

and nations, but the natural language of the affections, which are immortal. And when the crowd of weary sufferers thronged around the Apostles' steps in the city, the blind supporting the lame, and the lame eyes to the blind; or when the solitary leper saw them in the field, and made his gesture of entreaty from afar, and all were healed, how better could be represented the character of that faith, which has never set eyes on pain without yielding it a tear; which, in proportion as it has been cordially embraced, has sickened the heart of scenes of suffering and blood, and lessened, age after age, the stripes wherewith humanity is stricken. We neither claim nor ask for the cloven tongues of a divine persuasion; we boast not of any arm of miracle which we can lay bare in conflict with disease and sorrow: but in the *spirit* of these acts of Providence we may participate. While fanatics vainly pretend to repeat their marvellousness, we may choose the better part, and copy their beneficence. The world needs the preachers of wonders, less than the apostles of charity.

And amid all the splendors of miracle, nothing could be more unostentations than the diffusion of Christ's mercy by its missionaries in the days of old. Beginning at the provinces of Palestine, it passed, from village to village of the interior, from city to city of the vast empire's various coast: along the shores of Asia, beneath the citadels of Greece, to the world's great palace on the Tiber, it stole along, fleet and silent as the wind that bloweth where it listeth, sweeping through every foul recess, and leaving health where it found pestilence. Our imagination, corrupted by the vanity of history, dwells perhaps too much on the more brilliant positions and marked triumphs of the