

cent homes for the little ones ; fresh air trips ; dinners and breakfasts for poor children, waifs and strays ; cripples are tenderly cared for ; institutes have been established, where the understanding of the deaf hears ; the dumb with soundless language speak, and the blind through perfected sense of touch read, and enjoy the pleasures of manual labor, accompanied by the sweets of friendships. In connection with work for the blind, the pathetic story of Elizabeth Gilbert, the blind daughter of the late Bishop of Chichester, is most affecting. Her association for promoting the general welfare of the blind proved such a success, that the blind workers employed by the Association receive annually nearly £1,800 sterling in wages, and about £400 is also paid every year in gifts and pensions.

Societies for the protection of and providing against cruelty to children have been organized, and finally in 1889, a bill was passed through the British Parliament termed "The Children's Charter."

Works of piety and charity, now linked together under the name of Associated Philanthropy, have run like a golden thread from long past centuries, a piety and benevolence, historic as well as apostolic. Women have been the great conservators and dispensers of this line of continuous acts of mercy and goodness. From the days of St. Hilda educational institutions, hospitals and alms houses have been established and sustained. Records of ancient "Doles" and orphan charities bear their names, while protection for the young and comfort for old age, are naturally the gifts of their hands.

The good work that women now do in associations was done of old from home centres. This "duty toward my neighbor" was fostered by the parish life and county homes of England in the days when rural life formed the larger and more influential England ; the days before steam railways, daily newspapers, weekly and almost daily periodicals, national schools and electricity came to revolutionize the world. It is to these homes that we can trace the beginning of many a great work of charity. The every day life of the manor house fulfilled duties that are now called missions. Standing in the midst of properties which in pre-railway times were like distinct settlements, moved by a conscious sense of responsibility, influencing in turn their villages and groups of farms, they formed centres for the carrying out of all manner of good works. The women who presided over these homes, lived under the influence of traditional duties, which came with their inheritance. The children of dependents and poor neighbors were taught respect for religion, attended the same church, shared in the same sacred rites, finally resting in the old church-

yard, where their progenitors, rich or poor, had been laid before them. The manor houses proved training schools for girls, in all the ways of what we are now pleased to call "Domestic Science." The same was true in all respects of the better class of farmsteads, where it was easy to learn the secret of making home happy. It was in these homes that "Woman's Technical Arts" (needlework, cookery, and dairy management) not only entered into, but became part of the poorer girl's life. It was such home life that produced a Harriet Martineau, an Elizabeth Fry, or a Susan Martin.

The education of the upper classes of women in the present scholastic meaning of the phrase, was, perhaps, inferior to that of the present generation, but in a wider sense, not so, for more was taught at home than many now seem willing to admit or believe. From the home of a village schoolmaster came the many-sided and brave-hearted Hannah More, known as a "writer of tracts," yet the brilliant and witty friend of David Garrick, Dr. Johnson, Joshua Reynolds, and Horace Walpole ; yet she found her "mission," assisted by her sisters, in training over 1,000 children in the schools they established in the scattered villages of Mendip. Thus she spent the large sum of £40,000 sterling which she made from her writings.

Were not such centres of earnest life as the "Seven Thousand of Elijah," unrecorded save by the angel of the Lord, into the ripening harvest, of which the women of to-day are the privileged laborers ?

It is easy to understand how environment, with its limitations, curtailed co-operation of even adjoining parishes. No railways veined the land ; postal service was still a fledgling ; in the cities transit was poor and very dear, no cabs, no omnibuses, no cheap rates. The old poor laws of Elizabeth were still in force. Not until the invention of steam, when machinery ran the factories, did co-operation for the benefit of the poor and the laborer become a practical idea among philanthropists. With co-operative work for the benefit of the many, came woman's hour, and woman's opportunity. It was not until the "fifties" that we read of women working in associations for one special object, and even then the executive would be composed of a body of men ruled by a Shaftesbury, though woman's hands carried out the details, or a woman's heart or brain suggested the remedy and prompted the prevention of the evil to be overcome. Such societies as the Church Mission and Female Missions to the Fallen, and Female Aid Societies (1858) for providing homes for waifs and strays were all organized with an executive of men.

The Church Penitentiary Association, with its Homes of Mercy, although under the control