of its being opened. The different rules were then put *seriatim*, and for some time all were

carried without difficulty. At last a question was brought before the meeting which caused poor Miss Cooper the greatest anxiety. The question was whether they should apply for a beer licence for the club, and her trouble was still further increased at finding that the first person who rose to speak on the subject was far better known for his industry and shrewdness than for his sobriety. He addressed the meeting in something like the following words :—

“ Now, I’ll tell you what my opinion about this beer licence is. I ain’t a teetotaller, and I don’t intend being one, and when I want a pint of beer I intend having it, providing I can afford to pay for it. Now, if I want a pint of beer I can go to a public-house for it; but if I want to keep away from beer, and I very often do, I can come here. Now, if beer’s sold here, I don’t see the difference between this and a public-house, or what’s the use of my being a member any longer, so I shall hold up my hand against any beer licence being had.”

All the other speakers followed in the same tone, and on the question being put, “ whether a beer licence should be applied for,” Miss Cooper had the unspeakable gratification of finding that it was unanimously rejected. But more

remains to be told. The luxury of being able to *get away from beer* soon began to be felt by the members of the club, while several, finding they could do without beer, gave it up altogether and became teetotallers. On the evening of the meeting for passing the rules, the club, which numbers one hundred and twenty members, counted among them only twenty-five teetotallers; a few weeks afterwards more than half the members had taken the pledge.

The more Miss Cooper saw of her new acquaintances, the costermongers, the more fully she became convinced that a very great injustice had been done them by the estimate the public had formed of them. True, they had many faults, and were prone to many vices, but the dishonesty of which they were accused was not common among them. On the contrary, many instances came under her notice of honourable actions which would have been creditable to any class of society. Again, a very singular feature was noticeable in their behaviour to each other. The Westminster costermonger, being generally a man of weakly constitution, is obliged to wage the battle of life by aid of his cunning and address. Accustomed from his early youth to mercantile transactions, which, though in a very small way, are possibly quite

as intricate, and require as much tact in their management, as those of greater magnitude, he naturally becomes a very clever financier, seldom entering into any bargain without a clear prospect of gain; yet notwithstanding all his shrewdness, Miss Cooper found him continually giving up perhaps as much as half his capital on loan without interest to a brother costermonger in temporary distress; and the readiness with which he advanced his money was frequently the greater in proportion as the possible inability of the borrower to repay it was the less. She further noticed the great kindness and solicitude which they showed towards each other when in sickness, and the prompt manner in which they would get up a subscription for the widows or orphans of any deceased members of their class. These and other evidences of Christian feeling being so obvious to Miss Cooper, she attempted to inculcate upon the members of her club a more religious tone, and in a short time a very efficient Bible-class was formed in it. In the meantime the temperance movement progressed rapidly among the members, and in this Miss Cooper received great assistance from the celebrated artist, George Cruikshank, who joined her committee, and



used frequently to take the chair at the meetings, making himself exceedingly popular among the costermongers, thus doing good service in the cause of sobriety.

Meanwhile the schools established in the "One Tun" continued to flourish. The Band of Hope also continued to prosper. Miss Cooper established among the members of the band a penny bank, which was held in high favour among the young teetotallers. They encouraged it to such an extent that the third Christmas she had the satisfaction of returning to them more than eighty pounds which they had saved during the year.

Miss Cooper now fondly hoped that her labours would go on without further impediment, but she was doomed to be greatly disappointed. A terrible onslaught was made by the police on the costermongers who were wont to ply their trade in the Broadway, Westminster. This attempt of the police at the time roused great indignation among many of the well-wishers of the poor, and the police received from all sides great blame for their arbitrary conduct. The police at first tried to defend themselves by pleading that the costermongers and hawkers whom they had driven away were little better than thieves, but Miss Cooper and

her friends challenged them to prove their case. The police then shifted their ground, and stated that the hawkers and costermongers caused great impediment to the traffic, and also severely injured the trade of the legitimate shopkeepers in the vicinity. This last assertion, however, was fully disproved by the shopkeepers themselves, who said that these poor people, so far from being an impediment in the retail trade of the neighbourhood, rather brought customers than drove them away.

While Miss Cooper was devoting all her energies to the defence of the oppressed, she received another rebuff, which would have damped the courage of any one less determined than herself. One morning a notice was sent her from the Improvement Commissioners, that it was necessary her club-house should give way to make room for some alterations they proposed to effect, and that she would shortly be obliged to leave it. At the same time an intimation was conveyed to her that she would be fully compensated for her interest in the building. She now looked around her to find some other spot in the neighbourhood to which she could remove. She was without success, however. The value of land had so much increased in Westminster that the

compensation she had received from the Improvement Commissioners was insufficient for the purpose of re-establishing her institution near the spot from which she had been ejected. For some time she was at a loss what steps to take, when a friend sprung up where she had little expected to find one. The report of her exertions on behalf of the friendless poor had reached the ears of the late Marquis of Westminster. After making inquiries on the subject, and finding the statements he had heard as to the good Miss Cooper had effected were quite true, the Marquis kindly offered to lend her £7,600 at 3 per cent. interest. It is almost needless to say the noble Marquis's offer was accepted with gratitude by Miss Cooper—in fact, she looked upon it, in the fullest sense of the term, as a Godsend to her. She was now not only in a position to re-establish her club, but to unite to it a model lodging-house for those of the poor who were unable to become tenants of other model lodging-houses in the neighbourhood.

Miss Cooper now sought for some other locality in which she could commence operations. She at last discovered a vacant piece of freehold ground, and four old houses, situated at the corner of Old Pye Street and St. Anne's Lane,

which were purchased for £2,260; and on this she not only erected her club, but also a dwelling-house sufficiently large to accommodate fifty or sixty of those families who were ineligible, from the lowness of their weekly wages, or their daily avocations, for any other model lodging-house, Mr. Peabody's included, where none but men earning from 18s. to 20s. a week could be admitted. The expense of the whole building, beyond the cost of the freehold land, was £6,300, including £163 for stoves, and £333 for iron joists; the whole, with legal and other expenses, amounting to nearly £9,000.

Few who are acquainted with the general aspect of the working-men's clubs, would recognise at first sight that erected for the costermongers, street hawkers, and others of the poorer class in Westminster. The building was designed by Mr. Henry M. Eyton, of Buckingham Street, Strand, and of Ipswich, and would not disgrace the handsomest street in the metropolis. The portion of the building set apart for the club, has a general room thirty-two feet by twenty-four, and thirteen feet high, with a lavatory and other accommodations attached, also a kitchen and library. Over the club-room\* is a lecture-room, thirty-two feet by

\* The club has now some 250 members, not one of whom has come under the notice of the police for drunkenness.

twenty-four, and also a committee-room and office. In the dwelling-house, which is entered from St. Anne's Lane, there are seventeen single tenements, thirty-eight with two rooms, five with three rooms, let off at one and ninepence, three shillings, and four and sixpence a-week. The entrance to each tenement is at the back, from stone external galleries; on each landing are two water-closets, a washing-sink, and a tap with water laid on to both, also two dust-shafts. Each of the living-rooms has one of Nicholson's grates with oven and boiler, a lock-up larder, and a coal-closet. One of the most remarkable features in the building, and perhaps the most to be commended, is the wash-house placed on the top floor, by which arrangement the inmates of the dwelling-houses are not annoyed by the steam from the washing; it is a large and lofty room, with seven coppers and washing-troughs, also two drying-closets properly fitted up. All the floors in the building are of iron and concrete, boarded over, and the lintels of strong bar-iron, no timber being used in the construction; and the stairs are of York stone, built into the walls on both sides, so that, as far as practical, the building is fireproof.

In a portion of the building, forming the angle of Old Pye Street and St. Ann's Lane, is a



handsome double-fronted shop, in which the members have established a co-operative store ; this also promises to be a success. As yet, it has been open only a month, but more than £160 has been taken over the counter.

Including children, there are 254 persons in the dwelling-house ; and of these, sixty are married couples. If the integrity or respectability of tenants can be proved by the punctual payment of their rent, and the good order and cleanliness of their abodes, there is little more to be desired in those of the Old Pye Street model lodging-house. Greater cleanliness than pervaded the whole at the time of my unexpected visit, I have rarely met with ; and on inquiry of the Manager, I found there was not a tenant one week in arrears of rent. Yet the class from which they are taken may be better understood when I state that among the tenants were twenty-six hawkers and costermongers, two grinders, four blind street-musicians, two cabmen, two chair-menders, one china-mender, six widows—most of them charwomen, and the rest made up of persons in similar grades of life. Pride and discontent might find many a useful lesson by visiting this establishment. I found two poor widows thankful for the mercy they received in having obtained full employ-

ment. One laboured from six in the morning till six at night, sifting cinders in a dust-yard in Paddington, for a wage of tenpence a day; the other was in full work making skewers for butchers at sevenpence halfpenny a thousand. Not the slightest surveillance or espionage is kept over these poor people, the regulations of the lodging-house, which they are bound to obey, being merely such as are necessary for their mutual comfort. In such high reputation is the establishment held that every room in it was occupied twenty-four hours after it was opened; and applications sufficient to have filled a building ten times the size, are on the books from persons waiting for admission.

In the club and dwelling-house, several collateral societies have been formed. A loan society has been established among them—the operations of which now amount to a sum of considerable magnitude, no less than £328 18s. having passed through Miss Cooper's hands in the course of the last year. There is also a Temperance Sick Benefit Society, which is in favour among the teetotallers; and a barrow-club, by which members, through paying up small weekly subscriptions, may in time become the freeholders of good substantial barrows. Within the last two years no fewer than fifteen

barrows have been bought and paid for in this manner. The penny bank is also a flourishing institution, there being no fewer than 1,110 deposits.

No one can, with justice, dispute that Mrs. Harrison (Miss Cooper) has worked out her problem in a most satisfactory manner. She has proved that the poorest and most neglected are capable of becoming as respectable and well conducted as any other class of society—that the street-hawker, the costermonger, the char-woman, the crossing-sweeper, and the cindersifter, have all elements of good in them capable of development, if they are taken by the hand and instructed with judgment and discretion. All the ministers of religion in the vicinity of her labours speak of her with respect and affection. Mrs. Harrison has further added another proof how powerful is judicious female agency in all well-matured religious and social undertakings. She has set an example well worthy of imitation.

## CHAPTER X.

SARAH ROBINSON.

A MORE admirable proof of the power of an energetic, intellectual Protestant woman in the performance of good works, could hardly be met with than may be traced in the ministrations of Miss Sarah Robinson. But, apart from the effect of her personal labours, another fact connected with her is most noteworthy, as it gives a direct contradiction to the excuse the Catholic priests and Ritualists put forward of the necessity of women wearing a conventual dress when engaged on any mission of good, whether religious, moral, or physical. Although the pretext is not derogatory to womankind, and it may even be admitted that, at first sight, it bears the appearance of solicitude for their welfare and protection which may recommend it to the eye of the casual observer, the supposition that they may be offended or annoyed is, as

I hinted in my opening chapter, a gross affront to manhood. Had the Catholic priesthood taken as much pains to obtain a correct insight into the brighter side of human nature as they have the darker, they would not have fallen into the error of supposing that any body of *men* would offer or permit an insult or impediment to a woman when bent on an object of mercy, and I trust the reader will admit that in the short sketch I shall lay before him, of the life and labours of the lady whose name heads this chapter, I shall furnish a strong *prima facie* proof of the truth of my assertion. And it should be borne in mind that the result of Miss Robinson's teaching, on which I shall particularly dwell, is the one which would at first sight appear most provocative of anger and ill-feeling on the part of the men whom she stepped forward to instruct and civilise—the inculcation of temperance, or strict sobriety, among the private soldiers of the army. Nay, more, she chose as the particular objects of her labours those regiments most addicted to this soldierly vice; and that, not only without eliciting from them any ill-feeling, but while, so to speak, dashing the cup from their lips, earning in return their respect and gratitude.

When tracing the history of any individual,



whose name has become celebrated for any particular class of actions, it is the common habit of biographers to commence by proving that, from his earliest childhood, sparks indicative of the efforts of his after-life would occasionally make their appearance. For what purpose these indications were given, however, it would be difficult to say, for, as a rule, it would appear that those having charge of the children at the time failed to appreciate them. I have personally but little faith in these indications, being fully persuaded that the occupations or idiosyncracies of childhood (especially with women) are seldom indications of their future career. I shall not dwell, then, on the events of Miss Robinson's childhood, beyond stating that her family was in a highly respectable position in society, and living in a somewhat secluded manner in the country. When very young she was rather of a taciturn disposition, though amiable, and possessing at the same time great natural intelligence. She seemed then to give but few indications of the strong religious temperament which afterwards actuated her. As she grew older, however, and her mind became more matured, by degrees the truths of religion became more apparent to her, till at last she

joined her sister in establishing a Sunday-school for the neglected children in the neighbourhood. But as her mind increased in power her constitution became weaker, and growing rapidly, symptoms of a spinal complaint began to develop themselves, and for fourteen months she was obliged to lie prostrate on a couch. Thanks to medical treatment and the assiduous attention of her friends, her disease apparently succumbed, and she was again able to make herself useful in the neighbourhood. Her family afterwards removed to London, where she became a member of Dr. Hamilton's congregation, and ultimately joined the Presbyterian Church. She took an active part in the Sunday-school attached to the church, and also in the Somers Town Mission. As we are told by one of her biographers,\* so earnest was she in her work, that when a violent fever broke out in the neighbourhood, and the scripture reader was struck down by it, she went to and fro from his sick-bed to the sick and dying around, receiving his directions in her ignorance of the London poor, and carrying food and medicine to those who needed it. This labour, however, appears to have been more than her constitution was

\* "Active Service, or Work among our Soldiers." Hatchards, Piccadilly, 1873.

able to support, and she returned home with impaired health, and the impression on her mind that the spinal complaint was incurable, most of the medical men being of opinion that she might bear up against it for a year or two, but that afterwards she would most probably be obliged to spend the remainder of her life on her couch.

Her family afterwards went to Brighton for a few months, and then removed to their present residence at Guildford. It was now apparently for the first time that the idea occurred to Miss Robinson to take up the particular line of action in which she has already accomplished so vast an amount of good. Her attention was first called to the subject by the demoralising effects of billeting troops in the town when on their march to Aldershot. On these occasions drunkenness reigned in the streets, and the language and behaviour of the soldiers was frequently such as not only to shock the ears of the more respectable inhabitants of the town, but occasionally had a most demoralising effect on the more ignorant among the women.

Miss Robinson's first direct effort in the reformation of this vice of drinking among the military, as well as endeavouring to turn their minds more frequently on religious subjects,

took place in the year 1862. Mrs. Daniell was at the time projecting her Aldershot Mission, and Miss Robinson frequently accompanied her in her visits. When the Mission Hall and Soldiers' Institute was opened, in 1863, by a week of special services, Mrs. Daniell acted during the time as lady superintendent and conductor of the whole, her friend, Miss Robinson, performing the duties of the "housekeeper." Mrs. Daniell being obliged to quit Aldershot, Miss Robinson was left for several weeks in sole charge of the mission. Quoting from the little work already mentioned:—"She, during this time, not only conducted the soldiers' Bible-classes, prayer-meetings, singing-classes, and mothers' meetings, but was much engaged in work among the outcast women of Aldershot, who at that time used to congregate in colonies of seventy to one hundred together, occupying whole courts or large blocks of buildings named after the public-house that owned them, and threaded on the inside by long intricate passages connecting the whole. Into these dens she penetrated in the morning, when everything was real about the occupants—no glitter, no deception, no illusions, but real misery, pain, and remorse, and when, therefore, the words that are said to them are more likely to be felt

as real too ; whereas in their midnight meetings they are dressed up and terribly excited by drink. ‘I was very foolish,’ she says, ‘about going into these dens ; I walked up and down a long time praying for strength, and feeling wretchedly incapable, and without self-control. Even the people in the low lodging-houses advised me not to venture, as I should certainly be insulted. At last I dashed into it, and found it really not so very difficult.’ Many of these sinful desolate creatures were touched and softened by finding one heart that could love and care for them enough even to come where they were, ‘loving not loathing ;’ and from all she met with kindness, except sometimes from old women keeping the houses, who would be very abusive, threatening to burn her with a hot iron if she stayed. Often she would return in the afternoon sick and faint from the horrors she had witnessed, and the foul atmosphere she had breathed, and be ill for hours, before taking the evening meeting, or the soldiers’ Bible-class.”

Could a greater proof be given than this of the inutility of the conventual dress being worn by ladies when engaged on useful or womanly missions ? It would be difficult to choose scenes better adapted to prove the respect paid to women on occasions of the kind, not only by the



most demoralised among the military—the class above all others who would be liable to consider female respectability as nought—but by the wretched girls, their companions in vice, who received Miss Robinson's visits with respect and affection. This again proves the truth of a remark made by Parent du Châtelet, in his celebrated work on the fallen women in Paris, that “the strongest and most effectual police power felt, and submitted to, by these women, is the presence among them of an amiable and respectable lady.”

Although Miss Robinson was a frequent visitor to the degraded women, and more drunken among the soldiery at Aldershot, it was not till the year 1865 that she commenced what she terms her real “barrack work.” Her first efforts seem to have partaken more of a theological than a temperance movement, for it appears that during the first two months of her work, she distributed among them no fewer than one hundred and forty Bibles, writing in them the men's names, and six thousand tracts, books, and illuminated cards. The following short quotation from Miss Robinson's private journal gives a graphic description of her ordinary “barrack work” in Brighton and other places.

“I will sketch one day’s work as a specimen of the whole. Arriving at about two o’clock, I find fifteen or twenty men in the barrack square at kit-drill for punishment; the sergeant in command, an acquaintance of mine, salutes and smiles as I pass. Going up the first staircase I reach a corridor running the whole length of the building, the troop-rooms on either side; several cots in each room. I knock pretty loudly at one door, but there is too much noise inside for any one to hear—disputing, singing, joking, clatter of arms. I open the door and call out, ‘May I come in?’—‘Oh yes, miss;’ and the noise ceases. ‘I’ve brought you some papers to-day.’ First man, burnishing his sword, &c., does not look up nor reply, as I lay a paper down beside him and say, ‘I hope you will come to the lecture this evening.’ Second man, rolled up in his blanket, pretending to be asleep; I put a tract on his pillow. Next, two men sitting tailor-fashion on a cot, playing draughts and smoking and spitting on the floor, a kitten asleep between them. They thank me; one says he attended my last lecture, and means to come again. Three men next to them at the table, pipe-claying their tunics; I put some papers between them; one says no one else ever comes near them—that if a man wants to keep

straight in the army, he meets with no encouragement. Most are listening as I say a little about the way to keep straight, and what God looks for in a soldier, and what His power can do. A man on the corner cot says he does not care about my papers—I may leave him one if I like. I say I would rather leave him something he does care about; and on ascertaining he writes home sometimes, I give him an illuminated text-card to enclose, which pleases him very much. A man on the next cot says this reminds him of his Sunday-school. I sit down by him while he tells his tale: mother dead—other friends estranged by his own misconduct—very unhappy—deserves it all—no use trying to be otherwise—soldiers can't be religious; and so on. I have some earnest talk with him, and shake hands before passing on. The next man, preparing in haste for kit-drill, calls out to me to put a tract *there*, and he will read it when he comes in; the bugle sounds, and he hurries out.

“Going into the next room, I encounter four men running out for kit-drill, so I leave tracts on their cots, and offer one to a man smoking in the corner; he nods rather contemptuously and does not speak. Another tells me he has only seven months more to serve, and intends to think more about such things then; I speak

faithfully to him, and he takes it well. Two others asleep; another pipe-claying, I offer him a small 'Pilgrim's Progress;' he shouts out, 'Why, if this isn't the book which my mother used to read to me,' and, in answer to my questions, he tells his story; the tears are in his eyes; he sits down at the table and covers his face; I sit by him for a long talk—poor fellow! he seems a 'Pliable;' at last he begs for a Bible with his name in it and mine, promising to read it, and seek his mother's God.

"In the next room the men have been on guard, and are all asleep but the corporal, who jumps up to show me the care he has taken of the Bible and tracts I had given him long ago at some meeting. We have a talk about hypocrites in religion—the excuse of so many in continuing careless."

That great good has accrued from Miss Robinson's religious teaching is indisputable, yet the beneficial effects of her efforts to cure the soldier of his vice of intemperance are far more easily traced. Here Miss Robinson has indeed done good service, and that, too, with difficulties before her, the contemplation of which would have deprived many an energetic man of the courage to attempt a labour of the kind. Some idea of the determination she displayed

when her name, though much respected among the men, was not as well known as it is now, may be judged from a short extract from the same little work already quoted. It alludes to the disbanding of the Wiltshire Militia, seven hundred strong:—

“The last day was terrible work, getting these men away when disbanded, half of them drunk, and almost all with more money than wit, the streets swarming with sharpers and women ready to relieve them of their surplus cash. Miss Robinson was about the street from half-past six in the morning till late at night; and at the railway station to see each train off; on all sides were men drinking, fighting, or lying on the ground like pigs; but a large number she persuaded to go off quietly and sober, often to the great thankfulness of mothers and wives, who had come to look after them, but could not get them away.”

Nor are the exertions of Miss Robinson on behalf of the soldier limited solely to the time when he is on active service. After they leave the army she frequently corresponds with them, helping them to obtain respectable employment, and benefiting them in every way in her power. How far she has succeeded in her good work may be judged from the fact that during the



year 1872 Miss Robinson held 164 Military Temperance Meetings, with an aggregate attendance of 31,830; and received 1,435 pledges. She also distributed 24,100 books, papers, and tracts; wrote 2,200 letters, and sent out 685 parcels. The benefit derived by the men from their acquaintance with Miss Robinson after they have left the army, may be judged from the following few instances out of the many which might be quoted; and these from Miss Robinson's private diary:—

“One has married a Christian woman, and is now a member of Mr. Spurgeon's church. He has a good situation in London. Another is foreman in a very good printing firm, and has married one of his master's daughters. Both are earnest Christians. Another has a place on the Great Northern Railway, and has married a pious girl. Both are Sunday-school teachers. Another is in Scotland, a private keeper to an old insane gentleman; and has been the means of his sister's conversion, besides being a regular tract distributor in the village. Another is foreman in one department of Huntley and Palmer's biscuit manufactory. Two others are at Chelsea College, training for army schoolmasters, and maintain their Christian profession there. Another is training for the ministry at

Mr. Spurgeon's college. Some are now prison warders, or in the police, firm to their total abstinence pledge and religious principles. One especially, in the Surrey constabulary, is very useful in mission work."

I am far from even hinting that the whole of this good work has been done by Miss Robinson alone. On the contrary, in common with most of my heroines, she is immensely indebted to the assistance she has received from others working with her in the good cause. Nor is it to be thought that the temperance movement had not taken root in the army before she had exercised her influence so effectually on the soldiers. Such an idea would be utterly erroneous. By reference to Dr. Lee's valuable work on the subject, it would be seen that several regiments in India, possibly even unacquainted with Miss Robinson's name, had already taken up the good cause. At the same time, it is a fact that cannot be disputed, that at present she is the head and front of the movement in the army, and it is mainly to her admirable efforts that the great change now going on is due. Nor is this solely the opinion of Miss Robinson's immediate friends. The highest authorities in the army have admitted the excellence of her work, and have afforded

her all possible facilities in carrying it out. Again, the National Temperance League has been of immense service to her in her operations, and has stood by her manfully during the whole of her labours, always admitting, at the same time, that she is indisputably the first and most efficient champion the temperance cause has in the army. The following short paragraph, indirectly proving this statement, appeared in the *Times* on the 21st of August, 1873:—

“ A NOVEL EXPERIMENT.—The National Temperance League have successfully made a novel experiment at the manœuvres on Dartmoor, and are about to repeat it at Cannock Chase. With the sanction of the military authorities, they opened a temperance commissariat for the benefit of the soldiers, and have worked it so well as to make up to some extent for the deficiencies of the Control Department. Commencing at five o'clock in the morning, they have all day long supplied hot coffee and tea, in addition to most things eatable and drinkable which savour not of alcohol. In other respects, the ‘temperance camp’ has offered far better accommodation to the soldiers than the ordinary canteen, the men being able not only to obtain stationery and stamps, but having

a tent placed at their disposal for recreation, reading, and writing. The 'camp' appears to have supplied about one hundred gallons of coffee and four gallons of tea a day in penny cups; and at certain hours of the day the demands upon its resources have been very severe. The experiment has been made under the direction of a Miss Robinson, assisted by an earnest and competent staff, and officers and men alike have largely and thankfully availed themselves of the advantages which it conferred. At considerable personal trouble, too, Miss Robinson has rushed in where the postal officials feared to tread, and has earned the gratitude of many a soldier's wife by sending to Plymouth for post-office orders for the men, neither the camp postmaster nor the Postmaster-General, though memorialised on the subject, caring to make the necessary arrangements. Writing to the secretary of the League on August 14th, Miss Robinson says that on the previous Saturday she had sent in for forty orders, amounting to over twenty-five pounds, and adds: 'Last year the soldiers' wives left behind in garrison suffered much from being unable to get remittances from their husbands, and the men as a rule take no money back, saying that they may as well spend it as lose it.'

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the temperance caterers have seized every available opportunity of spreading the principles of the League; and as they started by securing in an eminently practical way the sympathies of the men, they have succeeded in making a very fair number of converts."

That the present Government have done much to facilitate the temperance movement in the army, both positively and indirectly, is not to be doubted. In the words of Major-General Sir Eardley Wilmot: "Still, in spite of all, there remains a certain amount of evidence that there is room for much improvement. If we compare, for instance, one regiment with another, there is discovered so great a difference in the amount of crime, that it appears difficult to understand how they can be under the same code of laws. It is true that peculiarities as regards a locality—the one presenting greater temptations than another—may be supposed in some degree to account for this; but the truth is, that the same fact presents itself when we receive the testimony of the same place regarding different bodies of men that for a time dwell among them.

"Inquiry brings to light the fact that the two great hindrances to the efficiency of a well-



organized and equipped army are crime and sickness. In the latter case, out of 75,667 men forming the army in England during the year 1871 (the latest returns published), 2,950, or one in twenty-five nearly, formed a quota of daily sick. If we were to add to these the number of non-efficient from crime, it would be found that a very serious loss of service to the country is annually occurring.

“It must be admitted, however, that the above average is considerably under that of the last ten years, and so far presents a hopeful appearance.”

Whether from this cheering fact, or from respect to public opinion, as before stated, Government certainly in the present time seems to be assisting honestly and conscientiously in the temperance movement. And this may especially be seen in the assistance they are giving to Miss Robinson and the Temperance League, if not to abolish, at least to restrain, the inordinate amount of intemperance and immorality at present so unblushingly carried on in the town of Portsmouth. Some idea of the condition of that town at the present time may be judged from the following graphic, but by no means overdrawn, description given of it by the author of the little work on “Active Service” :—

“And now I come to the special object for which this narrative has been written. In the later years of Miss Robinson’s work we find her paying more frequent visits to Portsmouth, and always speaking of it as the very stronghold of Satan. It is at Portsmouth that many of the regiments returning from abroad disembark, the troops being generally quartered there for twelve or eighteen months before moving to other stations. During their foreign service, the men have accumulated perhaps £3,000 or £4,000 in the regimental savings’ bank, which they withdraw upon reaching England. It is here, too, that many of her Majesty’s ships are paid off, before being placed again in commission, and sailors and marines come ashore with from £10 to £60 a-piece in their possession.

“The arrival of each troop-ship is eagerly awaited by crowds of land-sharks, owners of gin-palaces, abandoned women, &c. Even before the men land, the agents of the various ‘hells,’ whose owners batten upon our soldiers, find their way on board to entice them to these ‘chambers of death.’ Satan takes care to send his missionaries on board to greet the soldier on his first arrival home, but he receives no Christian welcome; no friendly voice invites him to a place of safety, simply because no such place

exists. In Portsmouth, with a population of 112,954, there are over nine hundred public-houses and beershops—that is, about one to every sixty adults—but not *one* soldiers' institute or mission hall, where men who do not wish to drink or be thrown with abandoned women can spend their leisure time.

“And what is the consequence of this disgraceful state of things? That the place is a pandemonium as each successive regiment comes home. Generally speaking, an infantry soldier's duties are over by four o'clock, and he is free to enjoy himself out of barracks till tattoo (nine or half-past), or later, if provided with a 'pass.' Within barracks he can, it is true, resort to the recreation-room, or library; but a man seldom cares to stay inside when he has liberty to go out. And if steadily inclined, he has literally nowhere to go. If the weather be wet, he must stand in the drenching rain or return to barracks. At Gosport, across the water, are the 'Stoke Road Mission Rooms,' and the 'Naval and Military Institute,' a well-managed business house, but in Portsmouth *no place whatever*. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the soldier is drawn into the gin-palace, the dancing-saloon, and worse; and that the steady get swept off with the depraved? Some years

back a regiment was known to draw out nearly £6,000 from the savings' bank, and to lose five hundred stripes and good-conduct badges, chiefly during three or four months in this garrison. And probably the losses of each regiment amount to at least half as much. House after house, street after street, are seen thronged with abandoned women, sharpers, intoxicated soldiers and seamen singing, quarrelling, fighting; while on all sides foul language, like the smoke of the pit itself, makes day and night hideous."

Nor is this description, terrible as it is, in any way exaggerated. And this I say from practical experience on the point, as some few years since I was requested by a certain weekly journal to write them an article on the subject. Before arriving at Portsmouth, I was aware that I should meet with many disgraceful scenes of drunkenness and immorality, but my expectation, sad as it was, was far surpassed when I arrived there. I will not distress the reader by giving a detailed account of my experience, but merely relate one or two instances which came under my knowledge, to prove the disgraceful indifference which then existed among the naval and military authorities, and the negligence, or worse, of the magistracy. The latter were especially to blame, as they had the power of grant-



ing or refusing licences to public-houses, which, as shown in the above quotation, are at least ten to one more than are required for the necessities of the town. Conversing on the subject with a publican, he said in reply: "It is all very easy for the Puritans to blame Portsmouth for its drunkenness, and say that the publicans encourage it for their own benefit. So far to the contrary, all the principal publicans in Portsmouth take immense pains in keeping their houses respectable. Of course, when a regiment returns, or a ship is paid off, a lot of women catch hold of these men and draw them into the public-house. That we can't help; but we try all we can to make it as little objectionable as possible. Why I, and several other publicans I could name, have each on these occasions a fly waiting outside the door, and when two or three of the women make beasts of themselves and get drunk, we place them in it and send them home. I have been looking into the figures of drinking in the different towns of England and Scotland, and find that, in proportion with their populations, there are three times as many committals for drunkenness in Glasgow as in Portsmouth."

On mentioning this statement to an intelligent member of the Portsmouth police-force, he burst



into a loud laugh. "Is it not true?" I inquired. "Oh yes, perfectly true," he replied. "There's no doubt on the subject. Only one thing should be taken into consideration. In Glasgow every drunken man is collared and locked up. But how would it be possible to do that in Portsmouth? Why, when a ship is paid off, or a regiment arrives from abroad, if the police were to lock up all the drunken cases, I, and the eighty-nine other men in the police force, would have nothing else to do all night. No, unless a feller is drunk and incapable, so as to be likely to get himself into mischief, or he pitches into somebody, we take no notice whatever of drunken cases in Portsmouth."

Afterwards I had an opportunity of talking with the surgeon of an infantry regiment which had been more than a year quartered in the neighbourhood, on the effect of intemperance in his regiment. "It is something perfectly fearful," he said, "and the authorities ought to take the matter up, if only on a point which is never noticed by them, and rarely quoted by the temperance advocates—the amount of extra duty thrown on the sober men by the intemperance and crimes of the drunkards. I can show you some figures taken from notes I made last year, by which I can prove that forty-six sober

men—most of them married, by-the-bye—did as much duty as one hundred and thirty others who were drinkers, the result partly from disease, directly or indirectly caused by their dissipation, as well as the punishments inflicted on them for breach of military duty.”

To return, however, to Miss Robinson. She has succeeded, with the aid of Sir A. G. Lawrence, Colonel Clarke, Major-General Sir Eardley Wilmot, Colonel Rawstone, and a few others, in forming a scheme to provide a Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth. The sum required to carry out the undertaking will be £4,000; the estimated cost of the building alone being £2,500. It is proposed to have in connection with the institution a large kitchen and dormitory for the temporary accommodation of soldiers' wives and children embarking or disembarking, or shifting quarters; their condition at such times being often most pitiable. This portion of the establishment will, it is believed, afterwards be self-supporting. The project, we are assured by the prospectus, has received the cordial approval of the Secretary of State for War, who, having been informed that no suitable building can be procured in the town, has felt that the good of the service would be greatly advanced by granting a convenient site on

Government land, of about an acre in extent, at a nominal rent, the War Department admitting, however, no responsibility, pecuniary or otherwise, in carrying on the undertaking.

It is sincerely to be hoped that the movement will be liberally supported by the philanthropic. We are particularly apt to boast of ourselves as the most charitable nation in the world. Yet, very possibly, were the subject gone deeply into, we are not really—proportionate means taken into consideration—as liberal as we flatter ourselves to be. If we were, it would be difficult to find as admirable a movement as that undertaken by Miss Robinson, not receiving greater support than it has, and that, too, through the whole of her Herculean labours. Some idea of the difficulty she had to contend with may be judged of from a short extract from her journal in 1863, in which she states that she is at a standstill for money, owing partly to the non-payment of some sums promised to her. “Except a little money,” she continues, “raised on one occasion by the sale of jewelry for the work’s sake, I can spare annually but £20 from my own pocket, all beyond that depending on the donations of friends; £40 or £50 in addition would have been sufficient to carry me through the year.” Extracts from succeeding years might be quoted

scarcely more satisfactory. It is to be hoped, however, from the just notoriety she has now attained, that she will be better supported; for certainly, of the many philanthropic efforts at present brought under the notice of the public, it would be difficult to find one more worthy of support than that being carried on by Miss Robinson.

## CHAPTER XI.

MARY WHATELY.

ALTHOUGH the examples I have given of the energy, tact, and devotedness exhibited by Protestant Englishwomen in the furtherance of good works, have been confined solely to those in our own country, it must not be imagined that the ministrations of others have not been felt, and with good effect, in foreign countries, especially among uncivilised nations. This subject alone would offer far too wide a field to enter into it at any length, for it would become so interesting to the narrator that he might be tempted to prolong the description of their deeds to an extent which perhaps might be wearisome to the reader. One instance of the kind, out of the many which might be quoted, must suffice.

It was in the wretched hovels of the Irish peasantry, and among the lanes and courts of



Dublin, that Miss Mary Whately, daughter of the late Archbishop of Dublin, made her first essay in mission work. And although this differed in many respects from that in which she is now engaged, it was good preparatory training for it. As a district visitor she learned to respect the poor, and her favourite employment was the care and instruction of their children. If the aid and solace she gave to the parents was to her a pleasing Christian duty, the attention and solicitude she bestowed upon the children was a labour of love.

Either from natural delicacy of constitution, or from exertions beyond her strength, Miss Whately's health at last gave way to such an extent as to cause serious anxiety to her friends. She was advised to leave England for a warmer climate, her physicians regarding this as the only means by which she might be permanently restored to health. But the labours in which she was engaged had too many attractions for her to allow her immediately to act on this advice; and she continued to reside for some time longer in Dublin, hoping against hope that her health would improve without her going abroad.

At last her illness increased to such an extent that she had to submit to the wishes of those

dearest to her, and quitting England, she took up her residence in Cairo. The change of air and the wonderful salubrity of the climate soon had a beneficial effect on her constitution, and she rapidly improved in health.

The interest she had always felt in the children of the poor again developed itself, and possibly with even greater intensity than when she was in Ireland. Not only did she find the physical condition of the children in Cairo even more deplorable, but they were sunk in a depth of ignorance, religious and secular, to which the most wretched district in Dublin could offer no comparison. This was especially the case among the children of the Mahommedan population, and her sympathy for the girls was strongly aroused. For the boys some indifferent education was provided by the State, which, though erroneous so far as its religious element was concerned, was better than ignorance. They were taught to be charitable in spirit to all; to feed the hungry; to honour and love their parents, and to support them in old age; to pray three times a day at the least, and to *praise* "Allah," even when suffering the direst misfortune; not to steal or bear false witness against their neighbour; and strictly to abstain from wine and ardent spirits. The religious

necessity of cleanliness was strongly inculcated, it being a rule that they should wash three times a day. And, to do the boys justice, it must be owned that the seed appeared to have fallen on comparatively good soil, for whatever their failings might be, they rarely failed in observing these requirements.

The girls of the poorer class, on the contrary, could hardly have had less care shown for their moral and religious welfare had they been beasts of the field. Not one in fifty was aware that she had a soul, or knew the meaning of the word. Their moral code was scarcely more advanced than their ideas of religion. When at home they were to assist their mothers in making bread, and take care of the younger children. The *religious* necessity of personal ablutions taught to the boys was considered supererogatory in the case of the girls, and in general they took advantage to the full of the license thus accorded them.

Generally, when a girl reaches her eleventh or twelfth year she is married to some boy a year or two older than herself. The tawdry show of the wedding-feast gone—and the poorest Arab on that occasion makes the greatest display his limited means will allow—the girl finds she has only exchanged the drudgery of her mother's

home for that of her mother-in-law, as the bride generally lives for some time in the house of her husband's mother.

And yet in these poor children, brought up in the lowest state of religious, moral, and social degradation, Miss Whately could easily perceive elements of good. She found them affectionate, obedient to their parents, and very grateful for any kindness. The good opinion she had formed of them increased on further acquaintance, and she began to have the same interest in them as she had felt for the destitute little girls she had formerly taught in Dublin. As her health would not permit her to return for any length of time to England, she began to entertain the idea of opening a ragged school for Moslem girls. And this was the more easy to her as she could now converse with tolerable fluency in Arabic, and could read it without difficulty. True, there were already some excellent Protestant Mission Schools, established by the Americans, which did good service in the cause of Christianity and civilisation, and she hesitated for some time lest, by competition, she might in any way interfere in the working of those who had already conducted their operations with such success. The more she reflected on the subject, however, the more she desired to establish a ragged school for

girls, till at last she could resist the temptation no longer, and resolved to make the attempt.

Fearing she might not succeed single-handed, or at any rate without good advisers, Miss Whately consulted several European friends, who had resided for some time in Egypt, and who were well acquainted with the manners and habits of the people, as to what plan she should adopt. Nothing could be more discouraging than the answer she received. Her scheme was declared to be utterly impracticable. "Moslem girls will not come to your school," they said. "Those of the higher classes are generally kept in a state of great ignorance, and have no wish to be educated—how, then, can you expect to find pupils among the lowest? Among the Copts some good might possibly be effected; but Mahomedan girls, and those of the lower class, too! No; the scheme is certain to fail."

Miss Whately, however, determined to proceed with her project. She took the ground-floor of a house in one of the poorest localities in Cairo, and engaged two young girls, members of a Syrian family in reduced circumstances, to assist her. When all was in readiness Miss Whately began to search for recruits. At first, nothing could be more discouraging than the result of her attempts to get



scholars. Not only was she unable to obtain any among the Moslems, but her efforts soon excited against her a considerable amount of prejudice among the mothers of the girls whom she had invited to attend her school. They flung dust at her, and cursed her as she passed their dwellings. Her little assistants became frightened, and declined to make any further efforts to induce girls of their acquaintance to become scholars.

Notwithstanding this great opposition, Miss Whately, with the indomitable spirit of a conscientious Englishwoman intent on carrying out a good work, resolved to persevere, no matter what amount of danger, impediment, or direct opposition she might find in her way. She saw, however, that there were some errors in her theory, which she determined to alter. She perceived that, no matter how good her teaching might be, she had hardly the right to expect that mothers would entrust their children to a stranger, and especially to one whom they had been advised as a moral duty to avoid. While nominally keeping her school open, though no scholars came, she occupied herself in making the personal acquaintance of many of the poor mothers in her neighbourhood. At first they were somewhat shy of her advances,

but as they became better acquainted with her this shyness vanished, and they began to converse with more freedom. Moreover, she brought to her aid, and with considerable success, some medical knowledge of the diseases of children which she had acquired. Ophthalmia, as is known to all, is a very common disease in Egypt with children, and Miss Whately possessed an excellent recipe for eye-water, with which she performed several cures.

The Moslem women are affectionate mothers, and, for Miss Whately's kindness to their little ones, they no longer spurned her visits, but invited her into their mud hovels when they saw her pass, till at last she got on terms of intimacy with many of them, and they would converse with her on family matters without restraint. From time to time she would touch upon religious topics, at first with but little success. "What have we to do with such things?" they would say. "Those are subjects for men; we are women. What use is religion to us?" Miss Whately assured them, to their great astonishment, that religion was a subject of as much importance to women as to men, as the soul of a woman was, in the eyes of the Almighty, as precious as that of a man.

Her arguments seemed for the moment occa-

sionally to carry great weight with them, but unfortunately, like Martha, the Moslem women were careful and troubled about many things, and the subject was soon forgotten. The only points on which they would listen to her with real attention were little episodes which she related to them from Holy Scriptures. All Arabs are fond of listening to narratives—in fact, it may be said that it is the greatest enjoyment of their lives. They will listen for hours, not only with patience, but intense interest, to tales from the “Arabian Nights Entertainments,” and similar compositions, told by professional story-tellers. It was not surprising, then, that their attention should be caught by Miss Whately’s Scripture narratives—though, alas! the interest they excited at the moment was generally the only effect they produced. The only point which gave her hopes that she might inculcate in them, in the end, some Scripture doctrines, was the frequency with which they requested her to repeat her narratives about the “Son,” which had especial interest in their eyes.

As her interest in the Moslem women increased, Miss Whately brought more frequently under their notice the subject of her schools. Although they paid more attention to her than

formerly, still they seemed but little disposed to allow their daughters to become her pupils. "What need have our daughters of education?" they and their husbands would ask. "Our mothers made excellent wives and parents without being able to read. Our own wives can make bread, care for their husbands and children, carry water from the Nile, and do all household work without being able to read."

Still Miss Whately persevered, but for some time without making much progress; and then came a change. One day when a Moslem woman urged that her daughter would be quite able to do household work without being able to read, Miss Whately fortunately told her that with reading she would be taught household work, especially needlework. Here Miss Whately touched a point of great interest to them. They could understand the practical use of an acquirement of that kind. Some immediately consented to allow their daughters to attend the school, if they might be taught needlework alone. This, however, by no means met Miss Whately's views, and she refused to receive the daughters unless they might be taught to read as well. To this, at last, some of the mothers acceded, and promised that their

daughters should attend, provided they were only taught needlework and reading.

Having succeeded thus far, Miss Whately now put her schoolroom into working order. A few prints, such as are used for the instruction of the infant classes in our National schools, which had been obtained from England, were hung up on the walls, as well as some texts from Scripture in Arabic, written out in a clear, legible hand by the father of a little girl who had been engaged as an assistant to Miss Whately. Alphabet cards were prepared, and a work-basket stocked; and at length, all being in readiness, Miss Whately anxiously awaited the arrival of the pupils promised her;—but, alas! none came.

Miss Whately again experienced that “hope deferred” which maketh the heart sick. Almost in despair at finding no children arrive, she one morning left her schoolroom, and begged a fruit-seller, to whom she was known, and who kept a school opposite, to send her his daughter Cadiga and her two little sisters. “They are Moslems,” he replied roughly, “and do not want to learn.” She next made a desperate effort, and called on every poor person she knew, even by sight, imploring them to send their children to school. From



the very earnestness of her manner she secured attention, and several of the women promised that their children should be sent the next morning. Miss Whately returned home, hoping that this time they would keep their word, although from the experience she had already had she greatly doubted the result.

The next morning, with her little assistant, she entered the schoolroom, and, placing herself at the window, waited for the arrival of her pupils. The hour named had passed, but none as yet had made their appearance. Miss Whately was just relinquishing all hope of their arrival when a woman wearing a number of silver and coral ornaments, though otherwise poorly dressed, at last entered the schoolroom, accompanied by a nice-looking girl of eight or nine years of age. Here was a gleam of satisfaction to poor Miss Whately—but even this for the moment was obscured and in danger of vanishing altogether. The woman, after throwing back her *burko*, or black veil, told her that she had brought her child according to promise, but that she was timid and afraid to stay. Miss Whately, however, by caresses and kind words, somewhat reassured the child, and she promised the next day she would stay. The woman had just left the schoolroom when two

little girls about eight years of age, followed by their mothers, as well as female relatives of different ages and degrees of affinity, came in. Miss Whately bade them welcome, and, after a great deal of saluting and chattering, they at last appeared to be convinced that there was nothing to be dreaded in sending their children to the school, and they then bade adieu to Miss Whately, leaving the children with her. The adults had no sooner disappeared than some other children were brought in, and by ten o'clock Miss Whately had the satisfaction of finding she had nine pupils, all Moslems. She now ranged them in a semicircle on the mat, and in turn asked each her name, and then who made her. The elder children replied, "Allah," and the younger, "The Prophet."

The school duties now began. Miss Whately had determined that no needlework should be commenced till a certain amount of mental instruction had been given. The first day's lessons consisted in teaching them five letters of the Arabic alphabet. This she did by showing them each letter drawn on a separate card; but simple as the lesson was, it seemed almost too complicated for the obtuse minds of her pupils, and after a short time they all begged that the instruction in needlework might

begin. Miss Whately, anxious to please the children, acceded to their request, and in a very short time each child had a thimble on her little brown middle finger, and a piece of linen given her to practise on. It would be flattery to say that their performances were anything but clumsy; still the children were proud of their efforts, and each took home with her a specimen of the work she had that day accomplished.

On the second day Miss Whately had no fewer than fourteen scholars. As they came to the schoolroom door, each kicked off her slippers, and then went to kiss the hand of the superintendent, and to lay it on her head. The school routine was gone through in the same manner as on the previous day. The pupils squatted down on the mat before the teacher, and learned the Arabic letters, and a few of such texts in Scripture as would not be too antagonistic to their faith; Miss Whately rightly judging that it would be better to impress upon their minds the fact that the Almighty had given souls to women as well as men, and that religious knowledge was more necessary to them than secular knowledge or needlework.

It would occupy too much space to detail the progress of Miss Whately in her school for girls. Suffice it to say, that three months after she

had opened it she had no fewer than forty-six pupils, almost all of them Moslems. Her school was now held in high estimation both by Moslems and Copts, and the jealousy which was at first shown to her gradually disappeared.

Encouraged by the success which had attended her school for girls, Miss Whately now determined to open one for boys. This she did in 1864, beginning with a class of sixteen, which in a short time increased to seventy. In fact, so numerous were the applications for admission, that Miss Whately was unable to admit all who presented themselves, partly from want of school buildings, and partly from her inability to obtain male assistants. The latter difficulty, however, she was able to overcome, having obtained the assistance of a Syrian gentleman of excellent education, Mr. Mansoor Shakoor, and that of his two brothers. From that time to the present the school has gone on gradually increasing in numbers and reputation.

My first visit to the school took place a few days after the termination of the fêtes given in honour of the opening of the Suez Canal. Miss Whately herself kindly received me, and conducted me over the whole of the establishment. The schoolrooms for the boys are situated on the ground-floor of the house, and

are divided into three compartments, each containing two classes. I have visited many schools in England, France, Italy, and Germany, but it has never been my good fortune to visit one better conducted, or one which offered subject of greater interest than that established in Cairo by Miss Whately, and yet the whole of her pupils are taken from the poorest of the population of Cairo. The number of pupils now averages between three and four hundred. The first class we inspected consisted of boys from six to eight years of age, many of whom were in rags, and although others of them were better dressed, all had the stamp of poverty upon them. One thing especially struck me as remarkable—the cleanly condition of all. There was not a child among them whose face and hands were not perfectly clean.

On mentioning the subject to Miss Whately, she told me that the maintaining of cleanliness among the pupils was one of the greatest difficulties she had to contend with. Although, by the Moslem law, several ablutions are necessary in the course of the day, the rule seems to apply only to adults, and solely to males. The younger the child, the more difficulty she had in making the parent attend to this regulation. Arab mothers consider that the greater the amount



of dirt upon the faces and hands of the children, the greater is their security from the mysterious influence of the evil eye ; and from this unhappy superstition has arisen no inconsiderable portion of that terrible curse of Egypt, ophthalmia. By degrees, however, Miss Whately managed to have her own way, although more than one pupil had been taken from her care in consequence of her firmly insisting upon it.

Another subject of interest to me was the different complexions of the children assembled ; it almost seemed that every nationality and race might be traced among them, though they sat there together without the slightest distinction being made in consequence of colour. Beside the Nubian or Ethiopian, as black as ebony, might be seen the Syrian boy, of a clear, fair complexion ; yet they were apparently on terms of the most perfect friendship one with another.

On inquiring of Miss Whately as to their different religious persuasions, she informed me that the majority were Moslems, but that the others were children of members of almost every religious creed—Greeks, Copts, Jews, Armenians, Roman Catholics, and even some Protestants ; but these latter were chiefly orphan children who had been adopted by Miss Whately. On asking her

what were the religious principles inculcated in her school, she told me that they were considerably modified since she had first undertaken the work. She had then attempted to teach them the truths of Christianity, showing them the errors of Islamism, and the false doctrines of Mahomet; she found, however, that she made little progress in her work of conversion. The girls were unable to comprehend the doctrines she taught, and the boys either denied them, or, if they admitted them, it was evident that they did so merely to please her, without being convinced by her arguments.

Miss Whately then resolved on a different course, determining to sow in their minds the seeds of Christianity, rather than attempt their sudden conversion. She adopted the Scriptures—the Old and New Testament—as her text-book for reading, and in this she found but little difficulty. Her Coptic pupils, believing in the truth of the Scriptures, of course read them with great willingness; while those of the Moslem faith admitted without hesitation not only a great portion of the truth of the Old Testament, but of the New also. By degrees the Mahomedan boys began to feel great interest in the episodes contained in the Gospels and the Acts of the

Apostles, especially those relating to Said Issa—as the Moslems term our Lord—and Marian his mother, both of whom are regarded as persons of great sanctity by the Moslem teachers. Numerous indeed in Egypt are the traditions respecting them amongst the Arab population. Gradually, as their minds were better able to grasp the subject, the divinity of our Saviour was more impressed upon them, and evidently with good effect; while the Scriptures, as before stated, being their first text-book, fixed the subject more lastingly on their minds.

To my inquiry whether she had converted any so as to make them entirely throw off the errors of Moslemism, Miss Whately candidly admitted that there were but few. The principal points she had gained were that she had raised the character of our Saviour and the principles of Christianity far higher in their estimation than they were when they first came under her instruction; and in time, with the blessing of God, she trusted the work would be carried to a successful completion. To my question whether she had been able to establish among the Moslems a brotherly love towards their Christian fellow-pupils, she assured me that on this point her labours had been attended

with success, and she gave many touching incidents in proof. Of these I will quote one.

A Coptic Christian boy, apparently half starved, one morning applied for admission to the schools. Although rags as a rule might almost be considered a uniform with the majority of the scholars (on their first arrival, at least), the clothing of this poor boy was so deplorable, that he seemed almost to cast discredit on the others. He was, however, after having been submitted to a thorough ablution, willingly admitted, and he took his seat among the other pupils. Miss Whately, from some unavoidable circumstance, was for a few days absent from the school, and on her return she found that the boy was not only considerably improved in health, but his clothes were in a far better condition than when she had last seen him. On inquiry she found that the boy was an orphan, and without a home. Since he had been admitted as a scholar he had slept every night in the stable of the donkey belonging to one of the masters. The Moslem boys had each day not only fed him with a portion of the food they had brought for their own meals, but had also exerted their influence among their friends to obtain for him garments, which, though poor, were

far more respectable than those in which he had first made his appearance at school.

After having heard several of the children read in Arabic some portions of the Old and New Testaments, I left the room, and proceeded to the one containing the two upper classes. These comprised perhaps some thirty pupils, boys averaging from twelve to fifteen years of age. The same appearance of order and cleanliness which had so much struck me in the other classes was equally observable here. At the time of my entrance the boys were occupied with their writing lesson. I examined their copy-books, and found them very neatly written, although, from the sentences being in Arabic, I was unable to compliment them as much as they possibly deserved. On expressing my regret on this point to Mr. Shakoor, the head master, to my great surprise he told some of the boys to bring their French and English copy-books. They did so, and I found them written in a manner which would scarcely have been surpassed in any of our ordinary schools. He then invited me to examine any of the upper boys in English, and pointed out five or six who were able, he said, to speak the language with considerable fluency. I selected one, a Moslem boy, the son of a donkey-driver, and asked



him what subjects were taught in the school. He replied, "Reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography." Seeing a large map of Europe hanging on the wall, I asked him whether he could point out the capitals of the different countries, and he did so without any difficulty. Mr. Shakoor then put some questions to him of a more difficult description, all of which he answered readily. Finding the boy so apt, I asked him to describe to me the course of a steam-ship leaving London, bound for Alexandria. He explained it to me in thoroughly good English, occasionally, perhaps, making some trifling mistake as to the points of the compass, but soon corrected himself on a little reflection. Another boy was then introduced to me, who read with great fluency several passages which I pointed out to him in the French Testament. I asked Mr. Shakoor whether the boy was able to translate the sentences into Arabic. "Certainly," he replied; "but he shall do more if you please—he shall translate them into English for you. Pick out any verse you like." On selecting one from the Gospel of St. John, to my great surprise the boy not only read it fluently in French, but immediately afterwards translated it into good English.

I now visited the girls' schools on the upper floor, where I found some sixty or eighty scholars. At the time of my entry they were employed in needlework, which they seemed to do in a very handy manner. They were as cleanly in appearance as the boys, and among them were several of great personal beauty. As a rule, however, they appeared less intelligent than the boys. Miss Whately informed me, however, that the appearance was less from any want of natural intellect, than in making them understand the advantages of education. Nor is this much to be wondered at, when, among Moslem ladies of the highest families, not one in ten is able to tell one letter from another, nor one in fifty capable of writing her own name.

My visit interested me exceedingly, and I sincerely complimented Miss Whately on her good work. She told me that, with the blessing of God, her ministrations had not altogether been without avail, and she was fully convinced that if she could obtain more assistance, she could do a vast deal more good than she was able to do with her comparatively limited means. Her school buildings, she said, were inconveniently crowded; in fact, she was frequently obliged to refuse scholars who applied

for admission. It had long been an object of ambition with her to obtain better premises, but unfortunately she received little help from her own countrymen. Her object was to erect, if possible, suitable school buildings; but although the Egyptian government had kindly offered her a spot of ground well suited for the purpose, she was unable from lack of funds to carry out her design. On inquiring in what manner the schools were maintained, she told me she received subscriptions from private friends to the amount of about £400 a year, the remainder of the expenses (nearly £500) were defrayed from her own pocket.

On asking her what sum she had in hand towards the erection of her school buildings, she replied that she had but a few pounds, nor did she see any prospect of obtaining more. I asked her if she had not somewhat neglected her opportunity of canvassing her countrymen who had visited Cairo during the fêtes given at the opening of the Suez Canal, adding that among the many thousand English who had visited Egypt on that occasion—many of them possessing enormous wealth—she could have obtained a good sum towards her building fund. She assured me in reply that she had neglected no opportunity whatever, but had applied to

every person to whom she could obtain an introduction. That appeals in aid of her schools had been posted up in the different hotels of the city, yet the whole sum she had received amounted to only £4.

I must confess that I left Miss Whately's schools with a feeling strongly approaching to humiliation. During my stay in Cairo I had visited the Mission schools of the Greek, Coptic and Roman Catholic churches, the latter carried on by a very numerous staff of nuns or teaching-sisters, and all maintained with considerable munificence. The American Protestants have, much to their credit, also an excellent institution for the instruction of the native population, admirably conducted, and liberally maintained. Scarcely a member of these different communities had at the time visited Cairo without leaving some substantial proof of their interest in the schools of their own religious creed. The number of Protestant English who were in Cairo, and who pass through it every year, is greater than all the other religious sects put together, and yet, not ten pounds are subscribed annually by them towards the maintenance of the only English Protestant mission in Egypt. Every day the influence of the Roman Catholics is increasing in Egypt, and the most strenuous

exertions are being made to impress the minds of the Moslems with respect for the Roman Catholic creed, and aversion to the Protestant; yet England allows one courageous woman, almost at her own expense, and single-handed, to represent the sympathy of the country in civilising and christianizing the Arab population of Egypt.



## CHAPTER XII.

MIRIAM HARRIS.

A PART from all intention of claiming for our Protestant sisters any innate superiority of charitable feeling over the Roman Catholic, I hold that this virtue is common to all good women of every country and religion. Although charity is eminently a Christian virtue, it is a singular fact that the most charitable community among us is that of the Jews. This at least we may say without fear of contradiction, that in all that pertains to the munificent and judicious distribution of alms, the Jews, as a rule, very much excel us. Were deeds of benevolence practised by the Christian communities in England with the same liberality they are among the Jews, and these voluntary contributions added to supplement the charitable and free educational endowments of the country, now so cruelly mismanaged and

misapplied, not only might every child, whose parents are too poor to pay for his instruction, receive a good elementary education, but the whole of our poor-laws, certainly as far as relates to children, might be erased from our statute-books. When this fact is brought under the notice of our Christian philanthropists, the following conventional remark is generally made: "Ah, certainly the Jews are a very charitable class, but the enormous wealth to be found among them, and the few poor dependent on them, enable them to practise a far wider system than it would be possible in our Christian communities with our hundreds of thousands of paupers."

This argument contains two errors. In the first place the Jews are not on the whole a wealthy community. It is true that among them may be found some families possessed of enormous wealth, but their middle class, as a rule, are certainly not in easier circumstances than our middle-class Christians. So far from there being few Jewish poor, the fact is that the numbers of their indigent are at least three to one greater in proportion than are the indigent of our own Protestant denominations. Yet not only do the wealthier English Jews relieve their co-religionists, with but slight application to the

poor-laws for assistance, but they have also thrown upon their hands a vast body of foreign Jewish paupers. It is quite a common practice for the Polish, German and Dutch synagogues to ship their poor over to England for relief. Indeed it would almost appear that the charity we find so abundant among our Hebrew population is almost confined to them, and that their foreign brethren lack this virtue in about as great a proportion as is developed among those born among us. Not only is the charitable nature of the English Jews most honourable to them, but their method of exercising their benevolence is equally so. A fraud is very seldom practised on the Jewish community by that class of impudent impostors who so trouble and perplex our Christian philanthropist. It is certain that it is exceedingly difficult for a dishonest Jew to impose upon the charitable of his nation, their dispensation of charity being managed with so much caution and shrewdness that detection would be certain. And this reputation is in itself a great safeguard, for the impostor, dreading detection, rarely attempts to practise any fraud on the benevolent of their nation. This facility in discovering any impostor is due to an excellent practice among the rich (especially the women), that of personally

visiting their poor, and thus becoming acquainted with their manners and habits when they relieve their necessities. Without difficulty the charitable wealthy thus become as expert in detecting the idle and improvident as one of our own poor-law relieving officers.

Among the charitable enterprises of the Jews in the metropolis, that of maintaining their schools on an efficient footing perhaps ranks the highest in their estimation. Of such importance is education considered by the English Jews of the present day, that they refuse to assist any Jewish parents, no matter how deep their poverty, who cannot prove that they send their children to school. Nor has the parent the slightest excuse to offer; for not only, as I have said, is education to be procured gratuitously even by the poorest, but an inducement is also held out to the children by occasionally providing them with dinners if they are regular in their attendance. The most interesting of these schools, and the one which especially tends to prove the indomitable energy of our English-bred women, whether Christian or Jewish, in charitable works, is the one under the management of the lady whose name stands at the head of this chapter—Miss Miriam Harris. Her labours in the cause of the poor children of her

own community form a fitting parallel with the labours of Miss Rye; and more, should the reader be inclined to dispute the opinion I hazarded in a former chapter—that the labours of Miss Rye had done more for the poor gutter children of the metropolis than all the ponderous labours and pedantic disputes of the School Board put together—if those performed by Miss Harris were added to them, it would be difficult indeed to deny the truth of my statement. Again, in the history of Miss Harris's labours may be found another proof of the benevolent and intelligent Englishwoman working her way against apparently insuperable difficulties, and succeeding, not solely by dint of her own exertions, but by the admirable faculty of enlisting the co-operation of powerful friends, and that far more by the shrewdness and integrity of her operations than by personal application and importunity.

Although for the last half century efforts have been made among the Hebrew community of London for providing education for the children of all classes, it was not till the spring of 1848 that attention seems to have been given by them to the state of their poor infant population. Admirable schools had certainly been instituted in which the Jewish youth of the poor classes



received gratuitously an excellent education, but nothing had been done for the infants. At last the notice of some of the leading Jewish philanthropists was called to the neglected condition of the swarms of little Jewish children in the neighbourhood of Houndsditch and Spitalfields, and a meeting was held for the purpose of establishing an infant school on the system adopted in our Protestant communities. At this meeting, which was numerously attended by both ladies and gentlemen of the Hebrew persuasion, it was unanimously resolved that the establishment of an institution of the kind was a work of paramount necessity. This point being agreed on, it now remained to select a site for the building, and to choose a governess under whose charge the children might be placed. Several names were mentioned, but all in their turn were either rejected or put aside for future consideration—not from the slightest want of energy, respectability or talent on the part of those proposed, but simply that not one of them had hitherto been engaged in teaching poor infants, and it was thought advisable, if possible, to obtain a lady who had had some experience in the work. At last two gentlemen who were present informed the meeting that they had heard that an infant school for poor

children had been established in Houndsditch by two benevolent Jewish ladies. It was stated that they had not only supported this school from their own limited resources, but had gratuitously given up the whole of their time to the task of instructing the helpless little ones placed under their care. This intelligence naturally awakened considerable interest, and it was resolved, after some further discussion, that a lady should be deputed by the meeting to visit the infant schools mentioned, and report on them to a committee which was to be formed for the purpose of carrying out the proposed scheme.

The lady nominated by the meeting was Miss Annie Goldsmid, the daughter of the late Baron de Goldsmid, whose memory, with justice, appears to be venerated by all his co-religionists. Miss Goldsmid, accompanied by a friend, contrived to find the school, which was situated in one of the poorest and most thickly populated localities in Houndsditch. Their arrival being totally unexpected, they had ample opportunity of inspecting the school under its ordinary working aspect. The room in which the classes were held was inconveniently small, and so densely crowded with children that to these ladies, unaccustomed to such an atmosphere,

respiration was exceedingly difficult. A more squalid congregation of little children than was there gathered together, it would have been difficult to find. Yet even among them it could easily be perceived that a considerable reformation had already taken place. Although their dresses were of the most scanty and poverty-stricken description, the faces of all were perfectly clean, showing that they were already alive to the benefit of cleanliness. In the midst of these children were the two young ladies who had so nobly devoted themselves to their instruction, the Misses Miriam and Julia Harris. They are the daughters of a highly respectable Hebrew merchant who had died a short time before. At the death of their father it was found that, although his business operations had been extensive, he was far from being a wealthy man. His children, who had hitherto been accustomed not only to comforts but to luxuries, were now found to have been very indifferently provided for. Notwithstanding their straitened circumstances, the sisters resolved to dedicate a portion of the little they had, as well as the whole of their energies, to ameliorating the condition of the infant children of the poor Jews in the neighbourhood. They had for this purpose rented the small room the deputation found

them in, and for some years they had continued their self-imposed labours with little encouragement and less notoriety.

Miss Goldsmid and her friend were naturally much gratified by all they saw and heard, and they readily came to the conclusion that Miss Miriam Harris was a lady admirably qualified to fill the post of head mistress to the projected infant school. Without reserve they told her the object of their visit, and inquired whether she would be disposed to accept an offer of the kind. Miss Harris needed but a moment to decide that point, for she could scarcely have received a piece of intelligence more calculated to afford her unqualified satisfaction. To be the mistress of an important institution of the kind had long been the object of her very laudable ambition, and it appeared impracticable for her to seek such a position unknown as she was. The idea had often presented itself to her mind, but she had as often put it away as an idle dream. Now, however, her highest wishes seemed on the point of being realised. Without any hesitation she informed Miss Goldsmid that she would accept the appointment with gratitude and pleasure, and she trusted her abilities would be found equal to the occasion. Miss Goldsmid, after making arrangements for an interview between Miss

Harris and the committee, left the crowded little schoolroom very much pleased with her visit.

On the day appointed, Miss Miriam Harris appeared before the committee, and she was nominated governess of the experimental school, which was to be opened for one year prior to steps being taken for organizing it on a larger scale. She had been strongly supported in her application by Mr. Samuels and Mr. Walter Josephs, both members of the committee, who had become acquainted with her after the visit of Miss Goldsmid and her friend to the school at Houndsditch. A more commodious schoolroom was now taken, and paid for by the committee, and Miss Miriam Harris—with the assistance of Miss Phœbe Barnett, then attached to the celebrated Jewish Free Schools—commenced the labour of its organization. Such success attended the enterprise, that before the expiration of the time for the experiment the class-rooms became so crowded as to be quite uncomfortable. The number of pupils at the commencement barely exceeded a dozen, but it soon rose to ninety, and many were the applications which could not be entertained owing to want of room. The Infant Schools Committee met to consider the question of finding some more commodious place than the rooms they



at present rented. To this they were stimulated by the wonderful success which had attended their experiment, and they at length determined to erect an edifice of such dimensions as should amply provide for the wants of the children of their poor co-religionists in the densely crowded neighbourhoods of Houndsditch and Spitalfields. For this purpose a large space of ground in the centre of Commercial Street, Whitechapel, was purchased from Government by the committee, and on it were erected the celebrated Jewish Infant Schools. This building is, I believe, the largest and most commodious for a purpose of the kind of any religious denomination in England. Some years since, when visiting the building, I could not help drawing a most painful comparison between that and the Christ Church Protestant School of St. George's-in-the-East. While the Jewish children had for their accommodation a magnificent building constructed purposely for an infant school, with large lofty schoolrooms, and both covered and open playgrounds, the infant school of Christ Church, St. George's, containing several hundred children, was held under two railway arches, funds not having then been provided for their better accommodation, notwithstanding the exertions of the incumbent, the Rev. George

McGill, and his committee. Whether better accommodation is at present provided for the infant children of the poor in that Church of England district, I am unable to say.

As soon as the building was completed Miss Miriam Harris was confirmed in her post of head governess, receiving at the time the high commendations of the Venerable the Chief Rabbi, the Rev. Dr. Adler, for the wonderful reformation she had made in the manners and habits of the infant population of the neighbourhood. From that date to the present the reports published by the school committee prove how great has been the success of the institution. When the Houndsditch branch was opened, prior to the erection of the present infant schools, it was intended to have received only two hundred pupils. Afterwards the building was enlarged so as to admit seventy additional children. This number was rapidly filled up, and applications for admission continued to increase till the opening of the new schools in Whitechapel, when the names of several hundred more were entered on the books. The number continued steadily to increase till they registered, at the date of my first visit, some thirteen hundred pupils, the schools being then, it was considered, more numerous attended than any

other in the United Kingdom. Since that date, some four years ago, these schools have been taken under Government management, and receive a certain contribution from the State. At the same time by far the greater portion of the expense is maintained from the pockets of the Jewish community in London.

Although the establishment of these schools is due to the united efforts of the Jewish philanthropists resident in London, who, both ladies and gentlemen, have been unceasing in their personal exertions, as well as profusely liberal in their pecuniary donations for their support, a vast proportion of the success must undoubtedly be attributed to Miss Miriam Harris. From the time when she commenced her little class in a small room in Houndsditch up to the present, when the schools have reached such magnificent proportions, she has had the immediate control and management of them. I would not for one moment wish it to be understood that to her efforts alone are due all the good results that have arisen to her institution. She has, on the contrary, unceasingly received the co-operation of a philanthropic band of Jewish ladies, whose unwearied labours have tended greatly to the increase and efficiency of the schools. No little praise should also be given to the Venerable the

Chief Rabbi (Dr. Adler) and the gentlemen of the Committee of Management, whose operations appear to have been carried on with a benevolence and intelligence characteristic of their nation, Still, Miss Miriam Harris may be considered as the leading authority in the management of the institution.

That this favourable conclusion of the efforts of Miss Harris has been arrived at from my own experience and inspection is true. At the same time, it is fully confirmed by the opinion of the managing committee themselves, as the following short extract from their last report (1873) will prove :—

“It is impossible to convey to any one who has not witnessed the unwearied assiduity and ability displayed by Miss Miriam Harris, how greatly the success of the school in Commercial Street depends upon her. Not so much in regard to the education as to the moral training, happiness, and general conduct of the pupil-teachers and children. The committee hope that, in course of time, they may have other teachers who, following the footsteps of Miss Miriam Harris, may display equal energy, moderation, and suavity of manner, so as to ensure in a like degree the respect and regard of the whole staff.”

Of the system adopted to ensure the moral training, happiness, and general conduct of the children, it would far exceed my limits to go to any length. One example must suffice. Among other virtues insisted upon by her is charity. That she begins with it at an early age, and even among the poorest, may be judged from the following short extract in her last report to the managing committee :

“ As I usually endeavour to inculcate feelings of humanity among the children here, I spoke to them of the collection being now made for enlarging the London Hospital, impressing on them the fact that they and their relatives were common recipients of the benefits of that institution, and that, although poor, their mite would be acceptable. I succeeded in collecting four pounds in farthings, half-pence, and pence from the children and their parents, which have been handed over to the institution.”

From her long residence in the neighbourhood, and her exertions in behalf of the children of the Jewish poor, she is regarded with feelings of peculiar respect by the evil community in the eastern districts. And that this is no unmeaning compliment the following anecdote will show.

One day when walking through one of the



streets in the neighbourhood of Houndsditch, two young thieves, some fifteen or sixteen years of age, attempted to steal her watch. They had hustled round her, and one had already got it in his possession, when he was greatly surprised by his "pal" striking him violently on the head and snatching the watch from him, which he immediately returned to the owner, saying at the time to his astonished companion, who seemed strongly to demur to the arrangement, "You fool, don't you see it's Miss Harris?" The lady, who had now begun to recover from her confusion, instead of thanking the boy for his behaviour, took him by the arm and inquired sternly whether he was a Jew.

"Yes, I am, ma'am," was the reply.

"And you are a thief too, I see," she said. "Are you not ashamed of yourself?"

"What can I do, ma'am?" said the boy. "I can't get work."

"Why don't you go to school, then?" inquired Miss Harris.

"Because no school will take me in, ma'am."

"Both your answers are untrue," said Miss Harris. "You can get work, and you can go to school. Now, remember I don't thank you for having returned my watch to me, nor do I forgive you for the part you took in stealing it."

If you choose to be respectable, I will assist you in becoming so; if, on the contrary, you intend to continue your disreputable life, I will prosecute you. I can easily find you out, and you know it. Now, take your own way. If you are willing to reform, call on me to-morrow morning, and I will aid you as far as I can; if you do not come, I will put the affair in the hands of the police." So saying, she left the boy and the disreputable crowd which had gathered round her greatly astonished at her proceeding. The next morning the boy called, and she lectured him soundly on the wickedness of his course of life. Finding that he had neither father nor mother, and that he had fallen into bad company, she requested some of the gentlemen connected with the schools to assist her in reclaiming the lad. They readily promised their aid, and the result was, that after the boy had received some education in England they paid his passage to Australia, where he is now a thriving and respectable tradesman.

To any person interested in the well-being of young children I cannot imagine a greater treat than to pay a visit to these schools. I am unable to state what is the usual formality necessary for gaining admission, but judging from the extreme facility I experienced on my personal

application, and the perfect courtesy and patience with which every detail was explained to me, I should imagine the reader would find little difficulty in the matter. A more extraordinary sight than the twelve or thirteen hundred little children congregated in these schools, and arranged in their different classes according to their ages, it would be almost impossible to imagine. Their instruction, with the exception of Hebrew, of which they are taught the rudiments, or at any rate sufficient to enable them to offer up some prayers in that language, appears to be very much the same as is generally given in our best Christian schools. The task of disciplining such a host of little creatures, whose ideas are naturally of the most republican description, must of course be a very troublesome one. But perfect success attends the efforts of the governesses of the different classes; while Miss Miriam Harris, a superintendent of the whole, walks through the different divisions, praising those worthy of commendation, and blaming others who may require it. The children are admitted into the school as early as two years of age, and leave it when they are six, unless in the case of cripples, when they are allowed to remain two or three years longer.

A most praiseworthy feature in the manage-

ment of these schools remains to be noticed. It is the general air of personal cleanliness which marks the children, notwithstanding the indifferent quality of their attire; and this result, it should be understood, is far more difficult to attain than in our Christian schools. As I have before stated, the synagogues of Spain and Portugal, Germany, Holland, and Poland—the three latter especially—are in the habit of sending their poor over to England to be maintained by their more charitable co-religionists in this country. All the care their own countrymen on the Continent seem to bestow on them is to give a trifling sum for their deck passage on board the Dutch or Hamburg steamers; and perhaps less thought is taken for their comfort on the voyage, or their fate on arriving in a strange country, than is bestowed on the herds of cattle which are generally their fellow-passengers. The first care of the philanthropic English Jews, on the arrival of these emigrants, is to seek out the younger children, and by their being placed in the schools and under the care of Miss Miriam Harris and her assistants, they are saved from the squalor, disease, or death which would be their lot if they remained under the immediate charge of their parents. The labour and difficulty experienced in teaching

the fathers and mothers of these children the value of personal cleanliness is almost incredible. Although the code of Moses, as well as the Talmudic laws of the Jews, are exceedingly strict as to the observance of personal cleanliness, the poorer of the German and Dutch Jews are, as a rule, extraordinarily dirty in their persons and domestic arrangements, and a filthier specimen of humanity than a low Polish Jew could hardly be found. An excellent plan is adopted for the reformation of these foreigners by the London Jews. The latter, when dispensing their charity, refuse to assist any Jewish parents who cannot prove that they send their younger children to school, while Miss Miriam Harris and the School Committee on their part refuse to admit them unless they are in a cleanly condition. The low foreign Jewish parents usually grumble very much at this, in their opinion, utterly unnecessary requirement; but, as they as well as their children are totally dependent on the charity of the benevolent, they have no alternative but to submit; and in a short time the foreign children are sent to the schools in as clean and tidy a condition as their English fellow-pupils. As a further inducement for the children to attend regularly, a dinner is provided twice a week in the schoolrooms for those whose parents are



in great poverty. About five hundred generally accept the invitation. Although these dinners are of the simplest possible description, yet, judging from the energy shown in partaking of them, they are highly appreciated by the little guests. The dinners, with the exception of those on feast-days, always consist of one dish, the receipt for which is as follows:—"To one sack and a half of potatoes add sixty pounds of rice; mix together, and when thoroughly cooked, add fat to your taste." The reader might imagine, from the quantity that this would be, what is vulgarly called a cut-and-come-again dish; but this is far from being the fact. After a quarter of an hour's attack by five hundred little Jews on this huge mass, not a particle of potato, not a grain of rice, nor as much fat as would leave the least stain on a silk dress, is to be found remaining. But if this feat should appear at all astonishing, it is nothing to what these children can accomplish on one of their feast-days, when they have pudding and other delicacies allowed them; then, platefuls of food which would probably give a Life Guardsman an attack of indigestion, are carried off by little toddling creatures whose "stowage" capabilities, from outward appearance, would hardly have been considered equal to a fourth part

of the burdens they have taken upon themselves.

I had the gratification of being present a few years since on, I believe, the greatest feast-day of the year—that of Purim ; and a happier congregation of little beings I never saw. There was but one face in the whole room which did not seem perfectly happy ; and hers was a case of sorrow, indeed. Amidst the shouts of laughter which were going on at the time, as well as the Babel of languages—for there were no fewer than six different tongues spoken by those present—a cry of distress arose above all. A little Jewish maiden of about six years of age was lamenting over some misfortune which had befallen her, of so terrible a description as to render unavailing the consolations which were being offered her by a group of her fellow-pupils and several ladies who were present. On inquiring the cause of her sorrow, I was informed that she had lost—her crinoline !

Nor is feasting the only pleasure offered to the children. Games of every description are carried on unremittingly ; toys of every variety are given to them, and the evening generally concludes with an exhibition of the magic lantern. An excellent plan has been adopted by Miss Harris for the purpose of inculcating on

her little pupils habits of economy and thrift. A number of tiny money-boxes is kept, each being appropriated to a particular depositor, and into these the halfpence and farthings he may receive are placed. A little book is also kept, in which the amounts of the separate deposits are entered. When the total of any depositor's account amounts to any considerable sum, say, for example, one shilling, the box is solemnly opened in presence of the parents of the child, and after the amount has been verified as corresponding with that in the banker's book, it is spent at the direction of the little depositor, in a pair of shoes, a cap, or some other article of attire. From his having economised the money for its purchase himself, the article remains, till it is worn out, the most esteemed portion of his very modest wardrobe.

Besides the infant school, a Sabbath-school is also held in the building, which is under the immediate superintendence of Miss Miriam Harris, although the instructions given are specially directed by the Rev. Hermann Adler, assisted by a numerous staff of Jewish ladies and gentlemen of high social standing, who take great interest in the work. This class generally numbers at least five hundred. There is also a Sunday-school conducted on the premises for

the tuition of Jewish girls who are employed in shops during the week, and whose education is defective. This class is also very numerous attended.

But the good deeds of Miss Miriam Harris are not confined solely to the walls of the Jewish Infant-school. Several other philanthropic institutions in the neighbourhood are also considerably indebted to her for their origin and success—such, for example, as the Jewish Model Lodging-houses in Commercial Street, and the Jewish Bible-women. Without ignoring the very valuable services, and extraordinary energy and liberality of the wealthy Jews for the reformation of their poorer and more debased co-religionists in the eastern portion of the metropolis, I intend no discourtesy to them when I say that there is not one among them who has been more unceasing in his efforts in the cause, or who has laboured with more integrity of purpose, or whose name is entitled to higher respect, than Miriam Harris.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SUMMARY.

HAVING given these slight sketches of the wonderful energy exhibited by a few Protestant ladies in the furtherance of good works, let me now cast a short glance over the aggregate of their labours; and I submit that the most devoted admirer of conventual life must perceive that no convent, since the first establishment of these institutions, has ever performed a greater amount of labour, or whose exertions, if we are to judge the tree by its fruits, have received more plainly and emphatically the Divine blessing.

Through the exertions of Miss Rye, aided at the commencement of her labours by her friend Miss Lewin, 178 governesses have not only been assisted to emigrate, but honourable situations have been found for them in the colonies; 1,500 female servants have also been provided with



good situations in Australia and New Zealand. During Miss Rye's exertions in these colonies, she made three voyages to Australia and New Zealand. Afterwards she collected from the streets and parish workhouses no fewer than 1,200 "gutter children"—nine-tenths girls—whom she has taken to Canada and placed in good and respectable families, where they are brought up as honourable members of society. To accomplish this she has crossed the Atlantic no fewer than twelve times.

For the emigration of boys, Miss Annie Macpherson has crossed the Atlantic ten times, taking with her no fewer than 1,800 of the wild street arabs of the East-end of the metropolis. These she has not only placed in respectable families in Canada (chiefly farmers'), but has established an agency there of unpaid co-operators, who watch that the boys are well taken care of, and in case they lose their situations by any accidental cause of their own or their employers, immediately find them other occupation. It will thus be seen that no fewer than 3,000 children have been taken by these noble-minded women from the gutters and back slums of London, and placed in comfortable and respectable homes in the new country.

Miss Mary Merryweather, after working considerable reformation and improvement in the factory schools at Halstead, has superintended the education and training, as well as the direction, of no fewer than 323 nurses, each in her way as efficient as a first-class Sister of Charity, three of whom are already at the head of other training institutions, having many pupils under them, and nine others have been placed in situations of great trust. Apart from this fact, the nursing of several first-class hospitals is under her management, as well as the poorer and most squalid districts of Liverpool.

Still more surprising is the result of Miss Johanna Chandler's labours. From first taking under her charge a poor paralyzed carpenter, she has by degrees worked her way on, assisted as she went by friends who gathered round her, with the greater earnestness as her labours increased. Not only has she established a hospital which, if not without parallel in the world, has certainly, from the peculiar diseases it receives, no superior, but she has also established and organized a Convalescent Hospital, now doing an immense amount of good. She has, moreover, collected funds to establish forty-eight annuities for incurable paralytics and epileptics, and money is now, happily in her case,

flowing in with such liberality as to give hopes that the number of annuities will soon be vastly increased.

Miss Gilbert has established and superintended an Institution by which, with its different co-operating agencies in the country, nearly one thousand blind people have in great part placed in their hands the means of supplying themselves by their own labour with the necessaries of life, the remainder being supplemented with subscriptions obtained through her agency and that of her friends.

Through the exertions of the Quakeress, Mrs. Hilton, a Crèche has been established in the poorest parts of Ratcliff, which, without counting many other advantages, is the means of maintaining in food, cleanliness, and health more than one hundred infants.

Miss Mary Carpenter has not only been the originator and organizer of one of the best Reformatory Schools for Boys in England, but has at the present time 120 children in her Ragged School, who, through her own exertions and the co-operation of friends, are found in food and taught industrial labour. In the same locality she has established an excellent Workmen's Club and Reading-rooms. Besides a dwelling-house for working boys at the most

dangerous period of their existence, where they are well lodged and fed, Miss Carpenter has also established an Industrial School for 100 boys, unsurpassed for the excellence of its management by any in England, as well as an admirable Reformatory for Girls. These are all under her personal control.

Mrs. Harrison (Adeline Cooper) has erected through her indefatigable exertions a magnificent model lodging-house, containing 234 inmates. She has also established a Working Men's Club of 250 members, conducted on temperance principles, and the "One Tun" Ragged School, with 200 children; altogether between 700 and 1,000 individuals being connected with this one institution, who, while many of them lead a life of great poverty and privation, maintain as honourable a reputation for integrity and good conduct as any class in society.

Miss Sarah Robinson's labours and success have scarcely been less wonderful than the others. She has not only done immense good among the wives and families of the soldiers, assisted in reclaiming many of the miserable women who haunt the camp, but has induced 1,435 soldiers to take the temperance pledge, and is at present occupied in erecting a magnificent Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth, where

the men and their wives returning from foreign service may be sheltered from the sharks who would otherwise prey upon them ; while Mary Whately has in Egypt converted in her schools many Moslem children to the Christian religion, and instructed many hundreds more, male and female, in the usages of civilised society, thereby preparing the ground for the good seed which afterwards, with God's blessing, may be cast upon it.

I will now submit to the reader the following question. Had those ladies, the brief sketch of whose lives and labours I have given, been the inmates of a convent, no matter how well organized, and under a set of rules drawn up by even the most liberal-minded priests, could the result of their labours have been greater, or have conferred more honour on the country of which they are natives, or the religion which they profess ? Would the poor sightless girl who, without any figure of speech, has taught the blind to lead the blind, and neither fall into the ditch, have done more good had she been a nun, more or less secluded ? Had the others I have named chosen St. Mary Alacoque as their model instead of Dorcas, the " woman full of good works and almsdeeds which she did," their devotion could hardly have conferred greater



benefits on mankind, and would certainly have been less intelligible.

Nor should it be supposed that in the names mentioned I have selected those whose labours were the most honourable, or who would be likely to give the greatest strength to the thread of my arguments, for that would be doing many others a very great injustice. I have, on the contrary, taken them without any special purpose of the kind, simply as they presented themselves to my notice. Should the reader doubt this assertion, the following few facts will tend to prove its truth. Admirable as have been the labours of Miss Sarah Robinson in the army, they are not more honourable, or do greater credit to Protestantism, than those of Miss Weston in the navy, or the good she has effected more distinguishable. Like Miss Robinson, she holds that the great ruling power of evil in the navy is the same as in the army—the demon of drunkenness. And holding that the power of gentleness is the great woman's province, Miss Weston adopted gentle remonstrance and persuasion with our sailors; and although there still remains an immense amount of evil, she has at the same time indisputably effected a vast amount of good. I have not under my hand the number of sailors who have by her persuasion

signed the pledge, but they amount, I am informed, to some thousands; and if occasionally relapses unfortunately take place among them, they are few indeed when compared with those who still remain true to the pledge they have taken. Possibly one of the principal causes of the fidelity with which the sailor who has taken the pledge still keeps it, even amidst the immense amount of temptation thrown in his way, may be attributed to the correspondence Miss Weston keeps up with those who have joined the temperance movement through her instigation. Speaking of the number of ships with the crews of which she corresponds, she says:—“Of this number, 112 are at the moment at which I write ‘in commission;’ and as her Majesty’s navy consists of about 222 commissioned vessels, it will be seen at a glance that my present field of work comprises *one-half* of our active navy. On board some of the larger ships I have as many as 250 Christian men on my list. The total number on my books stands at present between 1,000 and 2,000 names.”

Another lady’s name might be quoted whose life has been as useful to society as those I have already mentioned, although in a different sphere of action. This lady has exerted herself with immense benefit to the city of Shrewsbury

in the cause of temperance. The amount of good she has effected appears almost incredible, when it is considered as the work of one woman, with a band of courageous helpers whom she has gathered round her. There is scarcely a drunkard's family in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury which she has not visited, or on whom she has not conferred some benefit, either morally or physically. Some of the conversions she has made read more as if she had been possessed of something beyond mortal power in their accomplishment. I allude especially to the reformation of female drunkards. Not without considerable experience, as well as having collected an immense mass of facts and figures connected with the vice of intemperance in this country, I do not remember one exception of a reformed habitual female drunkard having come under my notice. Yet Mrs. Wightman has certainly made many, as the present neatness and comfort of several of the homes of these poor women will abundantly prove. But Mrs. Wightman has taken up, also, another branch of the temperance question, which has hitherto not met with the consideration it deserves—the increasing habit of intoxication or spirit-drinking among both men and women in a respectable position in society; and this often produced

by the detestable stimulating system lately so much in favour with our medical men.

Among the different examples which have come under her notice, Mrs. Wightman has given one which may serve as the type for many others :—" But there was one," she says, " the mother of several children, who came under my influence, and gave me the greatest sorrow of heart. She was a lady. Her husband obtained her consent to pay a visit of some months to a medical man who trusted he could cure her of the disease of drunkenness. Upon her return home she failed again and again, until it became again the daily habit of her life. She was staying after this at a country place where she had gone for change of air, and I visited her at her husband's request, charged with a very solemn message—that if she would now relinquish the cup all should be forgotten, for he loved her dearly yet ; but if she would not return home her children would see her no more. I pleaded with her for more than two hours. I placed before her the two alternatives. She said deliberately (the fumes of spirituous drink making her breath, as she spoke, more like some poor drunken man's, reeling out of a gin-palace, than that of a lady), ' I can't give up my glass ; it's my life ; I cannot do it.'

Again I pleaded and prayed with her, she kneeling by my side. I spoke of her husband and children—home, love, honour, life, and the awful contrast if she still held to her fatal purpose. I left her, baffled, distressed, and vanquished, unable to turn her from her fell purpose, and before many months had passed a funeral card bearing her name reached me, with the tidings of her death.”

It may easily be imagined how such scenes must weigh upon as impressionable a mind as Mrs. Wightman's. Even the satisfaction she feels at the converts she makes is crushed by reverses or failures such as these. Unfortunately her exertions seem to be telling on her health. That she may recover its full possession is the ardent wish of all who are acquainted with her, or who take any interest in the decrease of this terrible evil, which is the curse of our nation.

Again, the efforts of Mrs. Meredith would form an example quite equal to any I have quoted. Her mission has been to collect, under the authority of the Government, the female ticket-of-leave convicts, and to supply them with respectable occupation.\* Many hundreds,

\* It is stated that Mrs. Meredith and her lady co-operators have found respectable and remunerative occupation for more than five



through her means and that of her associates, have been prevented from again falling into a career of crime and sin. Even some of the offshoots from her excellent institution are most interesting in themselves. One is an asylum for the children of female convicts, established by the Hon. Miss Cavendish, situated near Addlestone, in Surrey. This institution is a perfect gem in its way. A number of cottages have been erected, in each of which some twelve children are placed under the charge of a matron, where they are carefully brought up, and the predisposed tendency to wrong, so often distinguishable in the children of the female drunkard, is by constant care and attention eradicated.

The labours, also, of Mrs. Hinde Smith, of Leeds, are as great and beneficial as any I have mentioned. In London, again, Miss Octavia Hill has done much in reforming the dwellings of the poor; and, in point of benevolence of motive and common shrewd sense, her labours cannot be surpassed in England. Through the

hundred female ticket-of-leave convicts. The labours of Mrs. Godfrey Armytage, and her lady friends, in aid of the discharged female prisoners in the West Riding Industrial Home have been equally surprising. Had either of these ladies been the reverend mother of a convent, and her friends nuns, could they have done more to benefit their unfortunate protégées?

agency of some friends, who supplied her with the means, she has entered, with her life in her hand, into the most filthy and squalid dens in the metropolis—such, in fact, as might possibly make an inspector of nuisances or a sanitary officer hesitate before entering. She has not only instituted, in the minds of the wretched inmates, the advantages of cleanliness, but by the means placed at her disposal she has expended upon their dwellings sufficient sums to put them in good and tenantable repair, fitting them up with every sanitary precaution and means of cleanliness. After having purchased the premises, she demanded from the tenants a moderate sum in increase of rent, sufficient to counterbalance the expense in improvements, thereby inducing habits of providence and self-dependence. The success which has attended her efforts proves, in an indisputable manner, that even the most depressed and degraded may be taught these advantages for their own benefit.

Again, the name of Miss Louisa Twining, with her school for girls, might also be brought forward as well worthy of all honour. In fact, there is hardly a town in England in which some Protestant lady may not be found exerting herself in a good cause, and with as much beneficial effect as any I have mentioned.

Although the instances I have quoted have been those from the middle class in society, unaided, at the commencement certainly, by any powerful friends or patrons, those in the class of society below them are as many, even when proportionate numbers are taken into consideration. One I could mention, a quiet-looking little Scotchwoman, who some years since, through the death of a relative, inherited a yearly income barely sufficient for the most moderate necessities of life, gave up all other employment, without any priestly advice or instigation from those above her, and dedicated the whole of her life to assisting the liberated female prisoner to find respectable employment, thus giving her the means of quitting the society of her old associates and commencing life anew. At the early hour in the morning when female prisoners are liberated from the different metropolitan gaols in which they have been incarcerated, this little woman is to be seen standing at the gate, and addressing them as they come out, neutralising frequently, to a considerable extent, the baneful effects and persuasions of the released prisoner's associates, male and female, who are standing by to lead her back to her evil ways. The different modes of action adopted by her and her opponents are

well worthy of consideration. While the little Scotchwoman attempts, by all the persuasive language at her command, to induce them to come with her to some Home, either Mrs. Meredith's or some smaller asylum or refuge supported or conducted by other ladies, the devil's advocate urges them to follow him. The struggle is a difficult one for the Scotchwoman, for while her arguments are indisputably stronger than those of her opponents, they, on their side, have an ally of tremendous strength—the gin-shop, which is invariably brought under the notice of the poor released prisoners doubting which way to go, and which too frequently turns the balance. To go at any length into the labours of the good Samaritans who are to be found in the lower class of society would be to intrude too much on the patience of the reader. Again, it would be difficult for me to know where to stop, for on bringing to mind the different instances of kindness the poor exhibit to one another, each successive one brings before me another equally beautiful, or more so; and thus I might be induced to carry my examples to an inconvenient length.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONCLUSION.

AND now let me add a few words in explanation of one great object of this work. In bringing under the notice of the reader the examples I have quoted, and the superiority of their mode of action over the Roman Catholic system of nunneries and convents, I again emphatically deny any intention of claiming for the Protestant woman a superiority over others of innate benevolent principle. On the contrary, I maintain that the principle of good is inherited equally by women of all religious persuasions. It is simply the cumbrous conventual system to which I object. Nor should I have dwelt on this subject as emphatically as I have done, had it not been for the assumption of superiority in their teaching and organization of woman's work which the Roman Catholic priests are at present claiming for themselves. Let me quote



an example. In a work lately published on convents and conventual life, and which is the subject of an article in the *Dublin Review*, the critic, when speaking of the Catholic nursing of the poor, says :—

“ What a contrast to the cold, desolate, sullen, heartless atmosphere of those prison-houses of our poor, our English workhouses, where the last years of declining life are spent in misery, and where the infirm and dying are waited on by pauper nurses, rewarded for their ministry, it may be, by a glass of spirits, while they are left at the last moment to breathe their souls away into the presence of their Judge, their agony being made thus more agonising, amidst the peevish interruptions and even blasphemous jeers of companions whose hearts have never been hallowed by religion or softened by human love. What a blessing for the aged and infirm were our workhouses in the hands of ministering angels such as the Little Sisters of the Poor, or Sisters of Nazareth ! ”

Had the writer of this article contented himself with the usual vague method of abuse habitual to the ultramontane Catholic priesthood when speaking of Protestants, he would have been more difficult to answer than in the present case. In proof of his statement he points to a convent

in the parish of Kensington, situated in the Ladbroke Road, and known as the "Little Sisters of the Poor," this institution being, in his opinion, vastly superior in its treatment to that our infirm and dying receive in our Protestant workhouses. Should the reader feel interested in the matter, I propose to him a very simple way by which he may be convinced of the error of the writer's assertion.

Having heard similar praise for its superiority over our workhouses mentioned by a Catholic priest, I determined to visit both institutions, and judge for myself how far the one so lauded was superior to the other. That the convent named is worthy of great praise there can be no doubt. Although known to be a Protestant, I was received by the Lady Superior, or whatever her conventual title may be, with great courtesy, and on explaining the object of my visit — which I did candidly — a Sister was requested to show me over the building. The poor in it seem to be admirably attended to, as far as kindness was concerned. In fact, it would be impossible to speak in too high praise of the attention shown to them by the Sisters. Beyond that, I found nothing whatever superior to ordinary asylums for the poor. The food was by no means superior, nor were the sleeping

accommodations in any manner better than in our hospitals, if even so good.

My next visit was to the Kensington Workhouse, there to test the correctness of the "peevish interruptions," and "blasphemous jeers" of the demoralised inmates ringing in the ears of the poor creatures yielding up their souls to their Maker. The building, certainly, at first sight proved itself far superior to the convent for the purposes for which they were both designed. I was received by the Lady Superintendent of the Infirmary herself, a thoroughly trained nurse from Miss Nightingale's School, with great courtesy, and conducted by her over the whole building. As far as accommodation and requirements for the sick and dying are concerned, it was in every respect superior to the convent. No nobleman's establishment could be fitted up with more elaborate or appropriate appliances than were to be found in this workhouse infirmary, and a cleanliness fully equal to that observed in the convent reigned in the whole building. The nurses employed seemed as perfectly fit for their duties, and as efficient as those in the convent—to be more so would be impossible. Warm baths were ready on every floor, and in less than a minute from the time one was ordered, it was at

the bedside of the patient. On the ground-floor was an admirable dispensary, fitted up with every requirement, and an experienced medical man always on duty, so that the instant his services were wanted he was in readiness. A staff of ladies in the neighbourhood frequently, at stated times, visit the establishment, so that it would be impossible for any irregularity to occur without their knowledge. In fact, not in one single instance was there any inferiority to the administration of the convent, while on many points it was infinitely superior.

I next visited the infirmaries for the sick and dying in the workhouses of St. George's, Hanover Square, and Chelsea, each of which was as efficient, well-conducted, and liberally supplied as that at Kensington. As for the "peevish interruptions and blasphemous jeers" which, we are told by the writer of the *Review*, assail the ears of the dying, I believe they could not have existed anywhere in England, unless in the imagination of the writer himself.

It may be fairly asserted that, notwithstanding the high encomiums passed by the Catholic priesthood on the convents and other female institutions under their control, in no part of Europe are their poor treated in a better manner than in our average English workhouses, great

as their faults may be. In support of this statement, I will call the reader's notice to the average mortality returns in the different asylums and hospitals for the poor in Catholic countries compared with those in our workhouses. Although on many points it would be difficult to draw a comparison between institutions under Catholic management and our Protestant workhouses, on one, a perfect conclusion can be arrived at—their lying-in wards. Of course, parturition being over, the recovery of the patient must depend on perfect sanitary regulations, appointments, and good nursing. And what is the result under Catholic administration? In Paris the mortality is far higher than in our London workhouses; in Vienna, a few years since, when the administration of these institutions was under Jesuit control, the mortality was seven to one greater than in our London workhouse wards; while in Rome it was higher still.\* I could go further in these

\* I have been favoured with a note on the subject of the deficiency and mismanagement in different foreign hospitals, under the direct control of the Roman Catholic priesthood, from Dr. David Owen Edwards, sixteen years resident physician of the Westminster Hospital, and a voluminous contributor to the *Lancet* and other scientific works, on subjects connected with hospital organization. In it he says:—"My observations have extended over parts of Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland, and everywhere the priestly system and control have the same character



calculations, but decline doing so, lest I might appear indirectly to hint that the fault might be either in the skill or willingness of the Catholic nuns by whom these women are nursed. Such, however, is far from my intention. I maintain that the excessive mortality is chiefly due (with the exception of Paris) to priestly interference and bad sanitary arrangements, and that the sisters themselves, on the score of humanity, deserve to rank fully as high, but not higher, than our Protestant nurses.

If carefully analyzed, among their different convents and sisterhoods, there is really but one institution which can claim superiority over ours

of inefficiency. The more strictly the different institutions were under sacerdotal management, the worse they appeared. In the States of the Church especially the evils of mismanagement appeared to reach their acme. In Rome many of the medical charities and hospitals were organized under the despotic government of the priesthood. I naturally took a professional interest in the working of these establishments, and frequently accompanied the medical officers in their visits. Each of these gentlemen assured me he was placed under the absolute control of an ecclesiastical superior, without whose consent he could not issue a single order as regarded the treatment and diet of the patients. In going round the wards of the hospital of St. John Laterani, with Dr. Valeri, I observed a woman just confined with twins lying in the next bed to a case of confluent small-pox. Infection seemed inevitable, but the doctor's wish to remove the latter case was counteracted by the ignorant whim of the superintendent priest."

Dr. Edwards, whose visit to Rome occurred some five years since, speaks in high terms of the kindness and efficiency of the Sisters of Charity.

—their organization of the Sisters of Charity and Mercy. And let it be understood in the organization alone, for in the working it can easily be shown that our Protestant trained nurses are fully their equals. The Roman Catholic priesthood no doubt deserve great credit in raising the status of the nurse. They hold her, and with great justice, as the “sister” of all mankind. Till very lately, when Miss Nightingale and Miss Merryweather took up the question, the Protestant nurse was considered merely as the drudge in the family ; while the sister of charity, without any superior qualifications, was admitted as their equal, placing herself at table with the family of the sick, and receiving from them the respect justly her due. Even at the present day there is a vast amount worthy of imitation in the Roman Catholic organization of nursing. With them all nurses are on an equality, the solace of suffering humanity placing them on an equal footing, and making them equally entitled to admiration. Although we have lately vastly improved on this subject, more might still be done to place all respectable sick attendants, while on duty, on an equal footing with the lady nurses. At the commencement of the reformation of our nursing in the Crimean war, a circumstance came under my notice which impressed the

subject on my mind. I saw, in a certain hospital which shall be nameless, a poor soldier suffering from intermuscular abscesses, and to such an extent as made the attention he required, to any but those profoundly imbued with the spirit of humanity, utterly loathsome. A lady and an ordinary hospital nurse waited on him. The lady-nurse spoke to him with great kindness, washed his hands and face, wrote his letters, read to him, and cheered his spirits with great amiability. The ordinary nurse, who received a wage above her board and lodging scarcely more than was necessary for the ordinary requirements of warmth and decency of clothing, several times in the day, with great tenderness and kindness, pressed the matter from the abscesses, and assisted the surgeons in their administrations. The poor man died, and the nurse who had attended him so assiduously was attacked by fever, evidently caused by the mephitic nature of the case under her charge. She was placed in a female ward, where, although she received every proper attention, in a few days she died of malignant typhus fever. But while not a word of commendation was passed on the poor woman who fell a martyr to her duties, the highest possible praise was bestowed on the lady for her humanity. Among the

Roman Catholics this would not have been the case. No matter what the position in society of the lady might have been, the poor woman who fell a victim to the discharge of her duties would have been equally honoured and respected.

But apart from this admirable feature in the organization of the Sisters of Charity, I admit no superiority whatever over our Protestant nurses. That they come more prominently before the public is true, but this is rather to be attributed to extraneous means than to superior quality of nursing. They certainly impress the mind of the general public more strongly than our Protestant nurses, but this arises from the parade which attends all the Roman Catholic movements. Their dress, as I stated in my opening chapter—highly inconvenient, by-the-by, for the purpose of nursing—attracts the eye, while the Protestant nurse passes unobserved. But if the result of their nursing be carefully considered, we have as much right, as Protestants, to be proud of those nurses taught by Miss Nightingale and Miss Merryweather, as the Roman Catholics have of their Sisters of Charity and Mercy.

Our public press, during the Crimean war and since, have done full justice to the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, and equal praise is

due to them for their behaviour in civil hospitals. Nor do I speak this, as many of our Catholic priests do, from mere hearsay, or to vaunt their own organization. I have myself seen them, during the visitation of the cholera in Paris and Italy, keep steadily to their duties with an energy which showed how devoted they were in the cause. On these occasions, the idea frequently struck me how absurd was the principle the Roman Catholic priests put forward as to the cause of the ministrations of these noble-hearted women—that they were doing actions acceptable to our Saviour for the working out of good to their own souls. In the hospitals at Paris, Bergamo, Milan, Venice, and Rome, I have seen these Sisters attending the sick and dying, actuated, I am persuaded, by pure womanly inherent humanity alone, utterly unmindful at the time that they had either bodies to be infected, or souls to be saved.

Another point on which the Roman Catholic priesthood claim great superiority over our Protestant institutions, is in the care and instruction of poor children. The more I investigated this point, the more it appeared that the direct contrary was the case. They point out our workhouses in proof of their statement, and that the class of children in them are demoralised by



our Poor-law system. Admitting this to be the case—are the Protestants solely to blame for it? If the reader will take the trouble to examine the list of the principal officials connected with the higher administration of the Poor-law, he will find a large majority—proportionate numbers of the Catholic and Protestant population being taken into consideration—to be Roman Catholics. In fact, I heard it stated (by an unsuccessful candidate, it is true), that to obtain a high appointment in Gwydyr House, no more powerful recommendation could be brought forward than that the applicant is a Roman Catholic.\* Certainly the Roman Catholics under the present administration seem to have had nearly their own way, and in every respect in the care of the Catholic pauper children. In many instances they have been taken from our Protestant workhouse schools, and placed in others directly under the superintendence of the

\* The two permanent secretaries, and therefore the most influential officials of the Board, Messrs. Lambert and Fleming, are both Roman Catholics, as well as the three chief inspectors, Messrs. Farnall, Doyle, and Fleming, jun. A regulation has also lately been passed that during the meetings of the Board the decisions of these gentlemen on all subjects coming under their notice shall be considered finite, unless antagonistic to the general law. Archbishop Manning, however, is indignant that the Catholics are not allowed greater power in the administration of the Poor-law. Was Rome ever satisfied?

Roman Catholics, and with hardly satisfactory results. The London Poor-law guardians maintained that the children were not properly cared for; the Roman Catholics insisted, on their part, that the attention and solicitude shown to the children under their superintendence, was far in excess of that they received in our workhouse schools. But a singular fact may be quoted, which rather tends to prove the Protestant guardians were in the right, for during the time the Catholic children were under Protestant administration, a desertion from the schools was a very rare occurrence; but since they have been under Catholic administration, desertions have been frequent. From this it would appear that in the judgment of the boys themselves, they had not benefited by the change.

But it must be remembered that the whole of the poor children of the metropolis not under the charge of their parents, or leading an arable life in the streets, are not to be found in our workhouses. There are in most districts in London industrial schools, supported by voluntary contributions, both for boys and girls, especially the latter. Some of these are in Catholic convents under the training of the priests and nuns; the others, with the exception of one or

two admirably conducted Jewish schools, are maintained and instructed by Protestants. The writer I have above alluded to, in proof of the superiority of the Catholic system over the Protestant, pointed to the Convent of the Little Sisters of the Poor, in the north ward of Kensington, and I answered him by bringing under the notice of the reader the Infirmary of the Kensington workhouse. I will now invite the reader to draw a comparison between the training of poor female children in Catholic convents, and the Protestant schools in the same parish, and judge for himself from which the children turn out the more satisfactorily. That I may not appear to take any unfair advantage of the conventual system, I would invite the reader to inquire of the Catholic mistresses of families who have taken children from the Catholic convents, or the Protestant schools, such as that in Sloane Street, Chelsea, or Miss Bell's in Marylebone, which they prefer? I could go further on this subject, but I decline doing so, leaving to the reader to make any inquiries he pleases. At the same time I beg it may be understood I place no blame on the Catholic nuns. It is the conventual system alone I object to, not any want of care or attention on the part of the teachers.

If the mortality returns of very young children in foreign Roman Catholic institutions were collected and compared with those in our workhouses—bad as the latter may be—the mortality in the former would be found to be immensely greater. And apart from our workhouse institutions, it should be borne in mind that there are thousands of schools and other institutions in England where poor children are taken care of, and that too with the greatest solicitude and skill. Admirable as may be the zeal of the Roman Catholic nuns, would it be possible to find, in Europe, two whose labours have been more successful in the cause of destitute children than the two ladies I have mentioned—Miss Rye, and Miss Annie Macpherson. From my Protestant point of view it would be difficult to imagine a more affecting sight than when, on arriving in America, either of those ladies disembarks, leading a poor child in each hand, and followed perhaps by a hundred others on their way to the far West. We have lately heard long descriptions of the pilgrimage of our English Catholics to Paray-le-Monial, but perhaps, in the opinion of the reader, the sight of those little pilgrims to the far West is quite as edifying to man, and as pleasing in the eyes of the Almighty, as that of any Catholic pil-

grimage ever undertaken. A curious contrast might be drawn between the struggle at the buffet at Montargis, in which our pious male pilgrims, after succeeding in driving their female companions from the refreshment stand—half-killing one of them by the way—struggled among themselves which should obtain the greater share of the eatables, and the rough emigrants and backwoodsmen in America taking food from the refreshment rooms, or their own stores, and entering the cars, feeding unasked the little pilgrims their fellow passengers.

That I might not appear to hold that the English Protestant woman possesses a superior amount of charitable feeling to those of other communities, I have purposely inserted a description of the labours of Miss Miriam Harris, and the school at present under her management, as proving that the Jews are quite as charitable as the Protestants or Catholics. In fact, both these Christian communities might learn a very good lesson by investigating the organization of the Jewish benevolent institutions in London, and the extent to which that "most excellent gift of charity" is carried by them. And here a very singular comparison may be drawn between the power of exercising charity



among the three communities in London—the Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. Among the Protestants, it is calculated, that one in every twenty-five is dependent upon others to a greater or less extent for charitable assistance; among the Catholics one in eighteen; among the Jews, in consequence of the great influx of Jewish paupers from foreign countries, one in six. The Catholics, although poorer than the Protestants, are certainly far richer than the Jewish community; yet, while the latter never apply to either Catholic or Protestant for assistance, the Catholic begs of both. I may be told that among the Jews are men of immense wealth. That is perfectly true; but their wealth in the aggregate would not be greater than that of the Catholics, especially were the names of some of the converts who have lately joined that creed taken into consideration.

The comparison between the two creeds, Catholic and Protestant, might be carried still further, though perhaps with but little advantage. The writer in the *Dublin Review*, by way of proving the superiority of the Catholic over Protestant institutions, quotes the text—“A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matthew vii. 18). I offer him, as an

example, the condition of two communities in Paris—the one receiving moral and spiritual aid from Catholic priests and priestly regulations; the other, Protestant men and women, acting openly and energetically together, without scandal in the sight of God or man, unless perhaps in the imagination of a Jesuit, or ultramontane Roman Catholic priest. The reader, if he has resided any time in Paris, may have noticed at night a number of men and women employed about the streets, who but rarely make their appearance in the daytime—the chiffoniers and the balayeurs (the latter the scavengers of Paris). They are, as may be imagined, of the poorest of the Parisian population. It might be considered, from the nature of their occupation, that considerable affinity existed between them; but this, however, would be a most erroneous conclusion. It would be difficult to find two communities holding more thoroughly antagonistic principles. The chiffoniers are certainly honest, so are the balayeurs; but there their similarity ends. The chiffoniers, both men and women, are drunken, quarrelsome, and filthily dirty in their habits. The balayeurs are sober, industrious, and well-conducted, it being a very rare case for one to come under the notice of the police. The chiffoniers are

to a man Catholic, the balayeurs to a man Protestant.

Singularly enough, the two principal colonies of these communities are in the same *quartier* in Paris, separated only by a couple of streets—that of St. Marcel. It would well repay the reader interested in the question to pay them a visit. Any locality more filthy than that inhabited by the chiffoniers it would be impossible to imagine; nor any more cleanly or well-ordered than that of the balayeurs. The latter have their schools, partly maintained by themselves, and partly supplemented by charitable contributions, besides their chapel and benefit funds. Few would imagine, from their cleanly appearance on the Sabbath, the unpleasant nature of their ordinary occupations. Their divine service, too, is admirably performed; and the singing of their hymns (many of which date from the days of the Huguenots) is more than creditable. A number of Parisian ladies and gentlemen (Protestants) take this community under their protection, and work together as energetically and as perfectly without scandal as in our English Protestant institutions. The chiffoniers, on the contrary, with the exception of occasionally a Sister of Charity or Mercy plying her womanly work, have few or none of

the better classes to visit them, and their dwellings and institutions are for dirt and demoralisation a proverb in the mouths of Parisians.

In conclusion, I beg to remind the reader that throughout this little work I have strictly abstained from touching on any theological subject. Nor have I more than alluded to the insulting and domineering tone at present exhibited by the priestly agents of Rome in this country; so different from the humble and almost abject manner in which they commenced their operations. That they are at the present time occupied in sowing dissension and ill-feeling among us in return for the hospitality and welcome they have received, must be apparent to all. To abler pens than mine I leave the task of arousing the Protestant population of England to the increasing power and unscrupulous actions of the papal emissaries, as well as the best method of stemming their progress. I have merely, throughout, attempted to answer the insulting sneers of the Roman Catholic priests against the good works of the Protestant women of England. I have only attempted to prove to the reader—and I hope with some success—that our Protestant Sisters are as energetic and successful in the perform-

ance of good works as the inmates of Catholic convents, and that, too, without priestly control or direction, monastic buildings, ecclesiastical mediæval millinery, or the degradation of the confessional.

THE END.



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