

nurses and parish visitors has, for some years, been in operation under the skilful superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Fliedner and his wife. Here Florence Night gale was trained for her heroic labours in the Crimea. From this institution there have gone forth many devoted Sisters of Charity, who without fee or reward have rendered distinguished services to suffering humanity. Attempts have recently been made in England to establish similar institutions and to redeem the character of our hospital, and sick nurses, who have hitherto been chiefly celebrated for coarseness, drunkenness, and mercenary dispositions. Much opposition in some protestant quarters has been shown to this movement. A dread has been entertained lest we should, under the guise of charity and benevolence, be introducing into protestantism the detested system of secluded nunneries. The evil thus apprehended is not, however, very imminent. We see no reason why protestant women may not devote themselves to works of charity, for the love of God, as well as those of the catholic religion. Why should self-sacrifice (if a good work can be so called) be unknown to the protestant church? We have, it is true, many noble instances of devotion to suffering humanity in the private walks of life, prompted by the sincerest christian piety. But what we want, is that female christian influence, for other than mercenary purposes, should be brought to bear on the management and nurseryship of our public hospitals. In primitive times the church had its Deaconesses, whose special function it was to minister to the wants of the sick and to relieve the distressed. Many of these were women of noble birth, and all of them were animated with the zeal for the glory of the crucified and merciful Redeemer. How these functions could be revived in modern times it is difficult to say. Our Ladies Societies and circles for benevolent purposes in connexion with our Churches perhaps, to some extent supply their place, but not to the extent desired. We want, not the seclusion of women for this or any other end, into a caste or Sisterhood—we want from them *an efficient communion of love and labour* with men on behalf of the wretched and the suffering. To accomplish this is evidently the aim of the book. It contains much valuable information and sound sense. We cannot, certainly, endorse all its sentiments and opinions. The author is evidently greatly mistaken as to the influence of the puritanic or Calvinistic element in the reformed Churches, in suppressing every tendency to female devotion for charitable aims. She will rather find, if she looks a little deeper, that this frigidity of religion has arisen, not from the puritan or the Calvinist—names synonymous with Martyr in earlier times—but from the lifeless orthodoxy, the cold moderatism, into which the once vital principles of the reformation have become fossilized. We recommend the perusal of this book to our thinking christian ladies and generally to all who desire to promote the welfare of the suffering and the wretched.

With the following true and well expressed thoughts our author concludes the first part of the book:—

"The history of the past, of the possible, of the actually accomplished, should give us courage in the present and hope for the future. It is a subject of reproach that in this Christendom of ours, the theory of good which we preach should be so far in advance of our practice; but that which provokes the sneer of the skeptic and almost kills faith in the sufferer, lifts up the contemplative mind with hope. Man's *theory* of good is God's *reality*; man's experience of good is the degree to which he has already worked out, in his human capacity, that divine reality. Therefore, whatever our practice may be, let us hold fast to our theories of possible good; let us at least, however they outrun our present powers, keep them in sight, and then our formal lagging practice may in time overtake them. In social morals, as well as in physical truths, "the goal of yesterday will be the starting-point of to-morrow;" and the things before which all England now stands in admiring wonder will become "the simple produce of the common day." Thus we hope and believe."