

said to the penitent "Neither do I condemn thee—go, and sin no more;" and who in His unsearchable wisdom vouchsafed the first sight of His risen body to the weeping woman who was a forgiven sinner! We learn that there exist the Church Penitentiary Association, and three different missions to the fallen, and besides a number of Reformatories, no less than 47 Houses of Refuge in England alone, "all of which," we quote the report, "are managed by self-devoted women, except in some few cases where temporary refuges have a paid matron." Of one of these missions, the Female Aid Society, a few words may be admissible, painful as the subject is, as indicating the kind of work done and what can be accomplished. "This is a Woman's Mission to Women, and sends earnest Christian women into the streets, the hospitals and the workhouses, to converse with and to rescue the fallen of their own sex. In the last twenty nine years the mission has placed 6,356 women in service; 6,116 have been placed in institutions for training; 1,719 have been restored to their friends; 74 have been assisted to marry, and 65 have been emigrated." Reading this record we scarce know whether to feel most humiliation for the necessity of the work or thankfulness that the devoted laborers are found by whom it is so earnestly and humbly done; that even in this stony and thorn-choked corner of the vineyard some harvest is reaped by pious effort and faithful, prayerful toil.

Third in order comes the nursing and tending of the sick, and perhaps in nothing is the change in public sentiment, or more properly speaking in human feeling, more visible than in the estimation in which this occupation is now regarded. "I was sick, and ye visited Me," were the Lord's words of commendation to the chosen on His right hand; but not until too recently have those words been construed as the Divine command they really are. While it may be supposed that tender solicitude rarely failed those to whom it was owed by natural affection, the case was very different with those who were dependent for it on outside sources; and the records of neglected hospitals and asylums, of workhouses where age and infancy were alike misused, of prisons where to the just reward of crime was added the unjust misery of uncared-for disease and suffering, would reveal many a pitiful and disgraceful tale. The master of fiction who dealt with and exposed so many modern abuses pictured, it is to be feared, but fact in Mrs. Gamp dragging the pillow from the head of her delirious patient for her own better repose, and swallowing at her own meal the wine left for his support; and in the beadle and matron enjoying their hot toast before the glowing fire while the chance medicine went out to the hungry applicant's dying wife in a blacking bottle, and the harpies who acted as nurses in the sick ward searched the finger of the dead waif for the absent wedding ring, and rifled the cold bosom of the poor locknet containing the tress of hair. All this is, without

measure altered, and if not entirely the work of women the vast change owes much to their exertions. Instead of hired attendants, self-seeking and inefficient, the hospitals are filled with women young and self-devoted, so trained as to bring to their work courage, intelligence and skill. Nursing has become an honorable profession, of late we might perhaps say even fashionable, were it not that the sacrifice and self-denial demanded by the discharge of what must sometimes be painful and often far from pleasant duties, will always keep its ranks free from those who would enter them from other than worthy motives; while Convalescent Homes, Cottage Hospitals, Orphanages, and Homes for the Incurables and the Aged, testify alike to the sanctifying influences of religion and the untiring effort they inspire. Nay, even in what would seem the most unlikely sphere of all, that influence is felt; for where once the soldier's only experience of womanhood was the abandoned camp-follower, plying alike on the living, the dying and the dead, her dreadful trade of spoliation, the devoted Sisters of the Red Cross Band now carry help and consolation, and fearing no pestilence, shrinking from no sight or sound of pain or terror, minister to the victims of fever and fire, heal where healing is possible, and soothe the lonely deathbed with gentle touch and whispered prayers.

The list of Sisterhoods is a long one, comprising nineteen Sisterhoods proper, besides eight institutions for deaconesses, and the Mildmay Home. The labors of these extend over every imaginable variation from the regulation of retreats for prayer to the management of a restaurant for sailors in the London docks, from the teaching in advanced schools to the attendance in the wards of a Magdalen Refuge; and in connection with them and under their charge are most of the orphanages and Children's Homes. Of the life the best idea may be given by the following extract from the report of the Deaconesses of Manchester:—"The Sisters are employed in nursing the sick, visiting the poor, teaching in and superintending Sunday schools, holding Bible classes and Mothers' meetings, and in all such parish work as is within the province of women. Training is also given in penitentiary and outside rescue work. The Sisters are also working in Mission Houses in—here follows a list of fourteen different towns. The Refuges at Aldershot and Forton are under the care of the Winchester deaconesses. Two also are engaged in Mission work at Kaffraria. This is a comprehensive programme indeed. The Mildmay Deaconesses have seventeen Homes and training schools, whence nurses are sent anywhere required, and from which free nursing is given to the poor. The Hospital and Medical Mission at Jaffa were originated and are entirely under the care of Mildmay workers, and to their training house at Stoke Newington the Church of England Zenana Mission sends all its candidates for train-