

greater than that which ordinarily falls to the lot of officers of the Church and private male workers. These, generally engaged in business all the day, find it difficult to make much use of the evening, which recreation or family duties demand, for purposes of Christian benevolence. It would be well, doubtless, if we could give our elders and deacons more time for the discharge of the duties right-ly devolving upon them, but since this cannot be, it is desirable that the functions of their respective offices which can be discharged by other labourers should be, as far as necessary, transferred to them.

That women have a place in the work of the Church we have seen is already in part recognized, as it has been recognized in all ages of that Church's history. The deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, Priscilla the teacher of Apollos, Persis the beloved, who laboured much in the Lord and many others whom the New Testament mentions, rise up for the example and encouragement of mothers and true daughters in Israel who now follow in their footsteps, and no less to the condemnation of many, fully as able, who sit at ease in Zion. Widows and virgins, and married women like Priscilla also, are frequently mentioned in the epistles as among the necessary helps if not governments in the Apostolic churches. Many of the Fathers and early Church historians, such as Sozomen and Theodoret, treat of the female Diaconate and give instances of their good works and fortitude under persecution, as in the case of Publia in the time of Julian the Apostate and Olympias in that of Arcadius. After a time, indeed, the false views of a degenerate Church drafted this effective arm of the Christian service into nunneries beyond the walls of which their influence was rarely felt; and before the twelfth century, when the Papacy as an anti-Christian system was fully established, the order of deaconesses disappeared. The wise policy of the Romish Church, however, when it saw that Protestantism was gaining ground, led to the founding of several female orders, the members of which were not confined to the dreary round of monastic life, but were actively employed among the sick and the poor. In the year 1618, the devout mystic, Francis of Sales, whose holy life, spiritual writings, "overflowing love and conciliatory manners led crowds of Protestants back to the Romish Church," founded the order of the visitation of our Beloved Lady; while, at the same time, the humble and zealous Vincent de Paul established the order of Sisters of Mercy. The education of the young and the care of the sick were the principal occupations of these and other sisterhoods since formed. It was, to a certain extent, in order to counteract the influence of the Sisters of Mercy, who filled the European hospitals, as well as to meet the enemy in every other department of his insidious working, that Pastor Fliedner, of Kaisersworth, a village on the Rhine, not far from Dusseldorf, opened, in October 1836, the Institution of Deaconesses. Since that time similar institutions have been established in Holland, Switzerland, and France, as well as in other parts of Germany, while in Alexandria, Jerusalem, Smyrna, Constantinople, Bucharest, Florence, and other places, the devoted women who go forth from these institutions are found at their holy work. From the 25th Annual Report of the Establishment of Deaconesses at Strasburg, we copy the following regulations which apply equally to those of other places.

- Act 1. The Deaconesses are servants of the Lord, who consecrate themselves, from love to Him, to works of charity and mercy. An evangelical deaconess, in the vocation which she has chosen, seeks no individual merit, but simply an opportunity of evidencing her gratitude to Him who has saved her.
- Act 2. The Establishment of Deaconesses founded at Strasbourg has for its end to offer to Christian persons, who wish to devote themselves to the service of the Lord, the means of preparing themselves to become sick-nurses, and to take the oversight in prisons, asylums, and houses of refuge, or in other charitable institutions which may have need of their services.
- Act 3. In order to attain this end the Deaconess's Home contains an infirmary where the sick persons admitted on medical certificate receive all the atten-