

A HISTORY OF NURSING

CHAPTER I

KAISERSWERTH AND THE DEACONESS MOVEMENT

THE river Rhine lies broad and peaceful between its low, green banks before the little North German town of Kaiserswerth, and the majestic old ruins of the Kaiserpfalz guard the entrance from the boat-landing to the quiet streets. Their testimony to a proud and knightly past is now ignored, and no one thinks of Kaiserswerth except as the home of the famous Deaconess Mother-house—as a sort of shrine, to which pilgrimages may be made in loving and grateful memories of the simple, self-forgetting devotion of its founders. In this quiet, remote village beat hearts whose rhythm started waves that have spread over the earth. The direct and indirect extensions of humane endeavour dating from Kaiserswerth may indeed be likened, according to the favourite simile of the German pastors, to the vast tree beginning as a tiny acorn, whose branches cover all the earth. In and around the little town itself now stand eleven noble institutions,