

exposure to untimely death, nourished it in Christian homes. It threw the ægis of its protection over the slave and the oppressed, raising them from the condition of beasts to the dignity of men and the fellowship of saints. With an unwearied and passionate charity it yearned over the suffering and the sorrowing everywhere, and created a vast and comprehensive organization for their relief, of which the world had before no example and had formed no conception. It was a holy Vestal, ministering at the altar of humanity, witnessing ever of the Divine, and keeping the sacred fire burning, not for Rome, but for the world. Its winsome gladness and purity, in an era of unspeakable pollution and sadness, revived the sinking heart of mankind, and made possible a Golden Age in the future transcending far that which poets pictured in the past. It blotted out cruel laws, like those of Draco, written in blood, and led back Justice, long banished, to the judgment seat. It ameliorated the rigours of the penal code, and, as experience has shown, lessened the amount of crime. It created an art purer and loftier than that of paganism; and a literature rivaling in elegance of form, and surpassing in nobleness of spirit, the sublimest productions of the classic muse. Instead of the sensual conceptions of heathenism, polluting the soul, it