

THE
DEACONESS
AND
HER WORK

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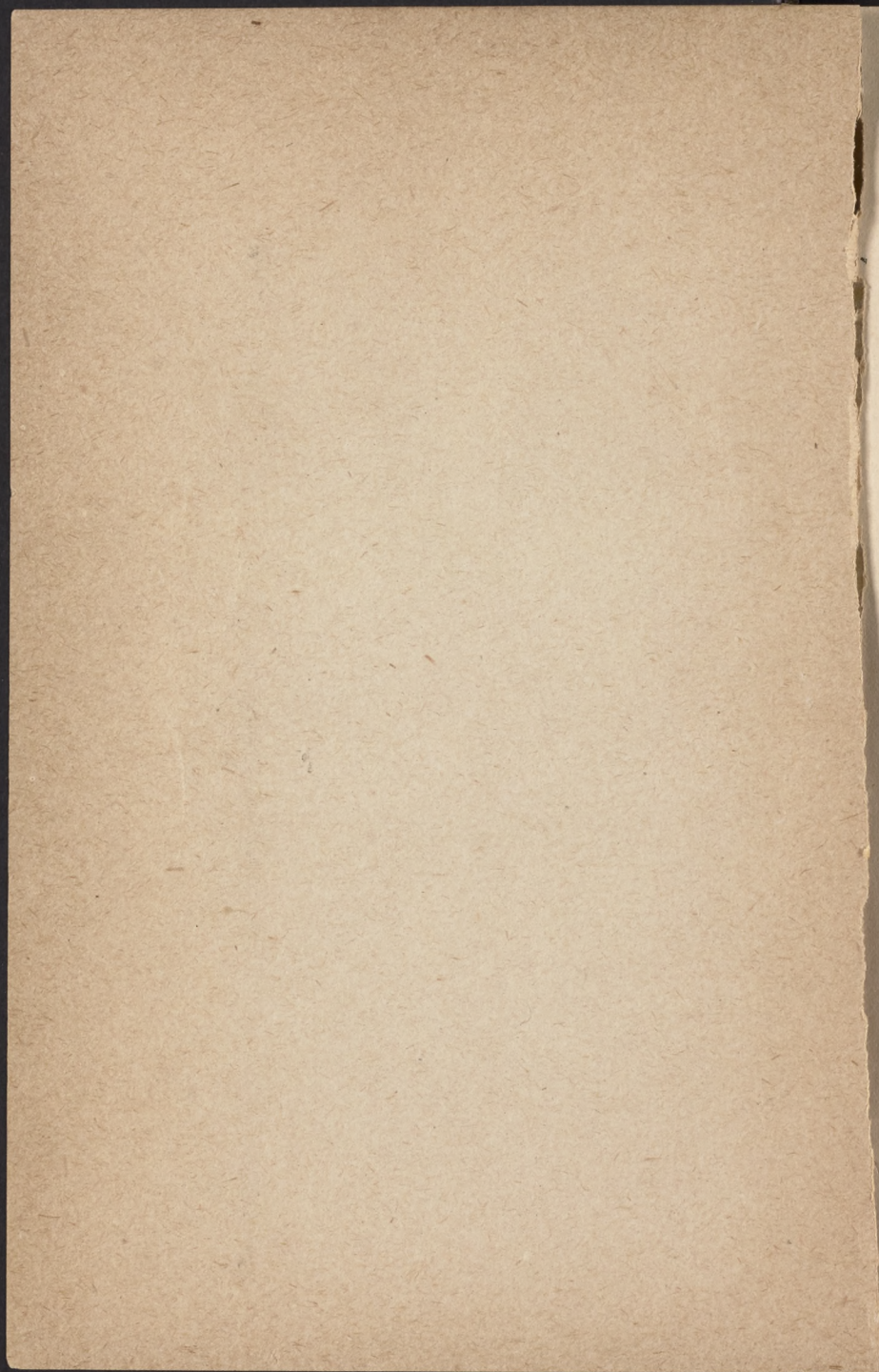
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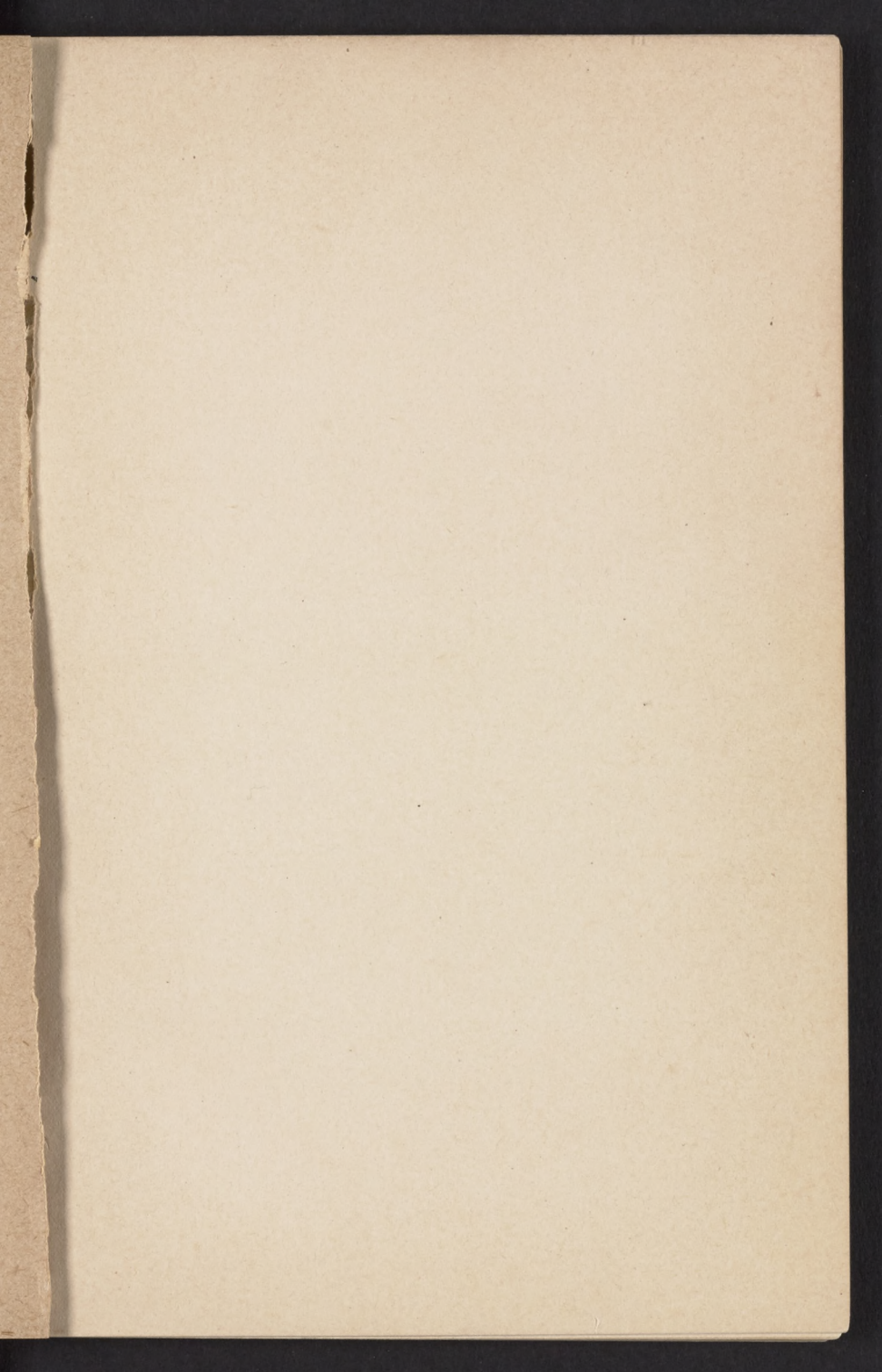
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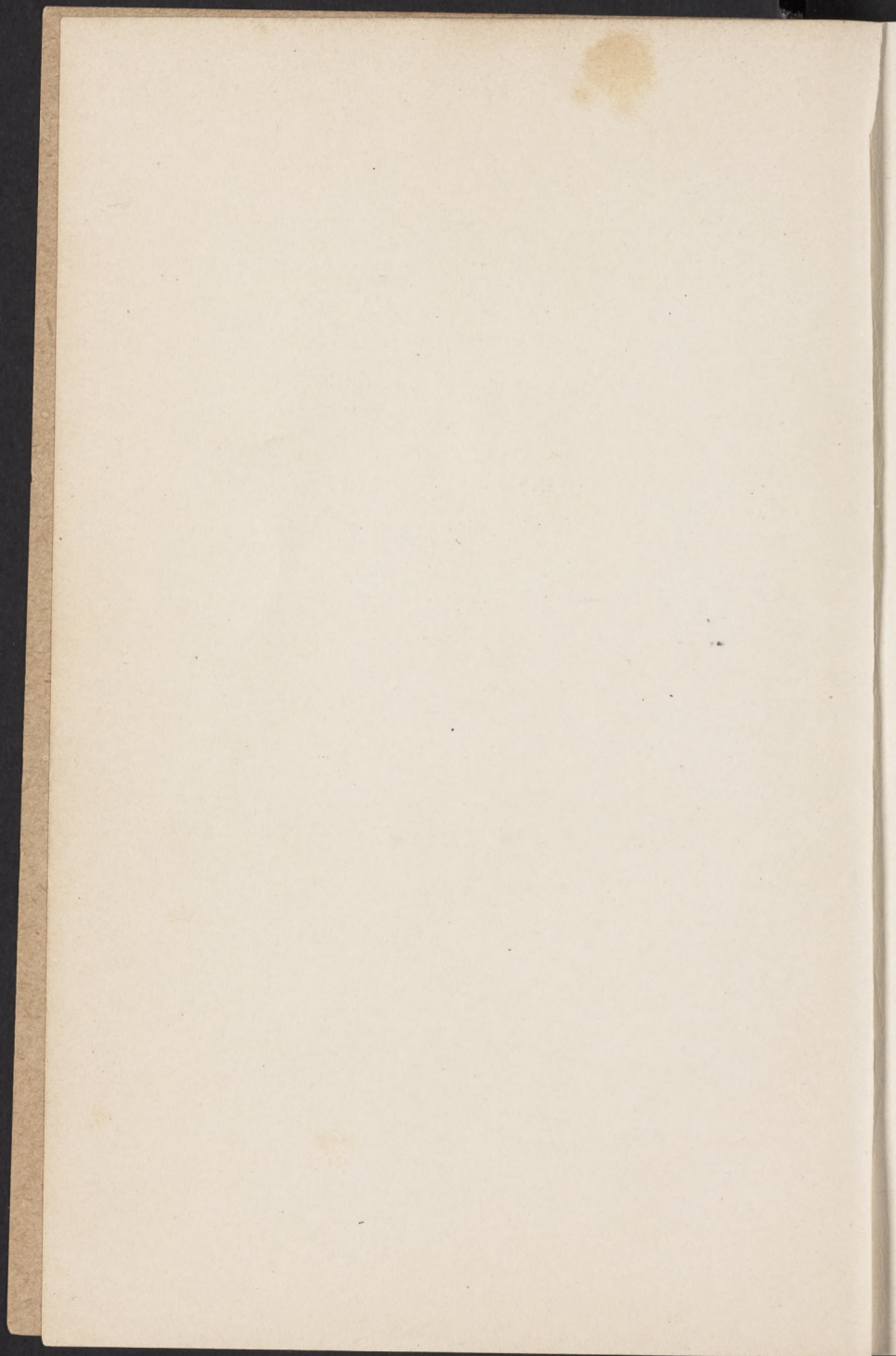
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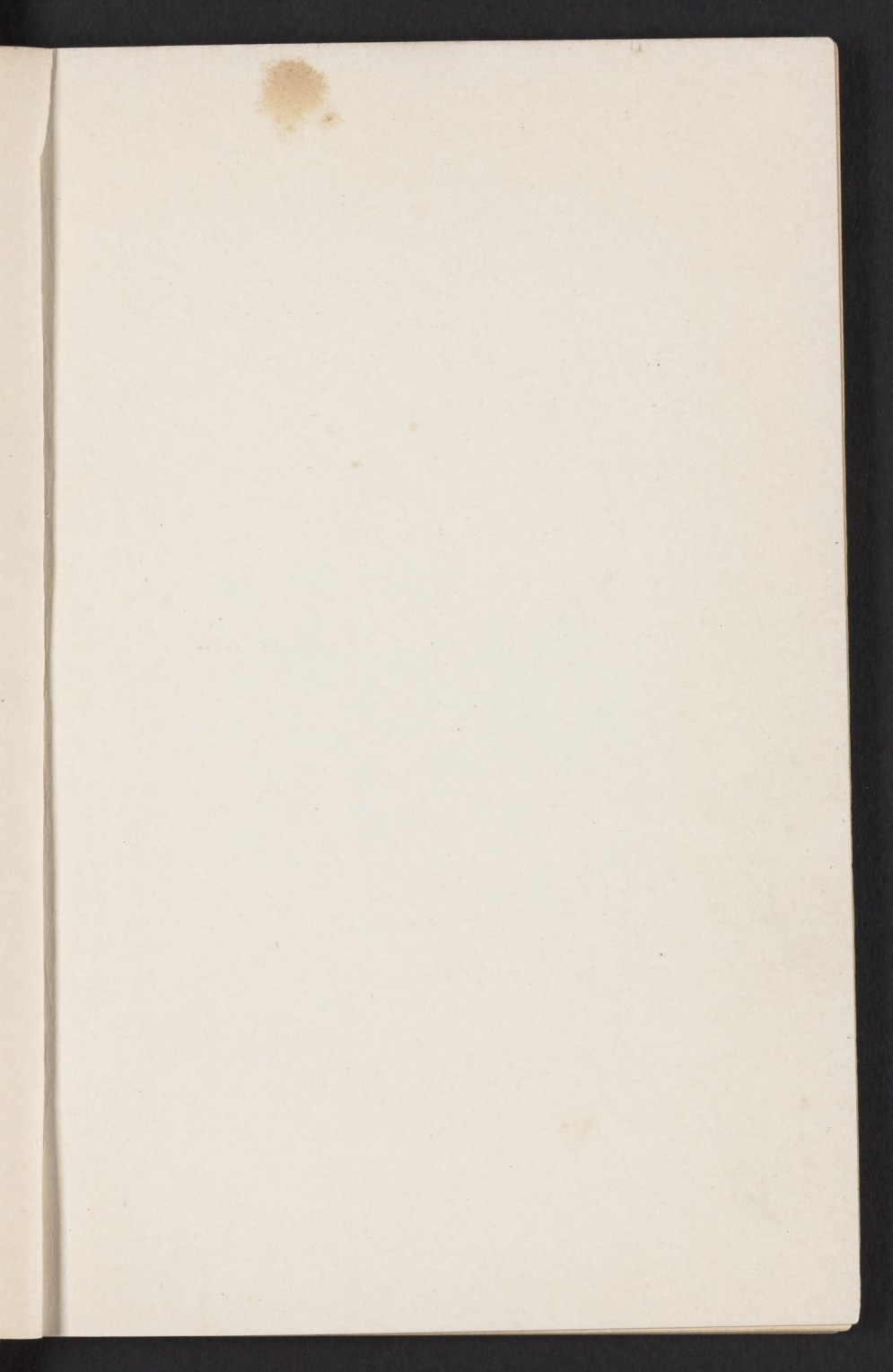
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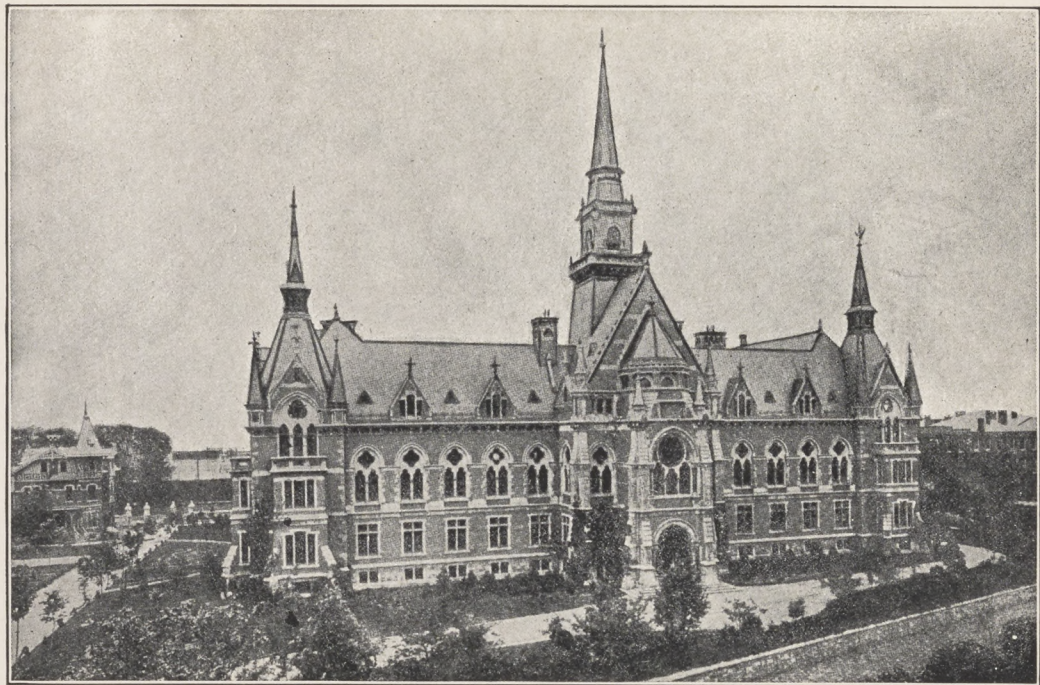
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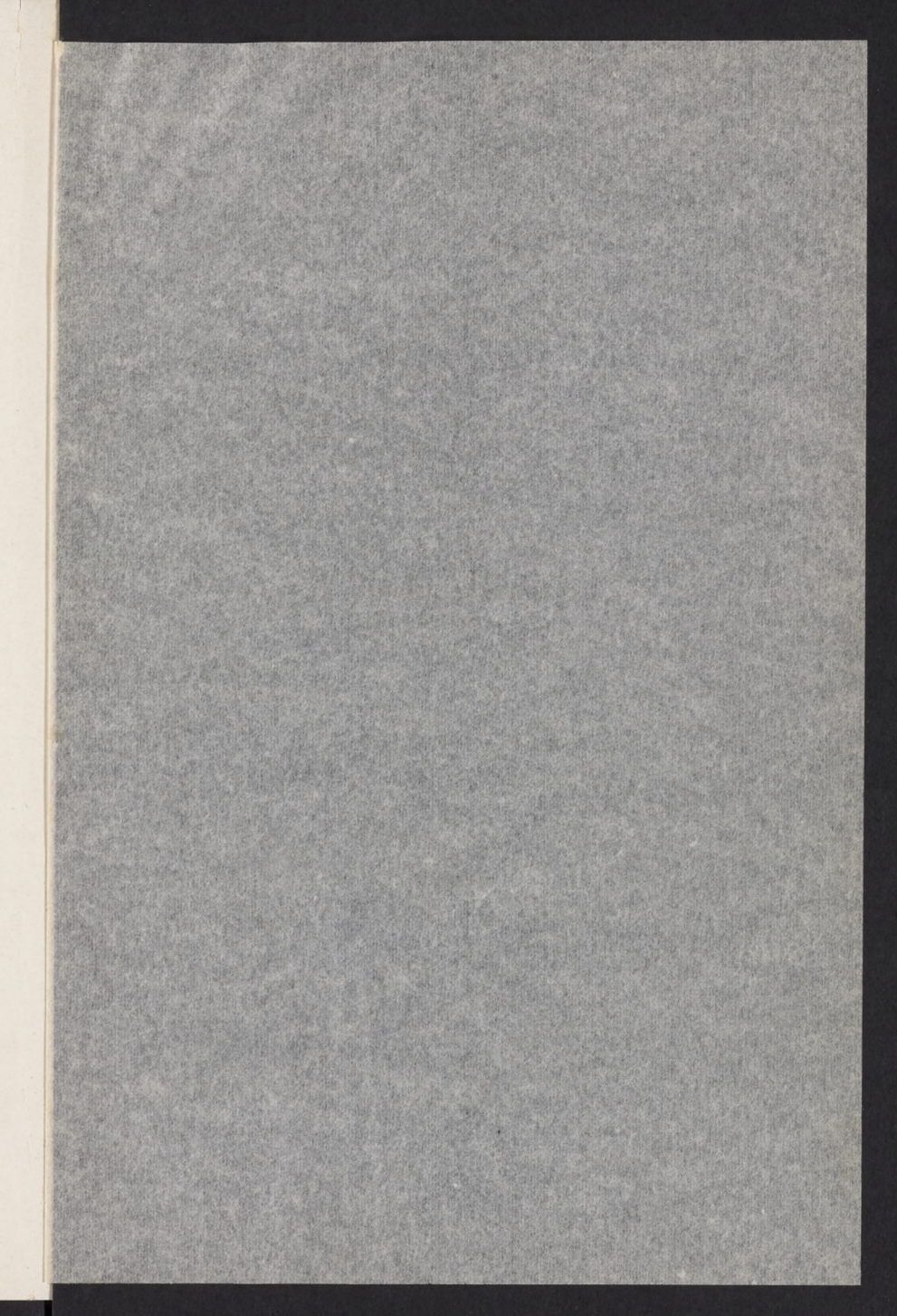


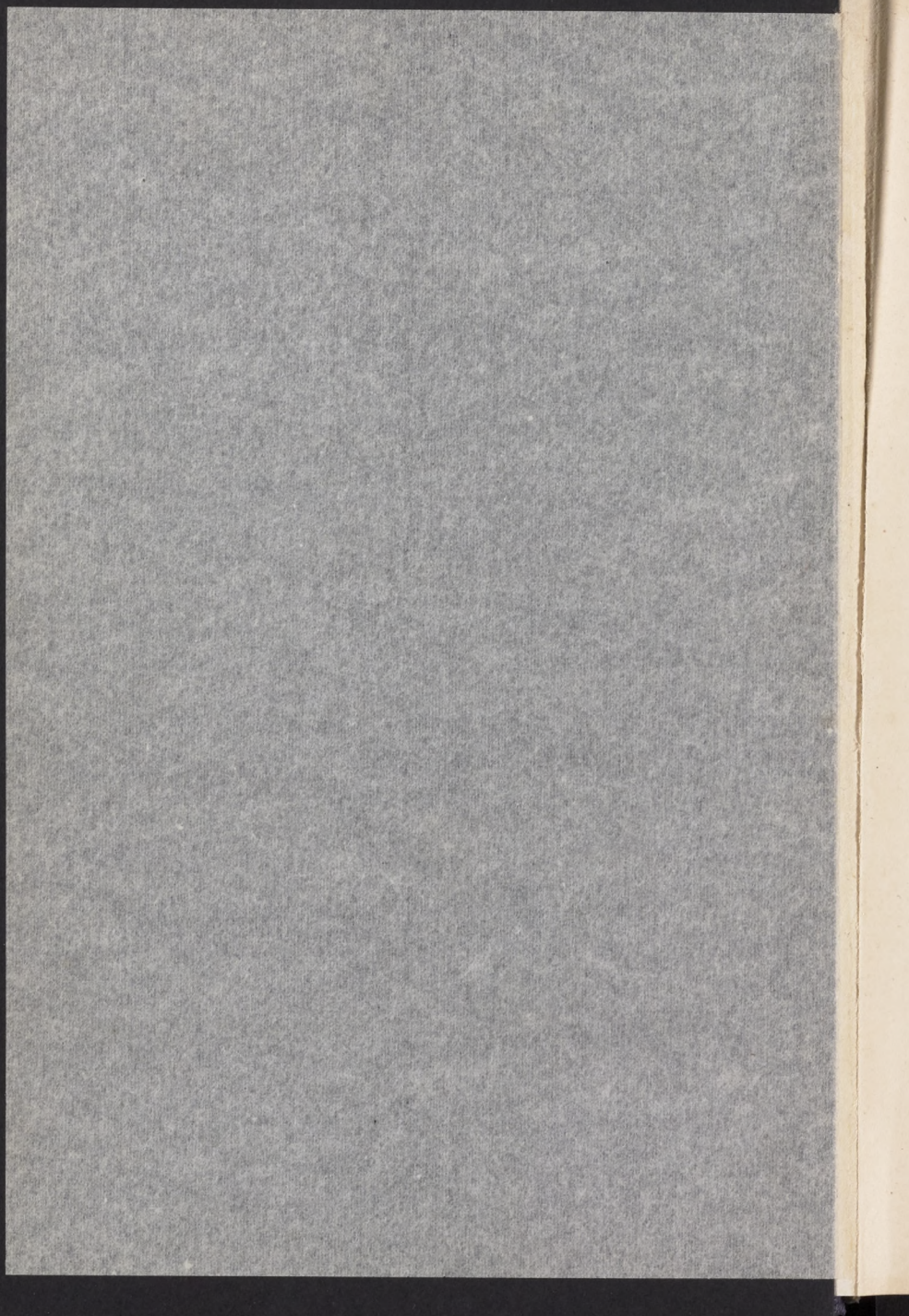






MARY J. DREXEL HOME AND PHILADELPHIA MOTHERHOUSE OF DEACONESSSES.





THE DEACONESS
AND
HER WORK

Translated from the German
OF
SISTER JULIE MERGNER

BY
MRS. ADOLPH SPAETH

By Authority of the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess
Motherhouses in America



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PREFACE

THE book of which this is a free translation was written at the request of the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, and is intended to outline the instruction, in the history and work of the female Diaconate, desirable for young women seeking the office of Deaconess. Necessarily much is left to the teacher of the Probationers, who may compress or enlarge and fill out as occasion demands.

The sources used are the well-known works of Schäfer, Wacker, Uhlhorn, Fliedner, Löhe, Meyer, Bezzel, and others. Statistics given are, for the most part, taken from the "Kaiserswerth Armen- und-Krankenfreund" (Friend of the Poor and Sick).

The reader will notice that throughout the book individuals are especially prominent. This is intentional. Our Lord works through individuals, and a captivating personality is always apt to create enthusiasm for a great cause, especially among the young.

May the Lord give His blessing to this little book, that it may be useful to the noble, sacred cause which it is intended to serve.

JULIE MERGNER.

HARRIETT R. SPAETH.

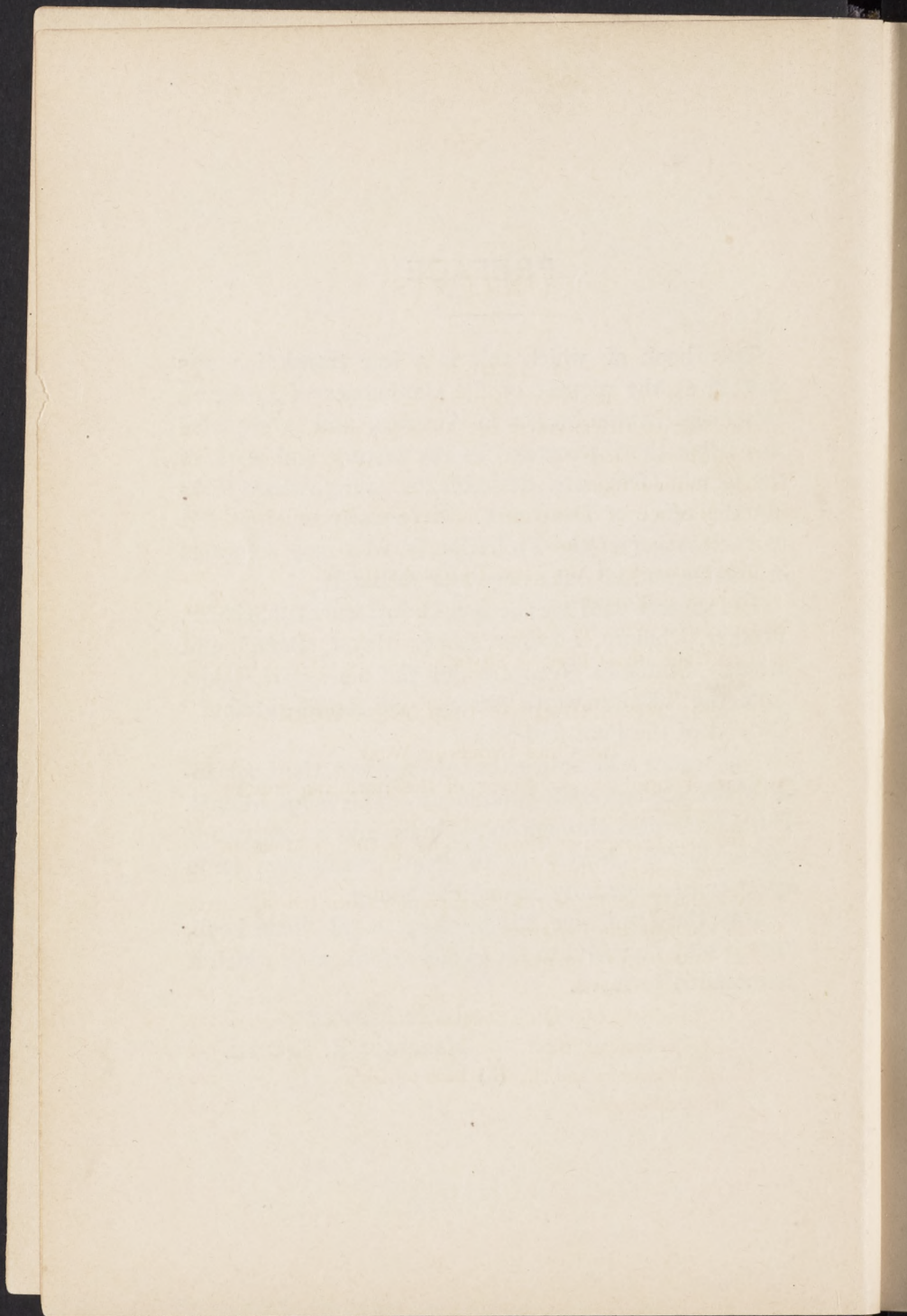
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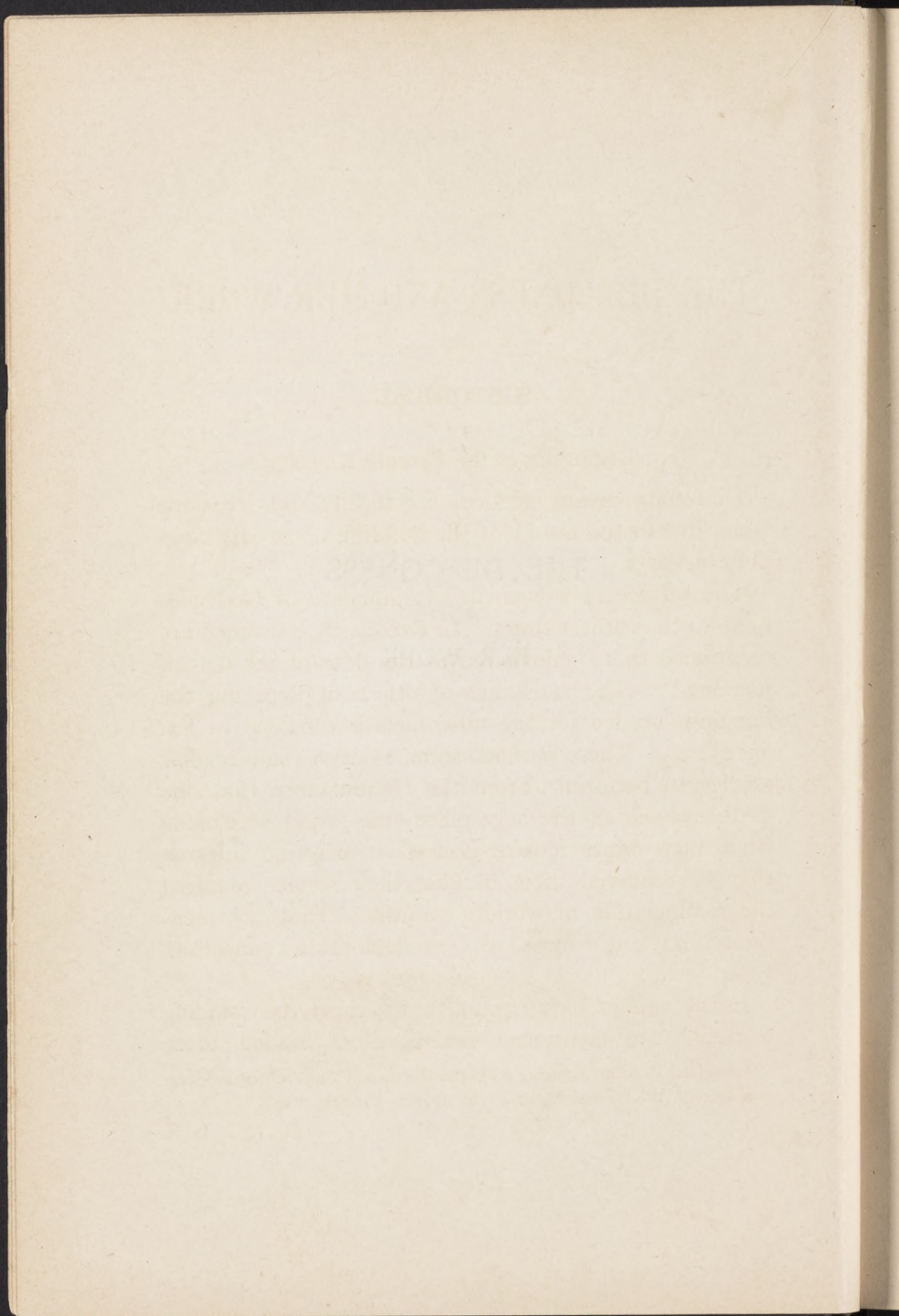
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THE DEACONESS
AND
HER WORK



THE DEACONESS AND HER WORK

I. HISTORICAL

1. Beginning of the Female Diaconate

Diaconate means service; specifically, service done from love to the Lord, for the building up of His kingdom on earth.

The service of women in the kingdom of God goes back to the earliest times. In Exodus 38: 8, women are mentioned that "ministered at the door of the tent of meeting."¹ The assistance of others in preparing the hangings needed for the tabernacle is recorded in Ex. 35: 25, 26. These women seem to have had regular service to perform. From the circumstance that one of the vessels of the holy place (the laver) was made from their brass looking-glasses, it may be inferred that they offered them because their service required the renunciation of worldly vanities. They are mentioned only once more, in very deplorable connection, I Sam. 2: 22.

In the time of Josiah and after the captivity, "singing women" are mentioned several times among those

¹ Revised Version, agreeing with the German. The Authorized Version reads, "Which assembled at the door of the tabernacle."

in the service of the temple. From such casual mention we gather, that, even in the Old Testament congregation, there was a sort of organized service of women in the Church.

Old Testament types of the deaconess are the four women with the gift of prophecy, referred to in the ancient prayer for the consecration of deaconesses, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, and Huldah (I Sam. 1, II Kings 22: 14). Miriam, the inspired sister of Moses and Aaron, is called "the prophetess." She appears as the leader of the women of Israel during the journey in the wilderness. Deborah is the judge to whom, in time of trouble, the people come for counsel and decision. She brings Barak to a consciousness of his divine call to deliver Israel from the yoke of the enemy. To the pious mother, Hannah, Israel owes the great prophet and judge, Samuel. She planted in his heart the fear of God, which kept him pure, as he grew up in an atmosphere of absolute corruption. Huldah, like the other three, retains her own modest position, but is nevertheless the prophetess to whom, as the king of Judah and his minister believe, the counsel of God concerning His people is revealed. These women are a proof that the Lord fits women also, through special gifts of the Holy Spirit, for special work, and the prophecy of Joel (3: 1) confirms this under the new covenant.

When we consider the New Testament examples of deaconesses, we gain a much clearer idea of their vocation. They are the women who ministered to the Lord during His life on earth. The first of these is Mary,

mother of the Lord; blessed among women. She calls herself the handmaid of God. She was permitted to serve the Lord as no other could. But she is only the first in a long line. Where the evangelist names Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna (Luke 8: 2, 3), he speaks of "many others," who ministered unto the Lord of their substance. Matthew mentions "many women . . . who had followed Jesus . . . ministering unto Him" (Matt. 27: 55, 56), and Mark says expressly that he does not name them all. The two sisters of Bethany, whom Jesus loved, also belong here (Luke 10: 38-42). Mary sits quietly at the Lord's feet; she has chosen the good part, and knows the right time to fold her hands. It is not a lack of capability, or Martha would not desire her help. Martha spares no trouble in serving the beloved Master. Though on this one occasion her sister is put above her, she to whom the Lord could speak such words as recorded in John 11: 25, 26, was certainly not wanting in spiritual understanding. These two pure, noble women are really the embodiment of the qualities without which no one can be a true deaconess. We love to contemplate these "noble ladies," and rejoice in their modest, womanly character. The Lord lifted up woman as a sex from almost universal neglect and contempt, and, in Mary, "exalted them of low degree." It is a cheering thought that He never had occasion to speak harshly to a woman, except in the one instance where the hard word was followed by highest recognition (Matt. 15: 21-28).

It is not until the Apostolic Era that we can speak of a

true Office of the Diaconate. It was the first branch of the Apostolic Office, according to Acts 6: 1ff., and was the result of a murmuring in the congregation. The Greek-speaking Jews complained that their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. The magnanimity of the Apostles on this occasion is worth noting.

They have learned from their Lord to be meek and lowly in heart. They at once take the blame upon themselves, and lay before the congregation a plan for effectual redress. At the request of the Apostles seven men are chosen by the people, "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." Upon them the office of the service of love is conferred by the Apostles with the laying on of hands and prayer. The Greek names of the candidates seem to imply that they were taken from the Hellenists, in order to show those who had not received their full allowance that the neglect had not been intentional slight. Thus the new office was created. Its object was: (1) To relieve the Apostles, so that they might be unhindered in following their higher vocation as ministers of the Word; (2) to provide the best possible care for the needy among the disciples. Its result, however, was a new and wonderful growth and vitality in the congregation.

The office of the diaconate was entrusted at first to men, but the obvious necessity for women also as helpers was soon felt. It appears that this help was at first rendered by volunteers. Such a helper was Tabitha (Dorcas), Acts 9: 36ff. That Peter was permitted to bring her back to life, is called by Wacker the Lord's

testimony to the estimation in which such service of women is to be held by the congregation. In several other places this voluntary service, performed by women, is mentioned in the New Testament; for example, in the well-known greeting-chapter, Rom. 16, but there are also indications of a regular, systematized service. In Rom. 16: 1, 2, Paul warmly recommends "Phebe our sister, who is a servant of the Church that is at Cenchrea . . . for she herself hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self." From this passage it plainly follows: (1) That there were officially installed deaconesses already in Paul's time; (2) that Paul approved of this, and demanded for such persons whatever they needed in the support and furtherance of their work.

Beside the deaconesses we find the Institute of Widows. Destitute widows were maintained by the congregation; and, at the same time, there was a crying need in the congregation for the help of women. What was more natural than to expect from these dependent widows service apportioned to their strength, on the principle laid down in II Thess. 3: 10? But not every widow was fitted to help in the congregation, and, therefore, certain ones were chosen for this service. In I Tim. 5: 9, 10, the Apostle Paul lays down the requirements demanded from those seeking such an important and honorable position; and, through Titus (2: 3-5), he admonishes these helpers as to the conduct befitting their station. From casual remarks of such writers in the second and third centuries, as Polycarp of Smyrna, Ignatius of Antioch, Tertullian of Carthage, and others, we learn

that the Institute of Widows had been raised to an office of honor in the Church, and that they were reckoned among the clergy. They had become the overseers and teachers of the women. Probably, in consideration of the work expected of them, the age limit gradually disappeared. In the first two centuries of the Christian Church these helpers were more numerous than the deaconesses.

2. The Female Diaconate in the Ancient Church

In the preceding section the honorable position of widows as helpers was mentioned as more wide-spread, during the first two centuries of the Church, than the actual Deaconess office. The name "widow" came to represent the position, and was, therefore, borne by single women also, who were invested with this office. But the diaconate continued to exist. Clear proof of this is found in a letter of Pliny the Younger, Governor of Bithynia, A. D. 112. This letter is a report to the Emperor Trajan, concerning the persecution of Christians, with a request for instruction how to proceed. In it he relates that he had questioned two girls called "servants," under torture, in regard to the mode of life and worship among Christians. He had chosen them as being in the very midst of the congregational life, and, therefore, of course, very well informed. This is our only direct information about the diaconate up to the end of the third century.

By that time a great change had taken place, of which

we know nothing in detail. Widowhood had fallen from its honorable position, and, instead of being helpers and overseers, the widows were mostly objects of charity. Deaconesses were found everywhere as helpers in the Church. It is assumed that the overrating of the single life had contributed to this, as only those were admitted to the office of Deaconess who had taken the vow of celibacy. Some widows were still allowed to work with the deaconesses, only such, however, as had been married but once.

From the Apostolic Constitutions, a collection of ecclesiastical statutes made in the fourth century, we obtain quite an exact knowledge of the deaconesses' work.

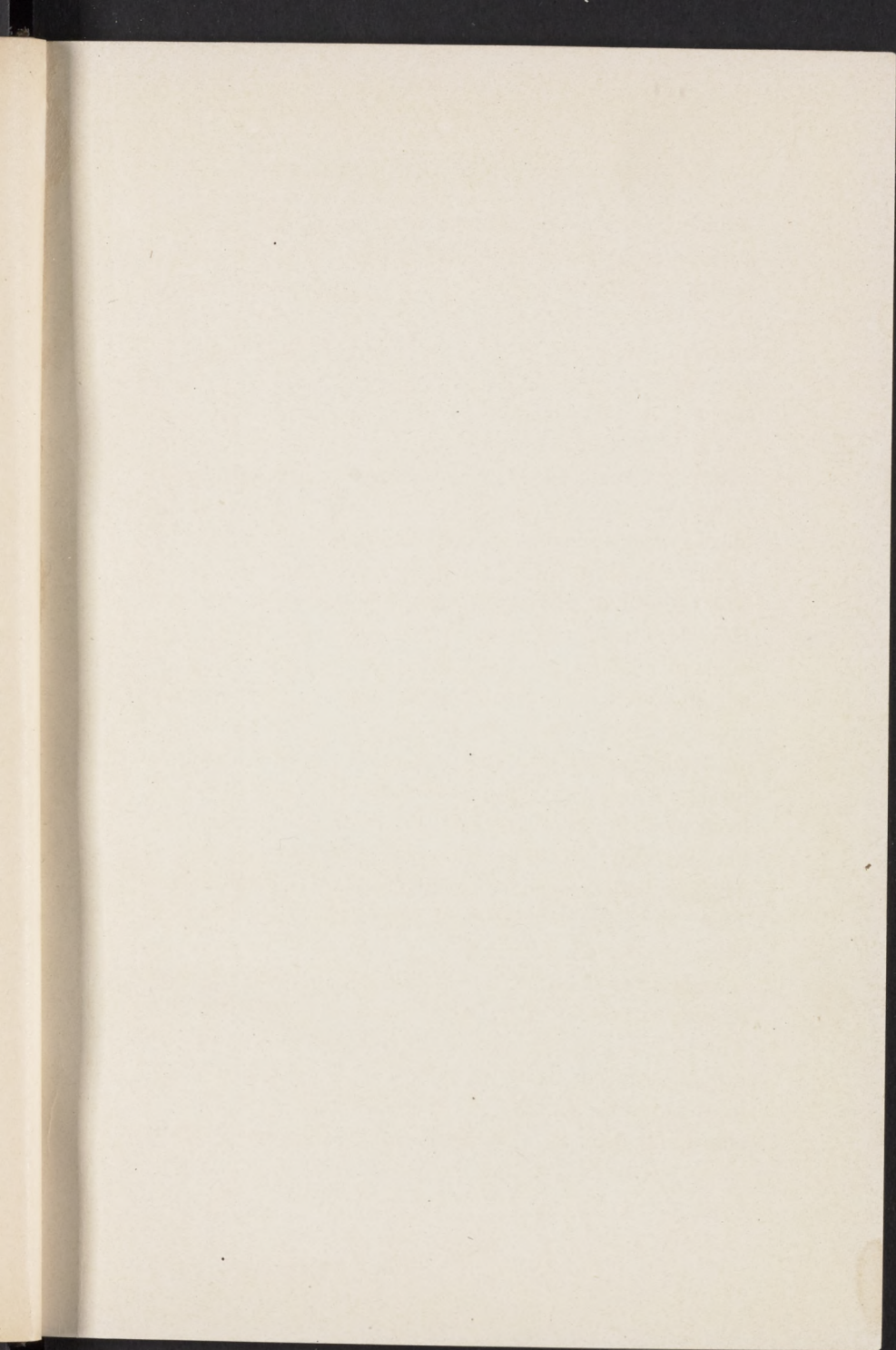
They were under the oversight and direction of the bishop, and had certain functions in connection with the public worship of the congregation. They were door-keepers at the entrances of the church appointed for women, and assigned places to women who were strangers. They acted for the bishop in his spiritual ministrations to the women of the congregation. They took some part in preparing female catechumens for baptism, and assisted at the rite itself. They also nursed sick women. In many points their work was similar to that of female missionaries of our day in Asiatic countries. In addition to these services in the church, deaconesses were also active in caring for the poor. The bishop was not allowed to send a deacon to a woman, but only a deaconess. On this point the Constitutions say, "the woman (deaconess) must be zealous in helping women. But both (deacon and deaconess) shall be ready for any

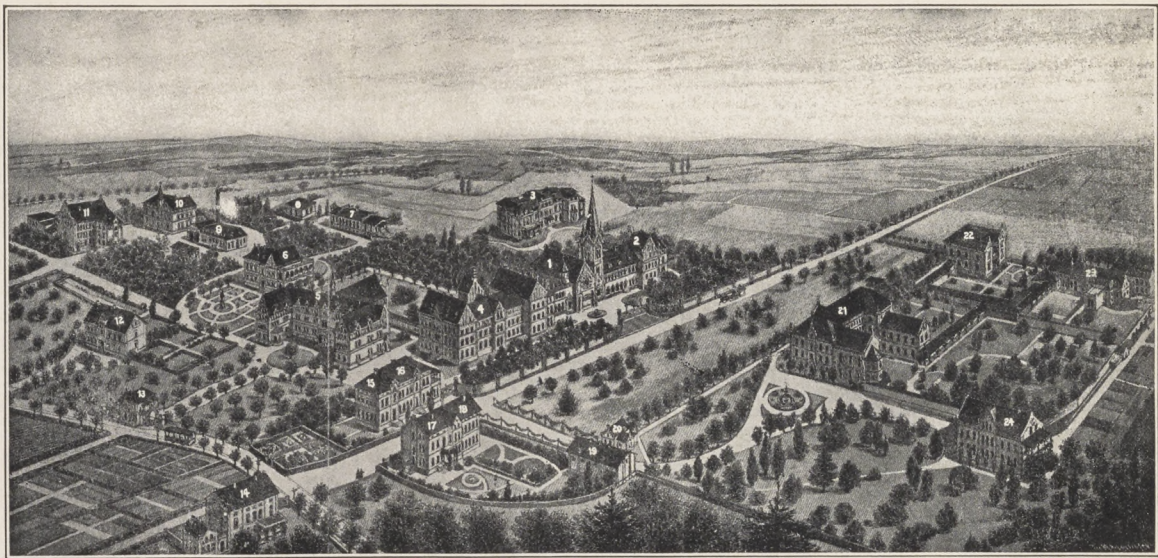
service required of them, carrying messages, going errands, and being generally helpful. They must not be ashamed to serve the poor, after the example of the Lord, 'Who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.'” Thus the diaconate was the means by which the bishop could follow the care of the poor in its minutest details.

The choice of those who should fill this office rested with the bishop. Deaconesses were counted among the clergy, and were consecrated by prayer and the laying on of hands. The prayer was as follows:

“Everlasting God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of man and woman, Thou who filledst with Thy Holy Spirit Miriam and Deborah, Hannah and Huldah; Thou who didst not disdain to permit Thine Only-begotten Son to be born of a woman; Thou who didst appoint women as doorkeepers in Thy holy tabernacle and temple; look now upon this Thy handmaid, chosen for Thy service; give her Thy Holy Spirit and purify her from all defilement of body and soul, in order that she may worthily perform the work entrusted to her, to Thy glory and to the honor of Thy Christ, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be praise and adoration forever. Amen.”

With the fourth century the female diaconate reached its highest point. From that time on it declined rapidly. The two best known among the deaconesses of that era are Macrina and Olympias. Macrina was born early in the fourth century, in Cæsaria, Asia Minor, as the eldest daughter of a wealthy and distinguished family.





THE NEW DEACONESS HOUSE AND ITS AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS ON THE FRONBERG AND THE JOHANNISBERG AT KAISERSWERTH.

(The first Motherhouse and its Related Institutions are located in the centre of the town.)

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Church. | 8. Morgue. | 14. Rectory. |
| 2. Tabernhaus (for sick and infirm sisters). | 9. Laundry and Boiler House. | 15-18. Homes of Officials. |
| 3. Feierabendhaus (for superannuated sisters). | 10. Asylum for Discharged Female Convicts and | 19. Gymnasium. |
| 4. Hospital. | Magdaleneum. | 20. Gardener's Home. |
| 5. Motherhouse. | 11. Fürsorgehaus (for imperiled girls). | 21-23. Sanitarium for Insane Women. |
| 6. Children's Hospital. | 12. Orphans' Home. | 24. House for Convalescents. |
| 7. Isolating House. | 13. Gatekeeper's Lodge. | |

She was highly gifted, and exerted a great and lasting influence on all around her. Her four brothers were brought to Christ, or kept for Him, by her. Two of them were the eminent Fathers, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa. To these distinguished men Macrina's judgment of their intellectual productions was final. They burned with eagerness to read their works to her. If her eyes brightened or even filled with tears of joy, they knew that they were a success.

In obedience to the wish of her parents, Macrina had become engaged to be married, but, after the death of her betrothed, refusing all other offers, she applied for consecration as a deaconess. Later, she established an association of unmarried women, with whom she led the spiritual and ascetic life of the community.

Olympias lived toward the end of the fourth century. She was one of the forty deaconesses who labored in Constantinople, under the famous bishop Chrysostom. Like Macrina, she was exceedingly beautiful, and possessed unlimited means. She married early, and when she became a widow at eighteen, Emperor Theodosius wished to give her in marriage to one of his relatives. She declined, however, and was consecrated by Bishop Nectarius as a deaconess. She used her great wealth most liberally for the relief of the misery around her. Later, she was very closely associated with Chrysostom, who became a spiritual father to her. After he was banished, her life was clouded with many sorrows.

Even in exile, Chrysostom still guided her through his letters. But the hatred of his enemies drove him

from place to place, until he died in a church while journeying. His last words were the motto of his life, "God be praised for everything." This was in the year 407. Olympias is said to have died about 420.

In Western lands the female diaconate appeared only here and there. Occidental custom sanctioned a much freer intercourse among men and women, and, therefore, the deaconesses were not so necessary. Also, the Institute of Widows was longer retained in the West.

After the end of the fourth century the female diaconate in the Orient also rapidly declined. The beneficence for which Macrina and Olympias were renowned had already a personal rather than an official character. The conception of the dignity of ecclesiastical position continued to rise. Up to this time widows and deaconesses had belonged to the clergy; now the high esteem in which clergymen and ordination were held had so increased that it seemed unfitting to ordain women. Hence, different Synods repeatedly forbade their ordination. Moreover, a decline in churchly life was everywhere apparent. Earnest, thoughtful spirits sought rather to flee from the world than to overcome the world.

While, on the one hand, many Christians relapsed into a worldly, voluptuous life, on the other hand, the crucifying of the flesh and the renunciation of the world were so much the more accentuated. The cloister became the refuge of pious meditation and asceticism, of study and benevolence. The deaconess gave way to the nun.

3. The Middle Ages

At the time when the structure of the female diaconate in the ancient Church was rapidly going to pieces, so that soon only a heap of ruins here and there remained, occurred the stormy period known as the migration of nations. The young and vigorous German tribes pressed in from all sides upon poor old Rome, took from her one province after another, and, finally, put an end to the Western Empire. The Eastern Empire still existed, but gradually lost all influence over the destiny of Europe. The monastic life advanced steadily from east to west. Many cloisters had arisen in Italy, France, and Great Britain. In Europe the monks were missionaries, and labored zealously for the spread of Christianity, not only in former provinces of the Roman Empire, which, through the migration, had in part returned to heathenism, but also in adjacent countries. The Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks were especially distinguished. The cloister was the missionary station for the diffusion of Christianity and civilization among heathen tribes. Also the charitable work formerly done by bishops, assisted by deaconesses, was given over more and more to the monasteries. Boniface—monk, missionary, and organizer of the German Church, the “Apostle of Germany”—sent to England for nuns to help him with the work in Germany. Among them Lioba may be named.

Still, this instance was an exception. An organized service of women in the Church existed no longer. The

monastic life shut them out more and more from any public participation in the work of that era. The origin of the cloister has been sought in the rough condition of the times, which made it unsafe even for nuns to go about freely. It is certain that they seldom took any direct part in the care of the poor and sick. But girls of the higher classes were often educated in the convents.

Over against this many women are mentioned, especially women of high rank, who, as individuals, distinguished themselves by private beneficence. To these the deaconesses, Macrina and Olympias, belonged, as well as a number of prominent Roman women. The most eminent of these is Saint Paula, who was descended from the oldest nobility of ancient Rome. Out of love for the Lord and concern for her own salvation she distributed her wealth among the poor in generous measure.

"Who among the poor but has been interred in clothing from her? Or among the sick, but has been comforted by her?" exclaimed Jerome.

She is only one among many. These women gave also their personal service. They laid off their splendid clothing, and, dressed in the sombre garb of the nuns, nursed the sick themselves, and were not afraid of the meanest work.

Later, the women of German princely houses were prominent in such active philanthropy. One of the most distinguished of these is Matilda, wife of the first Saxon king. Among the many institutions founded by her were a number of convents, which she intended

for "peaceful strongholds, and nurseries where a holy, Christian life could be cultivated in a savage, turbulent age." We see that the idea of a mission was still there; the cloister was not yet an end in itself. Several of Matilda's daughters and grand-daughters took the veil. Matilda's active hand was in everything: at home, her servants were the objects of her motherly care; outside, she sought out the poor and went herself to visit the sick.

Still more celebrated, about three centuries later, was Saint Elisabeth. A Hungarian princess, betrothed in early girlhood to the son of the Landgrave of Thuringia, and taken to his court, she grew up at the Wartburg in splendid surroundings. She was married at fourteen and a widow at twenty. Her husband died 1227, in Italy, on a crusade. Her brother-in-law seized the government, banished her with her three children, and for two years she wandered about miserably in bitterest poverty. At last she received the castle in Marburg on the Lahn as dower-house. She lived, however, in a wretched hovel, and used her means to found a hospital and home for the poor, in which she could serve the needy and wretched to her heart's content. After her husband's death she wore the gray dress of a Sister of the Third Class in the Franciscan order. Her confessor was the gloomy Dominican, Conrad of Marburg. He induced her to part from her children and to undergo the severest penance. She died in 1231, only twenty-four years old, and was canonized four years after her death. Over her grave stands the magnificent Church of Saint Elisabeth

in Marburg. Elisabeth has always been a favorite of the German nation. As Evangelical Christians, we must regret that, through the perverted guidance of her confessor, she became in many respects a victim to the errors of her time. But in her burning love to the Saviour, in the utter self-abnegation by which she sought to serve Him in His poor and helpless brethren, she is to us also a shining example.

In the days of the great Pope Innocent III, an awakening, reaching far and probing deep, began with Francis of Assisi, founder of the begging order of the Franciscans. He considered it his task to restore the Gospel. The Franciscans are not confined within monastery walls. They go out into all the world to preach the Gospel. But the monk's life is their ideal of the Christian life. In the precepts laid down by St. Francis, to live means to live according to the Gospel, for his precepts flowed from the spring of the pure Gospel. The mendicant orders carry the cloister out into the world. For, as every one must live according to the Gospel, but not every one can become a monk, this opportunity must be given also to those who remain in the world. To this end we have the so-called Third Rule. Those who live after this rule are designated as Tertians. The Third Rule of St. Francis, adherents of which led the monastic life without leaving the world, found great approval, especially among women. It helped to bring about a new conception of life among Christian women.

One proof that new ways were being broken in the world of women is found in the Societies of Beguines.

They arose in the end of the twelfth century. Numerous widows of crusaders who never returned, and other isolated women, sought refuge and maintenance in the Beguine homes. They lived in groups of small houses, marked by a cross over the door, and often surrounded by a wall. Of rules and regulations they had only such as are necessary for those in community. Their churchly life was zealous and devout. They were under the direction of a clergyman and a matron, generally chosen by the sisters, who also decided for themselves as to the admission of new sisters. At any time they could withdraw and could marry again. At first they were merely required to dress simply; later, they wore a sort of uniform. Where they were wealthy, they kept full control over their property. Most of them, however, were poor, and when endowments and benefactions fell short, they supplied the deficiency by the work of their own hands. They were employed in nursing, mostly in private houses. The poor were cared for without charge. Some of them were engaged in educating girls. They were very wide-spread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but degenerated later; and probably partly on this account suffered much from hatred and persecution.

In the Netherlands a few were found as late as the nineteenth century. In many respects their organization resembled that of the deaconesses; but the object of the Beguine societies was the care of those who needed to be cared for; their work was only incidental. The associations of deaconesses are formed for system-

atic united work for the kingdom of God—therein lies the difference.

Two hundred years later we find the Sisters of the Common Life. They, as well as the Brothers of the Common Life, honor as their spiritual father the Mystic, Gerrit Groote of Deventer, in the Netherlands. They were much like the Beguines, but their association was closer, and they had their home and purse in common. They laid more stress than the Beguines on the duty of working. Also the religious tendency was more strongly developed. The little book of Thomas à Kempis, "The Imitation of Christ," which had its origin in these circles, gives us an insight into the spirit of their communities.

The Order of Bridgetines must also be mentioned in this connection, although its members were nuns. It was founded in Sweden by St. Bridget, a noble lady. Her daughter was the first abbess. The order was intended, by the founder, to help in the restoration of the Church in the North. The object of the Order of Bridgetines was to exert an influence over Christian people, and to do efficient work in the outside world. Here the new idea is for the first time clearly expressed, and, we may fairly say, the Church before the Reformation has already found the way to secure to single women safety and freedom while employing their gifts in the service of the congregation. It is the conventual association, without the cloister. But more than two centuries were yet to elapse before anything in this direction came actually into practical working.

4. The Reformation

The Reformation is primarily not a reformation of practices, but a reform in religion. Its object is the renewal of the very first principles of the inner life. To Luther, everything depends on finding the right attitude toward God. He is convinced that the alteration in morals will follow of itself. The Reformation is the return to the doctrine of the great Apostle Paul, justification by faith. "Faith is a living, daring confidence in the grace of God so sure that it would die for it a thousand times. And such confidence and apprehension of divine grace make us cheerful, bold, and joyous toward God and every creature; which is the work of the Holy Ghost in faith. Hence, without compulsion, a man is willing and glad to do good to every one, to serve every one, to suffer all things, for the love of God and to His praise, who has shown such grace to him; so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, yea, just as impossible as it would be to separate burning and shining from fire." These are Luther's words, as well as the following sentences, in which he lays more stress upon love:

"A Christian does not live to himself, but in Christ and his neighbor. Through faith he rises above himself in God. From God he descends again, beneath himself through love, but abides always in God and in the divine love." And, "Out of faith flow love to God and joy in Him, and out of love a spontaneous, happy life, in the free service of one's neighbor."

Luther maintained that a right life could only proceed from a true faith, and history has verified this; although he himself, to his bitter sorrow, was permitted to see only scant fruit of the moral regeneration in his nation, but rather a great deal of moral corruption. The Gospel preached by Luther finally lifted the nations who accepted it to a higher plane of morality. But it was a long time until this effect was fully wrought.

What was Luther's position toward the diaconate, especially toward the female diaconate? In regard to the diaconate in general, Luther wished to have, in addition to the spiritual guide of the congregation, other officers appointed to manage the property of the church.

"After that of the preacher, there is no higher office in the church than to administer its income justly and honestly, so that poor Christians who are unable to earn their own living can have their needs supplied." But Luther did not wish to undertake this organization himself. He says, "If the people cared for it, it would be a good thing to begin by dividing a city into four or five parts, giving to each a preacher and several deacons, who would see in their own division to the preaching and the administration of church property; would visit the sick and needy, so that no one should suffer want. But we have not the right persons. Therefore, I will not venture to begin until our Lord God makes the Christians."

It has been said that Luther should have reformed the cloisters instead of abolishing them. What could be done through the Word of God, that he did; more than

that was not in his power. It was not so easy for him to appear as an organizer, for his position had no backing of ecclesiastical authority. In this respect the circumstances of the Swiss reformers were much more favorable. Luther's only commission was the spoken and written Word; and even when his powerful influence extended beyond the limits of his spiritual sphere, who shall say that it was his mission to reconstruct the diaconate out of the cloister? He had something else to do; as it was, the amount of work which he accomplished would have given ample occupation to three ordinary men.

And yet it is a weighty question for us, what position our great Father in the Faith took toward the female diaconate. We may, in the first place, recall what he said, in general, of the endowments of women. "The inclination to pity others is greater in the female sex than among men." "Women who love godliness generally have special grace to comfort others and to soothe their pain." Also, when occasion offered, Luther recommended female teachers for girls' schools. In our time that seems to us very much a matter of course, but it was not so in those days.

"But," say those who oppose the female diaconate, "Luther condemned the cloister and the monastic life most severely. Associations resembling the Romish orders in their organization would surely not have had his approval."

Certainly Luther used very sharp language against the cloisters. But his condemnation was not for the

external form of monastic life, but for its tenor and substance. Indisputable evidence of this has been preserved.

In the year 1532 the town council of Herford, Westphalia, wished to break up the Brothers' and Sisters' houses, and to compel the occupants to give up their order and dress. The superiors turned to Luther and Melanchthon, begging for help. Thereupon Luther wrote to the council, "Undoubtedly you are aware that unnecessary innovations in divine things are very dangerous. Whereas, then, the brothers and sisters lead a reputable life and have an honest, discreet community, truly esteeming and holding the pure Word as they have done from the beginning among you, I would kindly beg your Honors, not to permit them to suffer any uneasiness or animosity on this account; and that they may wear their dress, and keep up all laudable customs not contrary to the Gospel, for such cloisters and brotherhoods please me beyond measure. Would God that all cloisters were like this; then would all cities and countries be so much the better. I expect your Honors to know how to deal with those involved in this affair in a proper and Christian way, seeing that they are not injurious either to the pastors or parish, but rather are very useful and elevating." To the Superior, Montanus, and to one of the brothers, Luther wrote, "Grace and peace! I have received the communication from yourself and Gerhard, and have written to your town-council in regard to this matter, that they should protect and defend your community; for your mode of life,

teaching, and living according to the pure Gospel of Christ, pleases me exceedingly, and I would gladly see more of such cloisters, now and hereafter. I dare not wish much, but if everywhere similar conditions prevailed, the Church would be too blessed for this life. Your garb, and other praiseworthy customs maintained heretofore, do no harm to the Gospel, but rather are useful to it, over against those dissolute, unbridled Christians, who at present only know how to pull down, but not how to build up again."

Like many other thoughts of this great man, Luther's opinion here expressed received no further attention at the time. His contemporaries, and still more the generations which followed him, who often tried to be more Lutheran than Luther, fell far short of his magnanimity. Nevertheless, these thoughts were living seed which sprang up and bore fruit in due season.

Apart from a very few insignificant attempts, nothing was done in the Lutheran Church during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the line of organized beneficence, although the awful misery of the Thirty Years' War especially, and of the period that followed it, would have given ample opportunity for it. Pietism showed the first indication of a tendency to practical Christianity, but the Lutheran Church had still long to wait before her deaconesses appeared.

In the pre-Reformation communions of the Waldenses and the Slavic Church we find a disposition to restore the female diaconate. The Apostolic congregation of the earliest Christianity was looked upon by them as the

ideal for which they strove in organizing their own, and they sought to imitate it also by appointing parish deaconesses.

More important, however, was the experiment in the Reformed Church. The Genevan Agenda considers the office of the diaconate as one of the four which are indispensable to the Church. Here the important factor of personal effort and helpfulness for the first time receives its full value. Relief by individuals continued to be more or less practised, and the churchly character of the care for the poor and sick was still generally recognized. But even here the point was not yet reached of providing institutions for the training of deacons and deaconesses. The Synods on the lower Rhine repeatedly took up the question of establishing the office of Deaconess, as it was in the Ancient Church, and resolutions for and against it were frequently passed. The plan was never generally carried out, but there were deaconesses in congregations here and there. They were especially numerous in Amsterdam, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The office was not, however, a vocation for life, but only an appointment for a certain time, and modeled after the widows and deaconesses of the ancient Church. The persons chosen were single women, or even married women, who were not too heavily burdened with domestic duties. They lived at home and followed their usual occupation, at the same time filling their office by relieving the poor, exactly as the deacons did.

A report from the Chronicle of the Pilgrim Fathers

before their emigration to America is interesting. "There were about 300 communicants in Amsterdam, and they had two excellent men (Smith and Robinson) as pastors and teachers, four respectable men as deacons, and an aged widow as deaconess, who served them for many years, although she was sixty years old when she was chosen. She filled her position admirably, and was an ornament to the congregation. She generally sat in a suitable place in the church, with a small birch rod in her hand, which held the little children in great awe, and kept them from disturbing the meeting. She diligently visited those who were sick and feeble, especially women, and also, when need was, our girls and young wives, watchful where she could help others, according as each one's necessity demanded. And if they were poor she collected what they needed from those who were able to give, or notified the deacon of their condition. She was obeyed as a Mother in Israel and a servant of Christ."

We must mention yet the deaconesses of the Menonites in the Netherlands, from whom Fliedner received his first impulse. The Moravians revived the institution in 1745, as it had already existed among their predecessors, the Slavic congregations. But with these deaconesses their office was still only a secondary matter, not a vocation to which their whole life was devoted.

5. The Renewal in the Romish Church of the Ecclesiastical Service of Women

While on the evangelical side nothing was evolved beyond pitiful attempts, and even the efforts of the German Catholics in the field of women's work in the Church remained absolutely without fruit, in France the beneficent life flourished abundantly. France, the fatherland of the orders of Cluny and Citeaux, and of the nursing Order of the Holy Ghost, became also the fatherland of the Sisters of Mercy.

After the close of the wars of religion in France followed a period of restoration. A number of highly gifted and truly pious men and women succeeded in lifting the Catholic Church from the depths to which it had sunk. One of the most prominent of these is Vincent de Paul, who founded the Society of the Sisters of Mercy, an epoch-making act for the work of philanthropy.

Vincent was a peasant's son, born April 24, 1576, in Pouy in Gascony. He attended a school of the Franciscans, and was ordained a priest. Temptations, which threatened to make him doubt his own salvation, he overcame by devoting himself so much the more zealously to the service of the sick in the Hospital de la Charité, and when, one day, he felt himself utterly forsaken, he conquered this feeling by a vow to devote himself and his whole life to the service of the poor. Thenceforth this thought directed all his actions. During a summer spent in the country, as tutor in the family of M. de Gondy, he learned to understand the terribly

neglected spiritual condition of the common people. With Madame de Gondy, he tried to think of a remedy for this. The result was the Institution of Priests for the Congregation of the Mission, who, with the help of the bishops and pastors, were to re-awaken a Christian and churchly life among the common people. Furthermore, the plan included the uplifting of the clergy themselves. These efforts were successful, and became, unknown to Vincent, the preparation for the revival of active philanthropy.

The extremity of a poor family prompted him to ask aid for them from the pulpit in the congregation of Chatillon. In response to this appeal the family was so overwhelmed with gifts that Vincent saw the necessity of a system, without which one would receive too much while others were famishing, and founded a society of women, married and single, for the local care of the poor and sick. In other places similar societies soon arose, and the mission priests eagerly promoted this work. But even these societies proved unsatisfactory. Many took up the work with enthusiasm at first, but finally left to their servants what was necessary to be done. This gave Vincent the idea of training single women and sending them to the help of the societies. The first applicant was a gifted young country girl. She became the first Sister of Mercy. After a short time she died while nursing cases of plague.

It soon became evident that the assistants must be better trained and organized. For this purpose Vincent found in Madame Le Gras a character eminently

gifted for the post in every respect. On the 25th of March, 1634, she took the vow to devote her life to this work. The sisters, however, had no rules yet, and only in 1655 became a community, with civil and ecclesiastical recognition. In 1668, eight years after Vincent's death, followed the Papal sanction.

What had been Vincent's desire? At first his ideas took practical shape very gradually. The "*Filles de la Charité*" were not to be bound to any single hospital, but were to form a well-trained body of sisters, ready to step in wherever their skilful service was needed for any kind of philanthropic work. In the Middle Ages there were sisterhoods connected with specific orders and appointed to work in certain hospitals, but they occupied a very subordinate position. As already stated, in mediæval times, in the organized work of beneficence women stepped back. For the Sisters of Mercy, on the contrary, the house to which they belonged was the motherhouse, where they were trained and then sent out. They found their occupation outside, in hospitals, in homes of the congregation, in prisons, among the poor and sick, the neglected children, the fallen, and wherever else they were needed. Thus the full significance of woman's work of beneficence came to be understood for the first time. In such work of love Vincent de Paul pointed out to woman her proper place. He says on this subject: "For eight hundred years women have had no public office in the Church. Formerly there were deaconesses; since the time of Charlemagne, by the hidden counsel of Providence, they have ceased to ex-

ist. Now hath God called certain women, and made them mothers of neglected children, managers of hospitals, and distributors of alms." And Madame Le Gras says: "It is plain that in our century Divine Providence intends to use our sex as its instrument, in order to show clearly that it alone will mightily help the afflicted nations to their salvation."

Vincent never tires of emphasizing the fact that work is the aim for which those who came under his influence were associated. "Let us love God, but with the strength of our arm, and in the sweat of our brow. . . . In the Church we must work, for the Church is a harvest field, she needs laborers, but only those who will really work. To pray, to withdraw into solitude, to lose ourselves in the Divine, all that is good; but then we must go out again and work."

But, at the same time, Vincent warns against the desire of overdoing. It is a temptation of the devil, which he uses to deceive pious souls. He induces them to do more than they can, in order that, later on, they may not be able to do anything more at all. The Holy Spirit directs us to act circumspectly, only to do according to our ability, but to continue steadfastly in what we do.

Vincent was a strong character, with immense power of endurance. His piercing glance went to the bottom of things, and paid no attention to secondary matters. His fame as a good listener is preserved. He never interrupted any one while he was speaking. He possessed the great gift of reaching and moving hearts with

a few words. Cautious in speech, he was also slow in action. He never ruined his cause by undue haste, but steered quietly and safely for the object he had in view. He was a master in the art of waiting until the right moment came, and then bringing all his energy to bear.

"We must let God act, and wait in humility, dependent on the command of Providence." He never tried to persuade any one to join in his work, either as Mission Priest or as Sister of Mercy. "It is not our affair, but it is for God to select His laborers, and to call whomsoever He wishes to call. We have only to pray that God will send laborers, and to live so that our example may draw them." The foundation on which this quietness rested was trust in the Divine Providence. Vincent and his followers held themselves to be only instruments to be used in carrying out the purposes of Providence. Thus, trust in God was to Vincent the very soul of his labor.

Everything that Vincent established resulted from some need. Only that which was most necessary was ever undertaken. Nothing was makeshift; everything grew under his hands, and each new work sprang naturally out of the last. He never began by making rules; only as experience was gained did the statutes and regulations follow which were founded on it. But, when the rules were once given, they were exact and appropriate, covering the minutest details, and throughout imbued with the singular combination of burning enthusiasm and sober wisdom which belonged to his character.

Ever before his eyes was some great aim to be reached, no matter what it cost. He demanded from the sisters unqualified surrender, even of life if need be, but at the same time all regulations were most carefully weighed, to make sure that no sister should be overtaxed with work; explicit directions were given for avoiding danger of infection, and in every undertaking involving the financial side exact calculations were made.

Vincent insisted that the sisters were no nuns. That would have hindered them in fulfilling their vocation of serving the poor and sick. They did not, however, need a smaller, but rather a greater, measure of Christian virtues than the nuns, because they were more exposed to temptation.

"The houses of the sick are their cloister; their cell is a wretched room, often only rented; their chapel is the parish church; their seclusion is obedience; their grated window is the fear of God; their veil is modesty. They must take pains to lead holy lives, and work out most carefully their own perfectibility, by uniting the inward practice of a spiritual life with the outward occupations of Christian love." Thus they also were under the obligation to poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Sister of Mercy should often ask herself, "For what purpose has God instituted the Association of the 'Filles de la Charité'?" in order to reply, "To the glory of the Lord Jesus, to serve Him in His poor, and to do whatever God may appoint for me." Withal, she must always look upon it as undeserved grace that she is in this position and allowed to labor. It must be im-

pressed upon her that she is not only to relieve the bodily ills of the poor, but, above all, to help their souls.

The founding of the Sisters of Mercy is a part of the work of restoring churchly life in France, to which belongs also the conversion of heretics. Vincent looked upon the conversion of Protestants as one of the chief objects of his missionaries and sisters; successes of this kind filled him with triumphant joy. His character was inflamed with love, but against heretics he was hard and severe, for he was a son of the Church after the Council of Trent, which looked upon the suppression of the Reformation as its main problem. The idea that the sisters acquired merit in the sight of God by their work was very strongly declared by Vincent when opportunity offered, and the reward was pictured in glowing colors, but he never claimed the first place for it.

The form of government for the association caused Vincent much concern. Finally, he arranged for the choice of one of the sisters as Mother Superior by a majority of votes taken every three years. After three years she could be chosen again, but only for one term. She had the assistance of three sisters, whom she was obliged to consult. The sisters owed obedience to her; she herself was under the direction of the Superior of the Mission. The sisters took vows, but always for one year only. Every year they renewed their vows, but only when proposed by the Mother Superior, and with the approval of the Superior of the Mission. By this means it was easy to get rid of incapable sisters.

The sisters trained by Vincent and Madame Le Gras were mostly gifted, piously inclined country girls, and became indeed able workers. They labored in unselfish love, ready even to sacrifice their lives. They held fast to the principle laid down again and again by Vincent, that they were there for the poor and not for the rich. When, in 1652, three sisters were sent to Poland, the Queen of Poland wished to keep one of them in attendance upon herself. But she absolutely refused, with the words, "We have given ourselves to God, for the service of the poor."

The association grew very rapidly. At Vincent's death it had twenty-eight houses. Forty-six years later the number is given as three hundred. The example of Vincent also called many similar societies into being. They were formed partly for instruction, partly for the care of the poor and sick, partly for both combined.

While philanthropy was thus flourishing in France and other Latin lands, Germany was suffering from the fearful Thirty Years' War and its consequences, and the Catholic Church of Germany remained almost out of touch with this abundant vitality. In our day, on the contrary, the beneficent activity of Catholic women has greatly developed in every country, especially here in America, while in France, their birthplace, most of these societies of women, particularly such as were engaged in education, have been banished from the land.

To Vincent de Paul belongs the credit of being the first, after the long pause of the Middle Ages, to organize and inspire Christian women for the work of benefi-

cence. In many things we cannot follow him, for he was a son of his Church, but enough remains in which the female diaconate can learn from him and can emulate his example.¹

6. The Founding of the First Deaconess House

The time after the Napoleonic wars in Germany is called the period of re-awakening of the life of faith. In the days of deepest national distress and wide-spread personal wretchedness rationalism had been tried and found wanting. Bitter need drove many back to the living God, and when the fortunes of Napoleon changed, and the arrogant victor became the conquered fugitive, the glory was given to God. This tendency continued after the war, though not quite to the same degree. Sudden awakening and conversion were not unusual, and laymen especially were carried along by the movement, while at first the clergy and ecclesiastical authorities held themselves rather aloof. Those who were like-minded consorted with one another. Even the differences in confession were often ignored, where there was oneness through faith in the Saviour. Probably at no other time has there been such a frank mutual recognition of whatever is good in the different confessions. The Protestant, Baron von Stein, openly praises the Sisters of Mercy, and desires to see such societies in the Protestant Church. Somewhat later the Catholic Bishop and Cardinal, Diepenbrock, sends brothers to

¹ From Uhlhorn, "Die Christliche Liebestaetigkeit."

the evangelical Rough House in order that they may learn there. During this time the desire arose, with renewed strength, for the restoration of the female diaconate.

Quite independently of each other, four different persons began the agitation of this subject, between the years 1815 and 1835. Pastor F. Kloenne published a paper, "The Resurrection of the Deaconesses of the Ancient Church in our Women's Societies"—that is, the societies which had done so much during the exigency of war. Kloenne's plan was to choose deaconesses from the married or single women of the congregation, in addition to the deacons, and, under the oversight of the Presbytery, to give them charge of the work among the poor and sick. Count von der Recke-Volmerstein was already considering the erection of an institution for the training of deaconesses. His plans were received with great delight by the Crown Prince of Prussia, afterward King Frederick William IV, who saw in the revival of the order of deaconesses the filling of a want which he had long felt in the evangelical Church.

The great minister von Stein, mentioned above, to whom Prussia owed in a large measure her restoration after the misery of Napoleon's despotism, had become familiar with the work of the Sisters of Mercy, and had been deeply impressed by it. In conversation with the father of Pastor von Bodelschwingh he expressed, with great warmth, one of his favorite ideas, namely, to have institutions similar to that of the Sisters of Mercy founded in the Protestant Church. He also wrote to Amalie Sieveking on this subject, comparing the quiet

happiness and the blessed work of the Sisters of Mercy with the aimless, discontented lives of so many single women among the evangelical Christians as they felt old age approaching.

Amalie Sieveking since her eighteenth year had been thinking of founding such an association. When cholera broke out in Hamburg, she set the precedent to women of Germany in a deed of bravery. She called upon her sister-women to join her in taking care of cholera patients, and, when no one answered her call, she offered herself alone for service in the cholera hospital. On December 13, 1831, the first cholera patient was received and Amalie entered with her, to continue at her post until the epidemic was stamped out. Even earnest Christians considered this step eccentric, while others judged still more harshly. But after a few days the internal management of the hospital was given over to Amalie by the doctors, and, through the benedictions of the sick and dying, she was fully assured that she was acting in accordance with the will of God.

Soon after leaving the hospital she succeeded in gaining a few co-laborers; with these she formed a Society for the Care of the Poor and Sick, which did a great and blessed work. The association was imitated in many cities of northern Germany. Later, Fliedner tried twice to secure Amalie, once as Superior in Kaiserswerth, and again for Bethany in Berlin, but she would not give up her work in Hamburg.

Strong efforts to have women take part in public philanthropic work were also made by the English

Quakeress, Elisabeth Fry. She is known through her work among prisoners, the beginning of a reform in the prisons, which had been greatly neglected until then. She labored by word and example, and was also in sympathy with Fliedner, Wichern, and Amalie Sieveking.

None of the above-mentioned plans, apparently so full of promise, were realized. The diaconate was to be renewed from a small beginning, like unto a grain of mustard seed, and Theodore Fliedner, the pastor of a poor little congregation, was the instrument chosen by God for this purpose. He was born on the 21st of January, 1800, in a parsonage in the Taunus, the fourth child in a family of twelve. When he was thirteen years old he lost his father. Friends took charge of the numerous children, who were entirely without means, and Theodore, with an elder brother, was able to attend the gymnasium. The great poverty of his youth taught Fliedner perseverance and endurance, a rigorous self-government, and the art of making a very little reach a long way, an education of great use to him later.

At seventeen he entered the university. As in his father's home, so here also rationalism prevailed. Fliedner says later, "One thing I held fast, I did not deny the miracles and resurrection of Christ. Otherwise I must have considered Him as deceived or a deceiver, and that was against my moral sense."

Walking tours, which he undertook with incredibly little money, gave pleasure and instruction to the students. Over against the plans of his comrades for

the improvement of the world his sober words were, "First let us all become better, then it will soon be better around us." In 1820 he passed his examination, and came to Cologne as tutor. There the influence of Krafft, a member of the Consistory, was of great benefit to him. On the 18th of January, 1822, he entered Kaiserswerth as pastor, on foot in order to save expense to the poor congregation. His salary was 180 Taler—\$135. He took in several of his brothers and sisters to educate, and also established a Latin school, which was attended by children of the locality, both evangelical and Catholic. With great zeal he devoted himself to proclaiming the Word, and interested himself in the manifold needs of his congregation. At the same time, he made great advances in his own inner life. The critical financial condition of the congregation, which threatened its very existence, necessitated a collecting tour, in which he included the Rhine, Holland, and England. This journey was not only successful for its immediate object: Fliedner gathered also many valuable suggestions; he came in contact with a number of believing Christians, and became acquainted with their wide-spread philanthropy. His own faith was mightily strengthened by this experience.

On his return he continued his earnest labors in the congregation, at the same time doing a blessed work among prisoners. He grudged no trouble or exertion to bring about an improvement in the terrible condition of the prisons. For three years, once a fortnight, he walked to Düsseldorf, several hours distant, in order to

hold services in the prison there, and to exert a personal influence over the prisoners by talking to them privately. On the 18th of June, 1826, he founded the Prison Association of Westphalia and the Rhine. While seeking helpers for his work among prisoners he became acquainted with his wife, whose assistance in his work was of the greatest value.

The difficulty in providing for discharged female convicts resulted in the founding of an asylum in 1833. Katherine Göbel, a girlhood friend of the pastor's wife, undertook the management of it. For want of any other place, the asylum was begun in Fliedner's garden, in a summer-house ten feet square. At first one, then two unfortunates were taken in there. On the 14th of December the House-mother with four inmates moved into a rented house.

The clearest understanding of his aims Fliedner found in his wife. It was she also who encouraged him to begin with the deaconess work himself, since others, whom he might have thought better fitted for it, had declined. So, although he had no money, but only his confidence in God's help, he purchased the largest and handsomest house in Kaiserswerth in the spring of 1836. The house was to serve as motherhouse and also as hospital. Then he founded the Rhenish-Westphalian Deaconess Association. On the 13th of October, 1836, the first deaconess house was opened without sisters, without patients, and with only the most necessary furnishing. On the 20th of October came the first deaconess, Gertrude Reichardt, the daughter of a physi-

cian. The first patient was a Catholic servant girl. Fliedner's wife was the first Mother Superior.

It was a poverty-stricken beginning, and the barest necessities were often wanting, while scoffing and sneering from the people of Kaiserswerth, largely Catholics, were always at hand. Fliedner did not permit this to disturb him. "His was a sunny nature all his life. His happiness was fixed in God, and could not be interrupted by any sorrow." The institution grew, under the blessing of God. On the 21st of January, 1838, the first deaconesses outside of the motherhouse were installed in the City Hospital at Elberfeld. At the same time new departments were added to the institution in Kaiserswerth, and those which already existed were taken into connection with it. The Magdalen Asylum, mentioned above, was older than the motherhouse. In 1835 Fliedner had founded also a school for little children. This, too, began in the summer-house, and out of it grew the Seminary for Teachers in the school for little children. In 1844 followed the Seminary for Elementary Teachers; it was recognized by the Government in 1848, and soon teachers for the higher girls' schools were also trained there.

Fliedner possessed the gift of putting the right person in the right place; the various departments of the institution were allowed to develop in comparative independence, for "he did not think that whatever was not entirely in his hands must, therefore, go wrong." By this means he perfected his forces and heightened the pleasure in working. He used to say, "any one can do

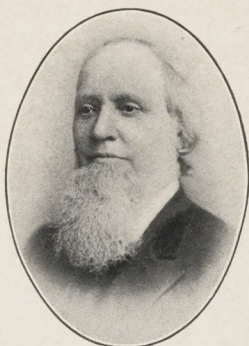
everything himself, but the thing is to get others to do it." In this his great executive ability is shown, and this also was the secret of his extraordinary capacity for work. It has been said of him, Fliedner was the soul of all that was done in the institution, and yet understood how to make himself not indispensable. The large sums of money needed by so many institutions were mainly gotten by collections. Fliedner was a master in collecting, and did not mind taking any amount of trouble. At the same time he had many encouraging experiences of the Divine assistance.

The best help in building up the institution was Fliedner's wife. Her keen and sanctified insight saved him from many a mistake. The order, simplicity, and frugality which she taught and practised were, especially in the beginning, of incalculable value. With large-hearted charity toward all who were in need of help, she understood how to combine a manly energy in the case of those inclined to abuse it. She was one of those rare souls who understand not only how to bear courageously their own heavy burden, but at the same time to give strength and assistance to others. Out of ten children seven died during her lifetime. She herself died on the 22d of April, 1842, after fourteen years of married life, "the first of the deaconesses," says Fliedner. "As she walked before her spiritual daughters like a mother, during her life, so she also preceded them in death." Her death seemed an irreparable loss, but Fliedner found a substitute for the departed one in Caroline Bertheau of Hamburg. She had been for the

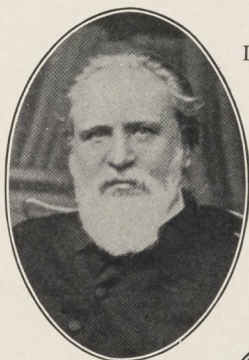
last few years chief directress of the large city hospital in Hamburg, had proved equal to many difficult situations, and was eminently fitted for the position of superior in the institution. Fliedner married her in May, 1843. For forty years, of which nineteen were after her husband's death, "Mother Fliedner" carried on her blessed work.

In the year 1849 Fliedner gave up his pastoral office in order to devote himself to the deaconess institution. The branch houses and stations had steadily increased. In this year, at the request of Director Passavant, Fliedner brought over sisters to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Soon afterward the beginning was made in the deaconess mission which has now grown to such proportions in the Orient. Fliedner himself took four sisters to Jerusalem in 1851; these were followed later by a great number, who served in the Oriental stations. Nursing the sick and Christian training of young girls are the two chief branches of the work.

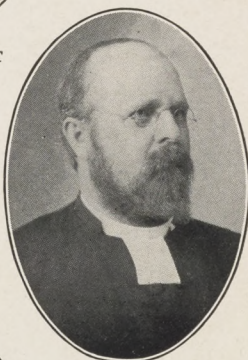
For the last seven years of his life Fliedner suffered so much that he was obliged to discontinue his outside work, but in spite of this he labored almost without interruption to the end. He lived to see, in 1861, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Institution and the first Kaiserswerth Conference. On the 12th of September, 1864, he was permitted to consecrate nineteen sisters. On the 4th of October he died, surrounded by his loved ones. "Conqueror of death—victor!" were his last words. His motto was John 3: 30, "He must increase, but I must decrease."



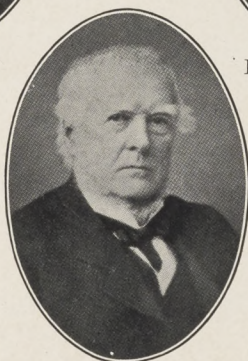
DR. PASSAVANT



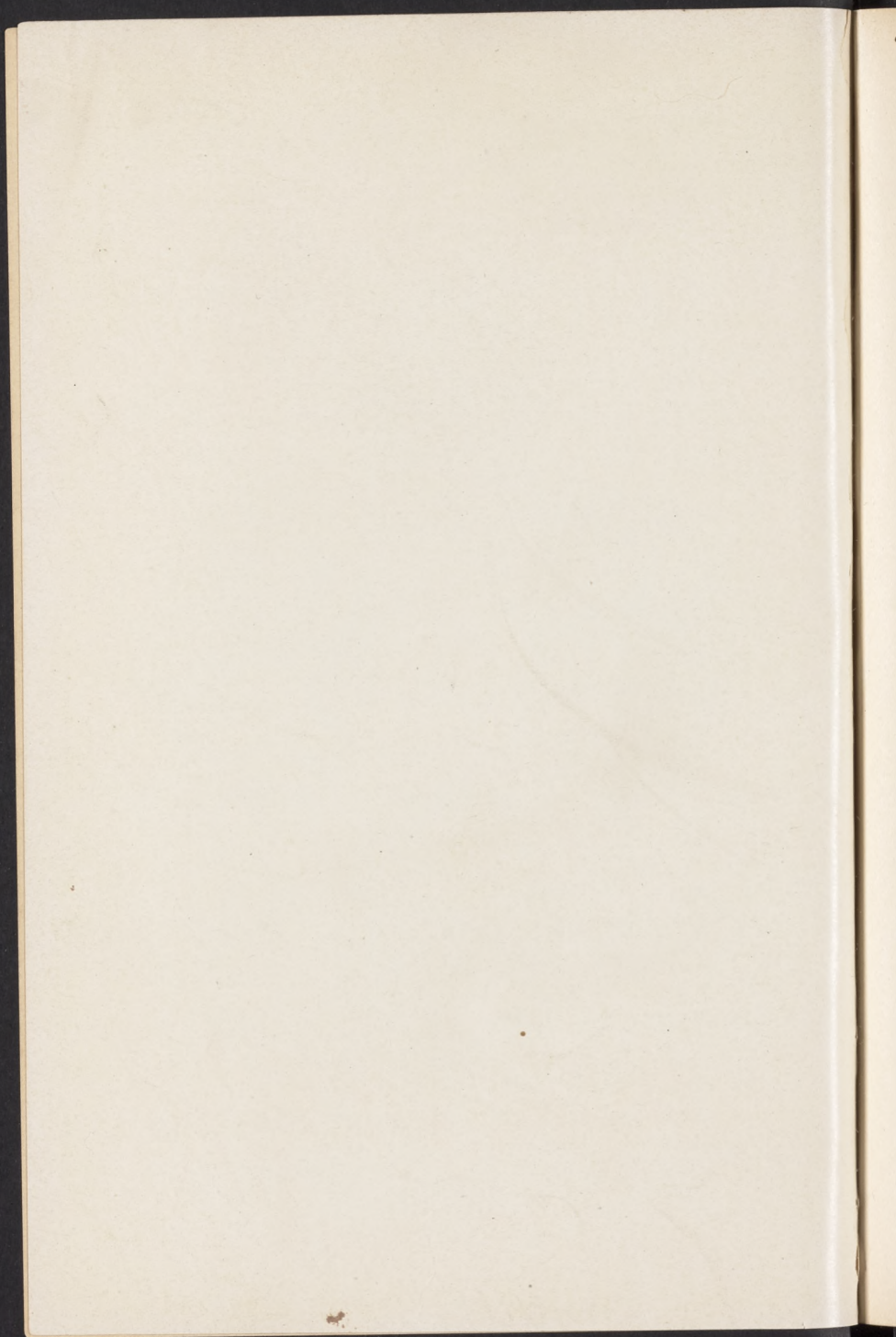
DR. SPAETH



DR. FOGELSTRÖM



MR. LANKENAU



At Fliedner's death the motherhouses numbered thirty, and the deaconesses 1600, in more than four hundred fields of labor. Kaiserswerth had 425 sisters and 100 outer stations in four continents.

Fliedner became the spiritual father of the modern female diaconate in the evangelical Church. His first drawing to the deaconess work he received in the course of his first collecting tour, from what he found in the Mennonite congregations of Holland. His ideal, and the foundation on which he wished to build, was the diaconate of the ancient Church. This he combined with the form of association as evolved in the pre-Reformation era. The central point of the association is the motherhouse; it gives to its members instruction, support, and a home. Thus Fliedner went back to the Apostolic basis, but, at the same time, he knew how to take into consideration the demands of the present. *To organize the service of women, and to utilize it for the kingdom of God*, that was the task assigned to him. He used the form which seemed to him best adapted for our time, and history has confirmed his judgment. Fliedner's conception shows the ingenious master, whose sure, practical eye recognizes what has elsewhere proved its value, accepts it, and, adding the results of his own experience and his own devices, fuses them all into one unique whole.

7. Growth in Europe

It has always been God's way to carry out His designs through individuals. When he wished to reveal His un-

speaking love to a lost world, he sent One matchless Personality for its redemption. What here took place, in inconceivable greatness and glory, repeats itself in thousands of gradations in the history of God's kingdom. Wherever a spiritual life exists, wherever streams of blessing are poured forth, wherever the love of God irradiates a desolate, cold world, it is from consecrated personalities, standing fast in living faith, that such efficacy goes out.

Just so is it in the history of the female diaconate. Where the work prospered and a motherhouse arose, there, on closer examination, we find traces of such consecrated personalities as the source of all this activity (John 7:38). Most of them were, of course, unknown beyond their own circle. But, among the many who were little known, there were also characters strong in the spirit, the brightness of whose names shone far beyond their immediate surroundings, and whose influence was felt in the development of the entire work. First among these are those creative personalities to whom motherhouses owe their existence, such as Fliedner, Gossner, Härter, and Löhe.

Fliedner's vision reached far beyond his own narrow field of labor. He had in his eye nothing less than "an important office of the apostolic Church, which had fallen asleep, and which must be called to life again in our evangelical Church, namely, the office of deaconess." Thus, he willingly lent a hand wherever his help was wanted for a new project. More than a dozen motherhouses were begun with Kaiserswerth sisters. A long

line of institutions had their first Superior, or even several in succession, from Kaiserswerth. The first Superiors of the three large Scandinavian houses, Luise Conring in Copenhagen, Marie Cederschiveld in Stockholm, and Cathinka Guldberg in Christiania, received their training in Kaiserswerth. Florence Nightingale, the celebrated English nurse, and Agnes Jones, who had charge of the poor in the Liverpool workhouse, both studied in Kaiserswerth. Elisabeth Fry, one of the first among eminent English workers, and Sophie Wurstemberger, founder of the great house in Berne, visited Kaiserswerth. Also a number of men, called to the same vocation, who owed their instruction and experience to Kaiserswerth, later carried on the blessed work in other places; for example, Ranke, first director in Nowawes.

The Elisabeth Hospital in Berlin is next to the oldest deaconess house. It was founded in 1837 by the devout believer Johannes Gossner. He was originally a Catholic, and had devoted himself to the priesthood. His inner life was strongly influenced by Martin Boos and Bishop Sailer, those evangelically inclined men of God in the Catholic Church. When he had reached mature years he went over at last to the evangelical Church, and at fifty-five became pastor in the Bohemian church at Berlin. He founded the Gossner Mission in India, and did much for the cause of benevolence in Berlin, in addition to beginning the Elisabeth Deaconess Home and Hospital there. But he did not care for fixed forms. The bitter experiences of his life had given him

a dislike to them. To him all depended on the inward truth of the matter. Living Christian characters were everything. He followed this principle in the mission work abroad, as well as in charitable undertakings at home. As long as the spirited, energetic personality of the founder upheld it all, the defects of this lack of organization were not very evident. Gossner personally was the human support and law of the institution. After his death it was found impossible to carry on the work in this fashion, and the house was re-organized on the Kaiserswerth plan.

Franz Heinrich Härter opened the Deaconess Institute in Strassburg in 1842. It grew out of a society of servants to the poor, founded by him in 1836. The recollection of one of his youthful experiences had helped to bring this about. In 1817 the City Council of Strassburg wished to arrange, in the City Hospital with 600 to 800 patients, for the nursing of Catholics by Sisters of Mercy, and of Protestants by evangelical attendants and nurses, if two capable single women or widows could be found to take the supervision of the latter. A confidential agent of the Council requested all clergymen to look around among women they knew. Härter's pastor discussed the matter with the young student and implored him, with tears in his eyes, to suggest at least one suitable person among his acquaintances. At that time no one was found for this work.

Härter was obliged to pass through many and sore conflicts inwardly, and through great trials and temptations without, in coming to the Saviour. Thus he be-

came the powerful preacher and abundantly blessed pastor which he was later acknowledged to be. He was eminently fitted for leadership. He tried to train the sisterhood of his house to be, as far as possible, an independent association, keeping for himself only an advisory vote.

Strassburg had helped different deaconess houses in South Germany and Switzerland in beginning their work, by training sisters for them. With most of our American houses, Strassburg has this in common, that there, also, facility in using two languages is required.

Löhe's wide-reaching and enduring influence is hardly less than that of Fliedner. He was born on the 21st of February, 1808, and belonged to a family of the middle class in Fürth, Bavaria. As a boy he showed unusual endowments. Once, while he was studying in Berlin, the piercing look of his bright eyes almost hopelessly confused the celebrated Professor Schleiermacher, who was lecturing. Of the mature man, A. von Stählin says: "Löhe is great as a preacher—among the greatest of the century; he is great as a liturgist, for he was a man of prayer and sacrifice. He was undoubtedly greatest of all as a pastor, for, from the beginning he possessed a rare power over the hearts of others. He had talent for originating and organizing. Grand and ever new conceptions were combined in him with remarkable power of looking at the whole, without neglecting single details, however small. His extraordinary sense of the beautiful lent to everything he did a charm of form, which attracted even those not immediately

connected with him and filled them with admiration. He was a chosen instrument of the Lord, a mighty preacher of faith and love, in word and deed." He died January 2, 1872. To this day, so many years after his death, the Deaconess House of Neuendettelsau, created by him, still bears the unmistakable imprint of his spirit.

Like Gossner, Löhe had not intended to build a deaconess house. He wanted "a society of women for the female diaconate, whose dearest aim should be the training of the nation's young girls for the service of Jesus among suffering humanity." With this object this association for the female diaconate was first founded. The direction of the association was to be in the hands of a mother society, consisting of six women and eight clergymen. At the head of the mother society, Löhe appointed "three intelligent and experienced single women" as directors. The first of these had been a Kaiserswerth deaconess. A network of associations, connected by membership with the mother society, was to spread over the whole of Protestant Bavaria, and kindle a fire of love and beneficence throughout the land. The deaconess house (or even houses) connected with the association should be considered only as a means to an end.

This plan failed. The association remained "a weak, sickly plant," whereas the deaconess institution grew fast. Opened May 9, 1854, in a poor rented house, it was able, by the 12th of October in the same year, to move into its own spacious home. Löhe did

not stubbornly hold to his first idea; he had the ability of great men to see what was within reach, and poured out now the full abundance of his soul to foster the young and growing motherhouse. Like Fliedner and Härter, Löhe endeavored to educate the sisters to be self-sustained Christian characters. He demanded a high degree of intellectual cultivation. Great as was the stress laid upon the duty of obedience on the one hand, Löhe conceded an equally great self-reliance to those who had approved themselves in the service. To this day the head sisters of the different branch institutions in Neuendettelsau are largely independent in directing the institutions and managing the finances. Even the auditing of the accounts is done by a sister.

The influence of Neuendettelsau on the development of the work in general was less direct than that of Kaiserswerth, but even practical assistance was rendered there very often; especially is Neuendettelsau still visited by many who wish to learn something of the work done there.

Among the fathers of the deaconess cause in its beginning, as those nearest to the four named above, may be mentioned Fröhlich in Dresden, Schultz in Bethany, Berlin, and, especially, though somewhat later, v. Bodelschwingh in Bielefeld. All of these became distinguished beyond their own field of activity.

The Dresden House was founded in 1844 by an association of women, with the help of Kaiserswerth. It was beset with difficulties in the beginning, and had to fight against indifference, enmity, derision, and

scorn. Even the directors, all of them women, were lacking in knowledge of the matter in hand. In 1846, at a cost of 14,000 Taler (\$10,500), the deaconess institution purchased the very convenient property which it still occupies. When the sale was concluded, the treasury held just 100 Taler, but faith shall not be put to shame.

In 1856 Pastor Fröhlich entered upon his office as rector. His wife was made house-mother, after the Kaiserswerth pattern. In his twenty-five years of control the house gained a peculiarly individual character. Fröhlich was born in 1826, the son of the collector of the road-tax. His parents were pious, but the religious instruction in the school was rationalistic. As a student he fought his way through grievous doubts, and was not sure that he ought to assume an office in the Church, owing to his attitude toward the faith. His inner life was most powerfully influenced by Tholuck's book, "Sin and the Mediator." He read it through in one night, and soon afterward burned up all his university notes and essays, and all his sermons which were marked by the rationalistic spirit. In this turning-point of his life he experienced especially the power of prayer. He continued steadfastly in prayer, with the assurance that his supplications were heard; and, therefore, he sought to lead the sisters also to this fountain of strength and comfort.

Fröhlich adopted Fliedner's ideas. The diaconate of the apostolic era was to him also the pattern for our time, therefore he desired to have "the vocation of

womanly beneficence in closest connection with the Church and her jurisdiction." The *office* of the deaconess is the same in the nineteenth century as it was in the first; its external *form*, in the nineteenth century, is that of the association. It is not a condition of the office, but the result of circumstances.

At the same time, Fröhlich was greatly influenced by Löhe, and knew how to apply his ideas to actual living, intelligently and skilfully. He laid stress also on the importance of having the sisters as highly cultured as possible, without losing sight of the main point; for "the more like Christ, the more cultivated." Fröhlich was a very attractive preacher and eminently fitted to teach. His lectures were highly valued. Even the older sisters eagerly used every opportunity to hear them.

On the 10th of March, 1881, when the preparations had already begun for celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary, Fröhlich died of an acute illness. At that time the sisters in Dresden numbered 211.

Dresden has done much for other houses, especially the Russian houses, Mitau and Riga, as well as that of Wiborg in Finland, received help for many years.

Pastor Schultz was appointed first chaplain of Bethany in Berlin, by Fliedner, commissioned by King Frederick William IV. Bethany is most particularly the king's own work. He called it the "Central Deaconess House of Bethany," for he wished to have a branch institution going out from it, to be established in each of the East Provinces. So should "a chain of ministering love

stretch out over the land, to bring together the best and noblest for the service of beneficence." "Constitutionally, Schultz was only the adviser of the Mother Superior, and yet, on the intellectual and spiritual side, the entire burden of working out, founding, and organizing the institution rested on his shoulders. Practically, his strong personality and great ability lifted him quite above the position given him by the statutes. Strict with himself, he was equally so with the sisters. But he secured for them a proper official standing and a large measure of self-government." Schultz died in 1875.

Bethany did not exert any direct influence; several houses did, indeed, receive their first superiors from it, but no other motherhouses were founded by it. In spite of this, Bethany practically attained, through Schultz, a position similar to that intended by its founder; it became a pattern for many other houses in its regulations.

But probably the most remarkable among these consecrated deaconess fathers is the lately deceased Pastor von Bodelschwingh, director since 1872 of the Deaconess House Sarepta, in Bethel-Bielefeld. His was a creative mind. He was one of the pioneers who clear the way for new roads. So this deaconess house, in connection with the other institutions which cluster in Bielefeld, has more individual peculiarities than all the other younger houses. It has also grown most rapidly, and is to-day the second largest house in Germany, with 1255 sisters. And yet Sarepta is only part of the life-work of this wonderful man.

"Even in his youth Friedrich von Bodelschwingh possessed a strong power of attracting everything that was weary or gone astray, sick or homeless." As pastor in Paris, from 1859 to 1864, he labored unselfishly and at great sacrifice among its poor German scavengers. Bodelschwingh, belonging to the highest circles of society, began his lifework there. The serious illness of his wife caused him to accept a call to a village congregation in Ruhrtal. Eight tranquil years he spent in the modest parsonage, happy in the possession of four blooming children. This quiet period was interrupted by war times in 1866 and 1870, when, on the battlefields on the Main and before Metz, he served the wounded and dying as army chaplain. At the end of the year 1868 he lost his four children within twelve days. All these events and experiences were the preparation for thirty-eight years of an unequalled ministry, among epileptics, the sick, the homeless, and children; in the mission field, with theological candidates, and last, but not least, to the deacons and deaconesses in their service of mercy. His motto was, "Therefore, we will not be weary." He also was permitted to labor almost to the very end. On the 2d of April, 1910, he died without a struggle, "like a tired child in the arms of his God."

What a hero of the faith was Bodelschwingh, in an age eaten through by skepticism and the lust of criticism—truly one of the great ones in the kingdom of God! From him the bright beams of a Saviour's love shone on the hearts of thousands, not only warming them, but

causing them also to glow with the same love. Well did he understand how to find co-workers everywhere, to coax out their gifts, and make them useful in the service of the beloved Master! But the whole secret of his power was that he devoted himself to the Master's service with body and soul.

Nearly seventy-five years have passed since the insignificant, modest beginning in Kaiserswerth. Twenty-five years after the work was thus begun, the representatives of twenty-six motherhouses, with 1202 sisters, met in Kaiserswerth "to exchange experiences, and to encourage one another to renewed zeal." That was the beginning of the Kaiserswerth General Conference, which includes now 80 motherhouses in Europe and 4 in North America, with 19,958 sisters. Of these, 16,090 are connected with German motherhouses, 3686 are in various parts of Europe, and 182 in North America. The members of this association work essentially according to the principles represented by Fliedner.

Eighteen motherhouses in Germany, with a total of 2908 sisters and 1523 fields of labor, do not belong to the Kaiserswerth General Conference. The largest of these houses are four motherhouses, mainly employed in the work of schools for little children, with a total of 1404 sisters.¹ A Methodist deaconess house in Frankfort on the Main has 295 sisters.

The rise of deaconesses in Germany has called out a multitude of free sisters, such as the Sisters of the Red

¹The three communities of "Converted Sisters" have already 404 sisters, although the oldest house was only founded in 1899.

Cross, of the Lazarus Cross, etc. Some of these sisters belong to associations, but many of them work quite independently. They wear a dress more or less like that of the deaconesses, and are called sisters; for this reason they are often mistaken for deaconesses by those who are not acquainted with the facts. On the whole, however, they resemble the English and American "trained nurses" much more than the deaconesses, with whom they have no connection.

The Order of St. John, restored in 1852, has had, on the contrary, an arrangement with different deaconess houses since 1886, by which sisters have been trained for the service of the Order. Their sisters are bound to serve their country when universal need arises and in time of war. In such cases their first duty is to relieve deaconesses who are sent to the front. They can be called out at any time by the officers of the Order. In accordance with the wishes of their officers, they often assist in the deaconess houses or otherwise in caring for the sick or poor. This is done voluntarily, and they must do it without pay, except that they are allowed to accept a sum not over 20 Marks (\$5.00) a month as pocket-money. After receiving their training free, if they wish to earn money by nursing, they must leave the Order, and are obliged to refund the money expended on them to the directors. In 1907 these sisters numbered 1174.

Although so small, Switzerland possesses four flourishing deaconess houses, with a total of 1390 sisters. The oldest is St. Loup (près La Sarraz) in French Switzerland, founded in 1842 by the saintly pastor, Louis Ger-

mond. In the beginning the house was the object of hatred so violent and aggressive that it was twice forced to close its doors.

The deaconess house in Berne was begun in 1844, by 'Sophie Wurstemberger. She was born of good family in 1808. As a child she showed superior talent, and an inclination to helpfulness and activity in works of beneficence. In 1837 we find her a member of a society of women which planned to establish an institution for the care of the needy sick. But they could not agree on details, and Sophie withdrew.

Through her intimacy with the family of the pious Prussian Ambassador, von Bunsen, Sophie made great advance in her spiritual life. Later, von Bunsen was transferred to London. Sophie accepted an invitation there, and saw much of Elisabeth Fry and her circle. She visited Kaiserswerth on her journey to England. Fliedner's penetrating eye soon perceived how richly endowed this new acquaintance was. He endeavored to gain her for Kaiserswerth, but without success. When she came back to Berne, she found that her own ideas had been unanimously adopted, and the institution was placed under her management. At great sacrifice, and under many difficulties, she labored for ten years. After all these years the house had only seven sisters. She found no countenance among her own people, who did not approve of the work in which she was engaged. She could not beg for contributions or help, but she believed firmly that if the work was of God, He would not forsake it. In prayer she found strength and refuge.

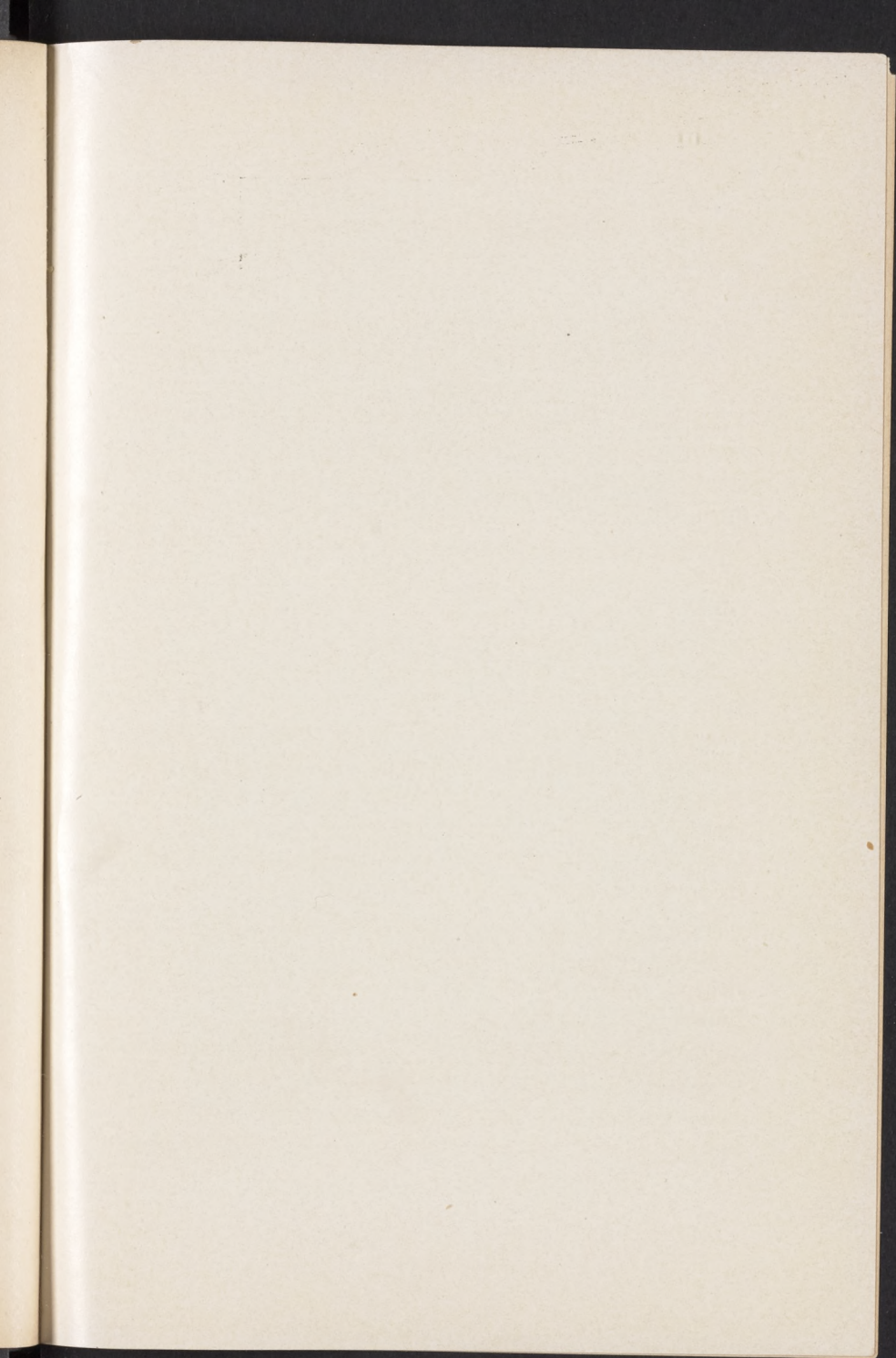
In 1854 Sophie married Fritz Dändlicher, twelve years younger than herself. She had become acquainted with him through her London friends, and for years he had been a helpful friend to her. Thenceforth, the House made rapid progress. Fritz Dändlicher also belonged to a good Swiss family, and was a Christian in the fullest sense of the word. He was eminently fitted for the direction of an institution. He was not a trained theologian, but a theologian by the grace of God. "The man saw much, and saw it well. He possessed a knowledge of men. He had had endless experience with godly, semi-godly, and ungodly people. At the bedside of the dying and the convalescent, the fever-stricken, and the convict he had found out the mysteries of life. This wealth of experience was in him inwrought with revealed truth. His adaptation of Scripture to daily life was masterly." He was at the same time a man of enormous capacity for work. "Even at seventy he did not seem to know what fatigue was. He was at home, to an unusual degree, in many departments of knowledge. When he addressed a conference of German pastors, no one would believe that he was not a clergyman. And he could speak just as readily in a French or English celebration. For a building he needed no architect—he was his own master-builder. It was really astounding what an adept he was in all the secrets of different crafts and trades, and when the scientist came to explain that a certain conduit could not possibly be made, and to give the reason, he could tell him how to do it, in the sure conviction that comes from

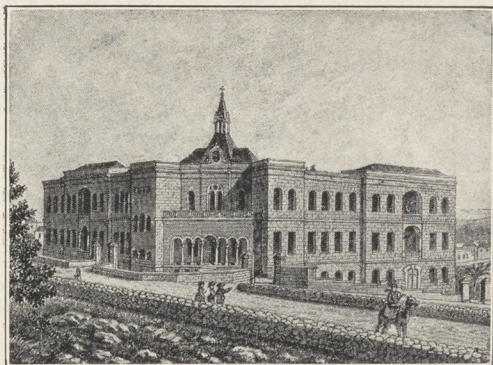
carefully weighing all the circumstances. He never approached any one for a donation, and yet always had what he needed. He even began building, before he had the necessary means, firm as a rock in his trust in the riches of God, and this faith never disappointed him."

No wonder such a personality was tempted to become an absolute monarch, and did not wish to work with a committee, a reproach that has often been brought against him. But Dändlicher was at the same time a humble Christian, and far from looking upon himself as an infallible man of God. He was always ready to admit faults or mistakes, when convinced by other men or by his own conscience.

Sophie lived to see her faithful work of so many years bear rich fruit. She died in 1878. For a while the House in Berne was the fourth in size, but the death of Dändlicher seems to have been a great blow to it. Between 1898 and 1901 the number of sisters decreased by 74; since then, however, it has again steadily increased, and has reached, with 418 sisters, very nearly its former figure, though now it holds only the twelfth place.

Riehen, near Basel, was founded in 1852 with the help of "Father Spittler." Neumünster, near Zürich, must also be mentioned. It grew out of a small circle, still under the influence of Lavater. The institution began with a silver coin dropped into the collection bag, with a poem demanding the erection of a deaconess house, and calling attention to the gift, made in reliance





DEACONESS HOSPITAL AT JERUSALEM



Deaconess House

Bethesda Hospital

Old People's Home

SWEDISH INSTITUTIONS AT ST. PAUL, MINN.

upon God, whose double blessing rests on the mite of the poor, as the first small stone for this building. It numbers now 346 sisters.

The deaconess work flourishes also in Scandinavia. In 1866 Cathinka Guldberg, the young daughter of a Norwegian pastor, went to Kaiserswerth to learn nursing, intending to make use of her knowledge among the poor and sick of her father's congregation. In the mean while a committee of ladies and gentlemen had been formed in her native land, under the direction of Stiftprovost Brun, for the purpose of beginning the deaconess work. They founded a deaconess house in Christiania, and wrote to Kaiserwerth, begging that Sister Cathinka might be sent to them as Oberin. At that time she was laboring in a hospital in Alexandria, where her knowledge of Swedish was of great value among the numerous Scandinavian seamen. In 1868, with the blessing of Kaiserswerth, she returned, and is still working as Oberin in Christiania.

The house grew from a small beginning, and quickly developed. It numbers at present 530 sisters, and has a long line of branch institutions and stations extending even into the extreme northern portions of the country. Four sisters labor among the lepers in Madagascar, and two in the mission in China.

Still older than the deaconess house in Christiania is the Motherhouse in Stockholm, founded in 1851. Its first Oberin received her training in Kaiserswerth. This institution numbers at present 355 sisters and probationers; in its branch institutions and in its stations,

scattered all over Sweden, almost every department of deaconess work is represented.

The total number of sisters in Scandinavia was 1169 in 1910.

The Netherlands possess 9 deaconess houses, but only 559 sisters altogether.

In France the first deaconess house was founded in Paris as early as 1841, followed by a second, in the same place, in 1874. They have only 103 sisters together, of whom 16 belong to the second house.

The first evangelical deaconess motherhouse in Italy was opened in Turin, 1901.

Austria, like Italy, is largely Catholic. It has four deaconess houses. The only one belonging to the Kaiserswerth Conference, which is also the most important, is Gallneukirchen, with 94 sisters.

Russia has eight deaconess houses, of which seven belong to the Kaiserswerth Conference. The largest of the seven is Helsingfors, in Finland, with 119 sisters. None of the others has more than 60, although the youngest of them has been established forty years. They have all had to contend with difficulties, both within and without, and so far have not prospered to any great extent. The oldest is the house in St. Petersburg, founded by a pious physician, Dr. Mayer, who conducted it for nineteen years. Finally, he retired because he could not carry out his wish that the institution should be primarily deaconess house rather than hospital. Curiously enough, the most determined opposition to his efforts came from the pastors of St. Petersburg; among them was even one

of his own friends, who had first called his attention to the female diaconate.

The eighth of the Russian houses, Bethany in Gross-Liebenthal near Odessa, is of more recent date. Its territory is among the Württemberg colonists, and Stuttgart was its pattern. The institution numbers 17 sisters, and seems to be in a flourishing condition.

In England the movement developed in another direction. We find, indeed, some traces of Kaiserswerth ideas, but the English female diaconate is, on the whole, a different thing entirely. In 1861 the London Diocesan Deaconess Institution was founded. The institution is churchly in form, and is under the direction of the bishop. The house is to be "a training-school and a common gathering place for the deaconesses." A difference is made between the sisters belonging to the institution and those who are merely trained there. The Dissenters' House in Tottenham is more like the continental establishments. Mildmay in London also follows the Kaiserswerth model. Deaconess communities in Chester, Salisbury, Bedford, and Liverpool may also be mentioned. In general, the female diaconate has not found much sympathy in England.

On the other hand, the Church of England has produced a number of sisterhoods, members of which are employed in the work of beneficence. Most of these are more like the Romish Sisters of Mercy than the German deaconesses. The oldest, and at the same time one of the most important among them, is the Sisterhood of St. John the Baptist in Clewer, one of the suburbs of

London, lying between London and Windsor. It arose in connection with a Magdalen Asylum, begun in 1849 by a clergyman's widow, Mrs. Tenant, which, from a small beginning, has developed into an institution of considerable importance. The sisterhood is divided into two orders. The real sisters are the first order. Then there are also sisters of the second order. These live partly at home, but are obliged, as far as possible even there, to live according to the rules of the sisterhood. Following the class distinction which is such a striking feature in England, the first order has two subdivisions. The time of probation for the first of them is two years, for the second, four years. Beside the two orders, there are assistant sisters and helpers. These live at home generally, and help the sisterhood by their prayers, and promote its work as far as lies in their power.

Every sister who is able to do so must contribute at least £50 (\$250) annually to the support of the institution. The sisters take the vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience for life. Their intercourse with relatives and friends is entirely unrestricted, and they can also spend their holidays with them.

The sisterhood is governed by a rector and superior. The bishop is inspector. Beside working among the Magdalens, the sisters are employed among prisoners, in nursing the sick and infirm, in bringing up and teaching the pupils in boarding-schools, day-schools, night-schools, etc. In the village of Clewer a whole colony of institutions has gradually risen; and there are also a number of out-stations.

8. Deaconess Work in America

The first attempt to transplant the deaconess work to America was made by a Lutheran pastor, Rev. W. A. Passavant, of blessed memory, whose name is connected with so many beneficent undertakings. While sojourning in London, in 1846, after a visit to a Jewish orphanage, he decided to serve the Lord Jesus by ministering to His needy ones. At once he began to collect for this purpose, renouncing personal ease and pleasure. Leaving London, he traveled over the continent of Europe, everywhere keeping his main point in view, the cause of beneficence. At this time the thought forced itself upon him in how many ways ministering love is lacking in the Christianity of our day, while it should really be its chief witness.

Mr. Passavant became acquainted with distinguished, godly men; among them were the two deaconess fathers, Fliedner and Härter. Only ten years had elapsed since the beginning in Kaiserswerth, and the deaconess house in Strassburg was scarcely five years old. In spite of this, the deaconess work made such a deep and abiding impression on Mr. Passavant, that henceforward he had a burning desire to transplant it to his native land, where, in his opinion, it was just as absolutely necessary as in Europe. He discussed the matter with Fliedner, who, as is well known, was always ready with encouragement and help, and deposited with him, provisionally, money for the traveling expenses of the sisters whom he hoped to obtain.

After his return to America he tried to awaken an interest and understanding for the work, and in 1848 took the first steps toward erecting a hospital. When, in the following January, soldiers returned to Pittsburgh from the campaign against Mexico, with the aid of a student he brought into his hospital two who had been taken sick, and nursed them with his own hands. This was the beginning of the first Lutheran Hospital in America.¹ At last, in July of the same year, 1849, came Fliedner with four sisters from Kaiserswerth, who were to begin the motherhouse in Pittsburgh, as a place for the training of American sisters. One applicant was already there, Louise Marthens. She was consecrated in the following year, and was the first American deaconess. She remained in her calling to the end of her life (1899).

The progress made did not fulfil the promise of the beginning. In thirty-five years only sixteen probationers entered. Some of them were consecrated, but all except three left the service again after a period of one to nine years. Two of the Kaiserswerth sisters

¹The names of Fliedner's wives are enrolled with his in the history of the female diaconate. No less deserving of mention is the wife of Dr. Passavant, though her opportunities were not so great. She encouraged him when he doubted his right to sacrifice all in an unknown venture. She gave him her full coöperation, her counsel, her prayers, and relieved him almost entirely of the care of a large family. The deaconesses found in her a sympathizing friend, a judicious adviser, a practical helper. She served the Pittsburgh Hospital for a long time as matron, when no other could be found. "She was a true deaconess without a title or habit," wrote Dr. H. E. Jacobs, possessing "extraordinary energy, unselfish industry, tenacity of purpose, and administrative gifts."

were married in 1853, to Passavant's great sorrow. Of the four who came first, only one, Elisabeth Hupperts, held out to the end. She died in 1895, after serving sixty years as deaconess.

The work of the deaconesses in Pittsburgh, Zelienople, Rochester, and other places, especially their service during the Civil War, under the direction of Miss Dorothy Dix, received hearty recognition—only, alas! it did not induce others to follow their example. The lack of proper oversight and training may have contributed to the failure. Dr. Passavant's many-sided and comprehensive activity left little time for this work. Also he probably undervalued outward observances, such as systematic training, cultivating the idea of a community, and a uniform dress for the sisters.

Other attempts made by Neuendettelsau were complete failures. The entreaties of the Lutheran Iowa Synod resulted in the sending of a number of sisters to America, "by their own resolution, and with the approval of the motherhouse." In a report of 1859 five deaconesses in North America are mentioned. The circumstances in which these sisters found themselves were evidently not very clearly defined. Two in succession were matrons of Wartburg, the theological seminary of the Iowa Synod. The account is given of one of these: "She has adapted herself to our poor condition with energy and judgment, and without any assumption. The residents of the seminary are now happy and contented, having found in her a true house-mother." The others were apparently employed chiefly in school work.

Women's societies and private nursing are also mentioned.

The Neuendettelsau report for the years 1858-59 gives only four deaconesses left in America, and in the very next report it appears that, "In America the House has no more deaconesses in the work, as all who were there have married." These conditions may be partly explained by the fact that, even in Neuendettelsau, in the beginning things were turbid and agitated, and had not yet settled and cleared, as they did in later years. For example, the "Korrespondenzblatt" of December, 1858, says: "As the number of our deaconesses grows continually, in spite of the gaps made by marriage especially, we must at times ask ourselves the question whether a deaconess institution can wish to see the number of its inmates increase indefinitely, or whether it were better to fix a certain standard as experience and circumstances may suggest. In answer to this question we have found ourselves more and more inclined to accept the second solution, although we are not yet so far that we could safely fix our limit."

In the year 1868 an urgent letter was sent by Pastor Johannes Dörfler to his "dear fathers in Christ," Löhe and Bauer in Neuendettelsau, imploring them to found a deaconess house in Toledo, "where women could be taught and trained for work in the different branches of practical beneficence." The writer paints in strong colors the great need among the sick, and the German children going to ruin. There was no German evangelical institution of mercy, though in Detroit, for example,

out of 100,000 inhabitants, more than half were Germans; whereas there were innumerable institutions under the direction and care of the French sisters (Sisters of Mercy). The German evangelicals have nothing. Hundreds of souls belonging to our beloved Church are carried over annually to the bosom of the Catholic Church by the tireless diligence of the sisters. As a "very specially important activity for the sisters, which would remove many difficulties and become a great blessing," he refers to the parish school.

For the establishment of the desired deaconess institution he proposes the sending over of a well-qualified sister, "who has the capacity to teach and direct others, and the courage which will not be dismayed by beginning in poverty." He offers all the assistance that he or his friends are able to give.

The letter seems to have made an impression in Neuendettelsau, but the correspondence that ensued took time. In the "Korrespondenzblatt" of Neuendettelsau, March, 1870, is recorded, "for several years we have had in consideration the sending of sisters across the ocean." It is further stated that a society for the female diaconate has been actually formed, and has sent a first-fruits gift to the deaconess house. "If the sisters, familiar with our traditions and aims, would offer themselves temporarily to the Direction for America it would be acceptable."

In the beginning of March, 1870, a call was sent out, signed by Johannes Deindörfer, to the brethren, and to all Lutheran Christians in America, inviting them to

join the Association for Works of Beneficence. Löhe had pledged 5000 Gulden (\$2500) to the association toward founding a deaconess home, and had promised to send two deaconesses as soon as the association was in a position to pay the traveling expenses and the cost of maintenance. All the pastors of the Eastern District of the Iowa Synod, and the president also, had become members of the association. The statutes were annexed. The object of the association was: Practical beneficence toward suffering humanity. The means to this end: (1) Instruction out of God's Word. (2) Founding of institutions. (3) Education and bringing up of deaconesses.

But the plan was not to be carried out. The primary reason was certainly the great war of 1870, which demanded all the available resources of Neuendettelsau, and on the 2d of January, 1872, Löhe died. This ended the matter as far as Neuendettelsau was concerned.

In 1872 an attempt was once more made. The society in Toledo sent Anna Lutz to Neuendettelsau to be trained there. She was to take charge at first of the orphanage which Pastor Dörfler had founded, and then, if possible, to begin a deaconess house in connection with it. Every effort was made in Neuendettelsau to instruct Anna Lutz as thoroughly as possible in the principles of the diaconate. She was consecrated and sent out in joyful hopefulness, but she had not labored for any length of time when she was forced by sickness to give up her calling. So this attempt also was a failure.

In 1869 Luise Adelberg, a Neuendettelsau deaconess, with the consent of the motherhouse, had accepted the position of house-mother in the orphanage founded by Pastor Volz in Buffalo. In 1874 she sent two of her charges to Neuendettelsau, in the hope that they might become deaconesses and carry on the work. But neither did this attempt meet with success, and, after laboring for a number of years in Buffalo, Sister Luise returned to Neuendettelsau.

In 1884 a new attempt was made, entirely independent of all that had preceded it. John D. Lankenau, a wealthy German of Philadelphia, had been president of the German Hospital since 1869, and after the death of his wife and children had given to it his whole love and care. As the management and nursing in the hospital were not satisfactory, either to him or to the vice-president, Consul Meyer, these two men succeeded, in 1882, in having three of the most prominent representatives of the Lutheran Church in Philadelphia elected members of the board, and endeavored to secure deaconesses from Germany as nurses. After many unsuccessful efforts, Consul Meyer persuaded a small deaconess community, recommended by Pastor Ninck of Hamburg, and consisting of six sisters with their Superior, to emigrate to Philadelphia. On the 19th of June, 1884, they landed in America. From that time on Mr. Lankenau's relation to the sisters was that of a father, whose business it was to provide for them. Dr. Spaeth, who, from the beginning, rendered great service in every way, undertook their spiritual guidance. In 1886 Mr.

Lankenau began to build a magnificent motherhouse, quite near the German Hospital, which was called the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses. The first name, in memory of the founder's wife, designates the Old People's Home connected with the Deaconess Institution. While this house was building, Marie Krueger, the first Superior, died. Through Consul Meyer the Board secured Wanda v. Oertzen to fill this post. In Kiel she had received a thorough training in nursing, and had worked with the deaconesses in the institution Salem in Stettin. Rev. A. Cordes, who, as assistant of Pastor Ninck, had become familiar with the deaconess work, was called, on Dr. Spaeth's motion, to be rector of the motherhouse, and entered on his office in August, 1888. From the beginning his aim was that the work should not be restricted to nursing. He organized the School for Deaconesses, and in the fall of 1890 opened also a girls' school. Under his skilful guidance the house made rapid progress, but in 1892 he returned to Germany. In July, 1893, he was succeeded as rector by the gifted and highly cultured Pastor C. Goedel, from the Rhineland. He labored thirteen years in the institution, until his return to Germany in 1906. In 1897 the house lost its able Superior by the death of Wanda v. Oertzen. Pastor Goedel's successor, in August, 1906, was Rev. E. F. Bachmann, who had been pastor at Buffalo, N. Y.

The deaconess institution numbers now 74 sisters. It owes much to Neuendettelsau especially. Through

its direct connection with Germany, where the female diaconate originated, it has, from the beginning, taken a leading position in deaconess affairs in America, and many other institutions have gladly come to it for study.

The founding of this house was, as it were, the signal which everywhere called similar institutions into being.

One year later, in 1885, the Norwegian Lutherans in Brooklyn opened a deaconess house and hospital, after Elisabeth Fedde, a sister who had been sent from Christiania in Norway, had done pioneer work for a year and a half. This was followed by two more Norwegian houses, the first, also begun by Elisabeth Fedde, founded in Minneapolis, 1889; the other, the Norwegian-Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, in Chicago, 1897. The latter had more than usual difficulty in the beginning, but already numbers far more sisters than the other two. Since 1903 it has belonged to the United Norwegian Church of America and is under its direction. The Norwegian Deaconess House in Brooklyn has so far undertaken work only among the poor and sick. Both the others have, in addition, workers in orphanages and old people's homes, in parishes, and in the mission fields of China and Madagascar. Pastor H. B. Kildahl is rector in Chicago, and Pastor A. O. Fonkalsrud in Brooklyn.

Pastor E. A. Fogelstroem began the deaconess work among the Swedish Lutherans in America. For more than twenty years he devoted his labor and influence indefatigably to this cause, until he broke down completely, and was compelled to resign the work to other hands. The Swedish Deaconess House in Omaha, Neb.,

owes its existence to his efforts. In 1887 he sent the first sister, Bothilda Swenson, to be trained in the Philadelphia Motherhouse. Four more sisters followed in the next year. In 1890 the Deaconess house was opened. Sister Bothilda, who had studied for one year longer in Stockholm, and had visited other deaconess houses in Europe, became the first Superior. The house owns a large property, most beautifully situated in Omaha, upon which a number of institutions have already been erected. It has 41 sisters. In 1904 it was taken over by the Augustana Synod, with which it is now in organic connection. Pastor P. M. Lindberg is the rector.

From this house went out the Swedish Bethesda Deaconess House in St. Paul, Minn., which was founded in 1902 by Pastor C. A. Hultkrans. It belongs to the Minnesota Conference of the Swedish Augustana Synod, and is now an entirely independent deaconess house, with 21 sisters. The Swedish fields of labor are about the same as those of the Norwegians.

The prosperity of the Deaconess Institution in Philadelphia filled Dr. Passavant and his friends with new courage for the deaconess work. On the 29th of December, 1891, the venerable old man was brought into the chapel of the Milwaukee Hospital in his rolling-chair, in order that he might himself consecrate three sisters as deaconesses. This was the third consecration since the beginning in 1849. One of these three sisters, Martha Gensike, became Superior of the Deaconess Institution. Probationers soon began to come in, and in the year 1893

the motherhouse in Milwaukee was organized. Dr. Passavant himself installed Rev. J. F. Ohl as the first rector. Scarcely a year later the untiring laborer was called to his rest. At that time the sisters numbered 17. Thus he was permitted yet to see the beginning of the work of the diaconate which he, nearly fifty years earlier, had planned and hoped to establish in his native land. The motherhouse now has a rector from the Iowa Synod, Rev. H. L. Fritschel, and through this has come into closer connection with that Synod. It numbers 45 sisters, most of whom are working in the different institutions founded by Dr. Passavant.

The Deaconess Institution in Baltimore, Md., differs from those mentioned above, in so far that it was founded directly by the General Synod, the general body to which it belongs. Since 1885 the matter had been agitated, especially by Rev. F. P. Manhart, D. D., and Rev. G. U. Wenner, D. D., but 1895 is the year which can actually be given for its founding. The House was opened with six sisters, who had been trained in advance in Philadelphia and Kaiserswerth. Baltimore is the only Deaconess House among those mentioned so far that does not include a hospital. It usually sends its young sisters to Philadelphia to learn something about nursing. Most of the sisters are employed as parish deaconesses. The Baltimore House is entirely English, its rector is Rev. C. E. Hay, D. D.

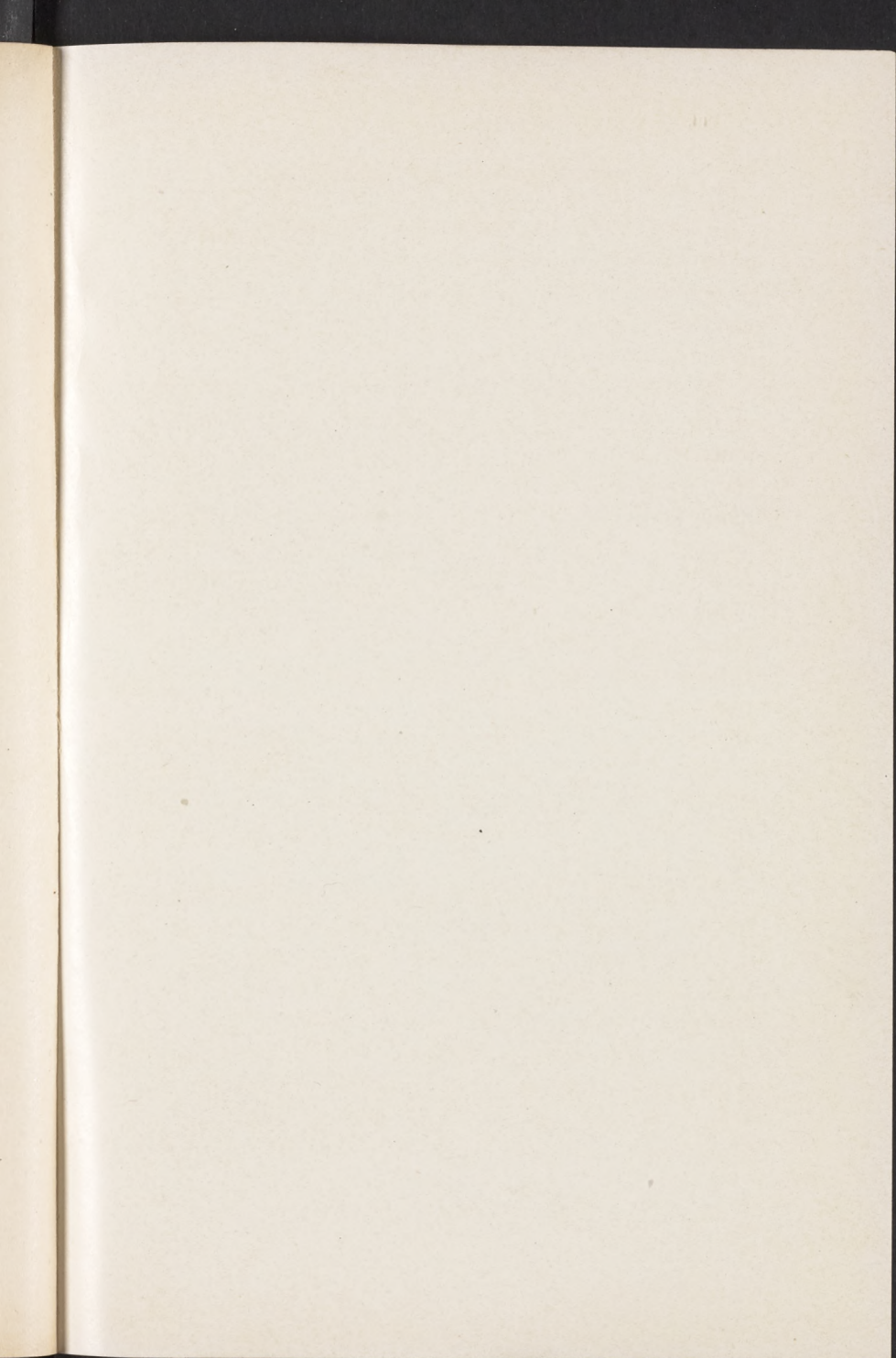
The youngest two among Lutheran Houses are Brush, in Colorado, and Sioux City, in Iowa. They are still in the very beginning.

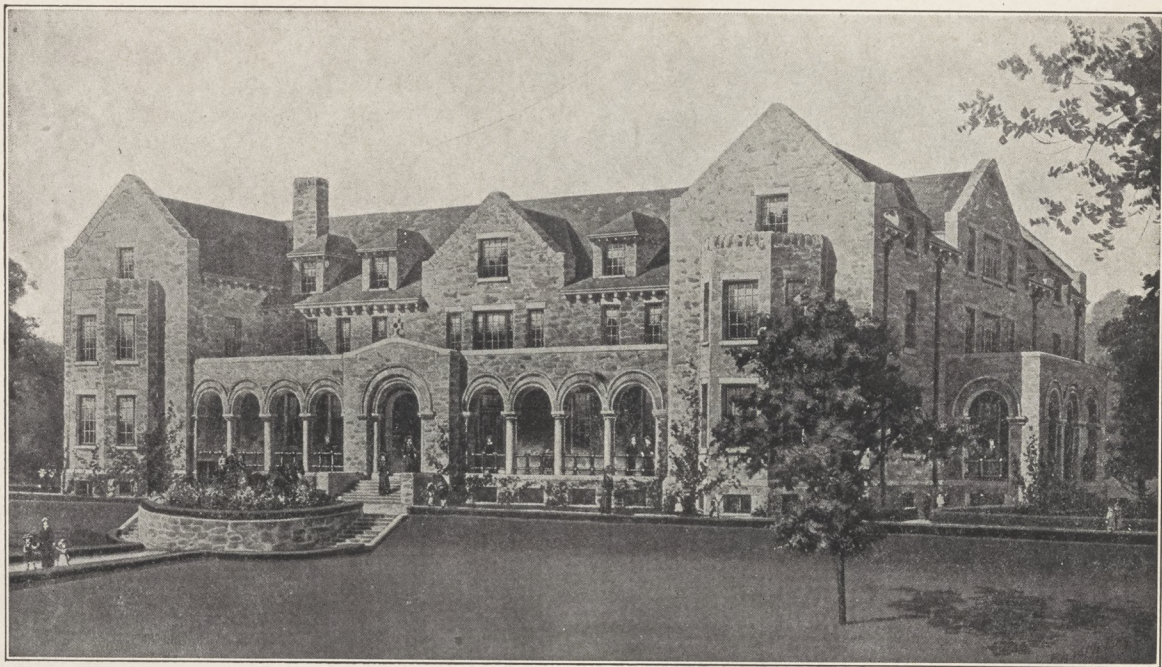
In 1896 the Lutheran Houses formed a Conference which meets every two years to discuss matters of common interest. Four of these houses have joined the Kaiserswerth Conference. The total number of sisters in Lutheran houses is 313, with 93 fields of labor.

The Deaconess Houses and Societies for the Diaconate of the German Evangelical Synod of North America, united in October, 1909, to form the Evangelical Association for the Diaconate of the German Evangelical Synod of North America. To this association, beside five deaconess houses, belong three societies for the Diaconate, which provide for the training of probationers, but have no motherhouse yet. The total number of their sisters is 65.

By far the most important institution of the association is the Evangelical Deaconess House in St. Louis. It has 43 sisters. Ten sisters are intrusted to them for training by other deaconess houses or societies for the diaconate belonging to the association, and to three of these houses it has sent sisters for helping out and managing them.

For a while there was great enthusiasm in German Evangelical circles for inter-denominational deaconess houses. The fact that, in philanthropic work, one can and must reach over the confessional hedges with a helping hand is so obvious as to need no argument. But it was overlooked that a deaconess house, in order to prosper, must present an absolute oneness in its workers. This is not so easy, however, unless there is one mind and one conviction in matters of faith. The inter-denomi-





DEACONESS MOTHERHOUSE, BALTIMORE, MD.

national houses did not show the progress hoped for from their very promising beginning. The oldest undertaking of this kind, and, at the same time, one which seems to succeed best, is the German Deaconess House in Cincinnati, with 27 sisters. Dayton was begun by Pastor C. Mueller, with much love and enthusiasm, and was organized with the help of a Sister Superior lent by Bielefeld for a few years. It seemed to flourish, but went down again, and Pastor Mueller became discouraged and resigned. Evansville was annexed by St. Louis. Buffalo has scarcely any sisters left.

The Evangelical Society, which also possesses two deaconess houses in Germany, has a deaconess house and hospital in Chicago, with over 40 sisters. The Atlantic Conference of this society intends to erect a second house in the East. So far it has had most of its sisters trained in the Lutheran Motherhouse in Philadelphia.

Two Reformed Houses in Cleveland, Ohio, and Allentown, Pa., are still dragging out a miserable existence.

Most of these institutions devote themselves mainly to nursing. The sisters of the Evangelical Society are employed more in parish work.

The Episcopal Church in America, like the Mother Church in England, has sisterhoods and deaconesses. The line is not clearly drawn between them, but, on the whole, the field of the first seems to be the institutions, while the second take the parish work.

The founder of the first sisterhood in America was the Rev. William Augustus Muhlenberg, of New York, a great-grandson of the Lutheran patriarch. The model

which he set for himself was the German deaconess, with whose work he had become acquainted during a European trip. In 1852, primarily for service in his own congregation, he organized the sisterhood of the Holy Communion. It was intended to bring together women "who might be trained to assist the pastor of the congregation in parish visiting, nursing, the education of girls, helping needy women, church embroidery, and other service of this kind." The rules and fundamental principles of the sisterhood follow those laid down by Fliedner; his questions for the self-examination of sisters are almost literally translated. In 1858 the sisterhood took charge of St. Luke's Hospital in New York; in 1863, a branch, the Sisterhood of St. Mary, was formed.

At first the new movement did not meet with much encouragement; but in 1869 the Board of Missions chose a Deaconess Committee, on whose motion the organized work of women received recognition by the Church, and a special Board was appointed for it, under the bishops.

The Episcopal Church has now about 25 sisterhoods, none of which, however, are very large; also there are seminaries for deaconesses in New York, Philadelphia, and St. Paul, where single women, with sufficient preliminary education, can take a two years' course in theory, in which they receive also a rather broad general culture. If they choose, then, the vocation of deaconess, they are set apart for this work. It seems that this training is not required in every case. The Church Year Book for 1908 counts 157 deaconesses. The office of the deaconess is recognized as a churchly one, and the

members of the sisterhoods are in part similar to the Romish orders, and, in other respects, the Kaiserswerth model is unmistakable. For example, among the United Deaconesses of Maryland the form of consecration is almost word for word the same as that used in many deaconess houses. Among others the requirements are more strict. For instance, the sisters are not allowed to visit each other socially in their rooms without special permission of the Superior. Many rules require the observance of the Hours of the Ancient Church. Vows may be taken by those who wish to do so, even where they are not required.

The organization of these associations seems to be, on the whole, the same. The practical head is the sister superior; the rector is usually the spiritual head only. The supreme oversight belongs to the bishop. The sisterhood is graded in three classes—sisters, probationers, and associate sisters. The latter only devote a specified time to the work. The fields of labor are about the same as in the German deaconess houses, except that parish work is not mentioned. This is probably given over to the "deaconesses."

In the Methodist Church of America the deaconess idea gained entrance in 1889, and has since become widespread. One of the first parish workers was a pastor's wife, Lucy Rider Meyer of Chicago. In 1885 she had begun a seminary for training women to labor in the service of home and foreign missions. During the summer vacation in 1886 she, with some of the pupils, worked among the poor, the sick, and needy of Chicago. These

workers called themselves deaconesses. The attempt succeeded, and the work was continued. In 1887 Mrs. Meyer sent a petition to the General Conference asking that the deaconess work be authorized as an office in the Church. The petition was most warmly supported by the Missionary Bishop, Thoburn, who had just returned from India on furlough. He ardently desired to gain deaconesses for the Zenana work. At his request a further petition was addressed to the General Conference, that special authority should be given to deaconesses in the mission field, to administer the sacrament to women shut up in the Zenana. This was refused, but the General Conference most enthusiastically recognized the female diaconate as an institution of the Church, and placed it under churchly regulation.

As the ground had already been prepared by others, the deaconess cause now developed very rapidly. It was zealously pushed forward by Mrs. Jane Bancroft Robinson, of Detroit, who had become acquainted with the work in Europe, and had visited Mildmay in London. In October, 1888, she had laid before the Woman's Society for Home Missions, in Boston, a comprehensive report filled with intense love for the cause. A Deaconess Committee was formed, and she was unanimously chosen as president. She delivered enthusiastic addresses throughout the country, and founded deaconess homes and auxiliary societies. She was called the Evangelist of the deaconess work in the Methodist Church of America; it was placed under the oversight of the bishops in 1900.

In 1908 the General Conference in Baltimore re-organized the deaconess work. The whole body of deaconesses belonging to the Methodist Church in the United States are now included in three forms of deaconess administration, and are under a common Board of Directors, consisting of eleven members, new appointments being made by the General Conference every four years. Two members of this Board are bishops, each of the three deaconess corporations must have two representatives, and the last three may be chosen without limitation. Every deaconess must belong to one of these associations, and must have her license renewed every year by the District Board. Thus, in any case, the churchly control of the work is secured.

Each of the three corporations has its pension fund, to which institutions, under the care of deaconesses, and deaconess stations pay a fixed contribution annually. There is also a relief fund. The total value of property held by the deaconess organization is given as nearly five and a half million dollars. The deaconesses receive no salary, but, when they cannot maintain themselves, are supplied for life with what they need.

The numerous deaconess homes of the English Methodists must not be confounded with the motherhouse. They are not the centre of a larger organization, but the home of a group of workers, laboring together, perhaps in one of the more important cities.

The English Methodists distinguish two classes among the deaconesses—nursing deaconesses and visitors or evangelists. The training of the two classes is quite

different. The former, in addition to their instruction in the Word of God, are thoroughly taught how to nurse the sick. The latter receive a wider culture, at the same time having practical exercise in all that belongs to their future calling. The course lasts two years.

Of the work it is said, "the deaconess work includes everything in which the help of women in the Church is needed." But the task of the first class is principally the bodily and spiritual care of the sick poor in the districts of the large cities, the work in the hospitals, and other institutions. The Evangelists find their chief occupation in house to house visiting, instructing and training the young in schools and Sunday-schools, leading prayer-meetings, etc.

The latest report gives 1068 licensed deaconesses, of whom 376 labor in Europe (335 in Germany), and 3 in foreign missions, beside 286 unlicensed and probationers. Comparing these numbers with former statistics, it seems as if the enthusiasm, having reached its height, has come to a standstill.

The German Methodist deaconesses in America have developed much more slowly than the English bodies, but the work seems to have more backbone. Pastor Golder is general superintendent of this corporation. He upholds, both by word and pen, the motherhouse organization as the best form of deaconess work. His sister is Superior of the motherhouse Bethesda in Cincinnati. It is the largest and most flourishing of these houses, and numbers 70 sisters in 9 fields of labor. The total number of German sisters is 91.

9. The Work in Its Present Shape

By far the great majority of deaconesses at present belong to an organization usually called the motherhouse. The motherhouse is not the invention of any particular genius, but is a growth and development, and in seventy years of history and experience has proved itself the best form of deaconess work for our time.

The motherhouse is not an end in itself; its aim is to organize women's work for the service of the Lord in His Church. The motherhouse has shown itself to be the best means to this end.

As all human beings resemble each other unmistakably, so do the motherhouses; and as every man, on the other hand, has the stamp of personal characteristics, so that no two men are exactly alike, so also each motherhouse is marked by certain entirely individual features.

The motherhouse grows out of the association of a number of women for a common work in the kingdom of God. This association is called a sisterhood. The sisterhood is governed by the House Direction and is bound to obey it. As money-making is not the aim of this associated work, the members of the sisterhood receive no payment for their services. But all their needs are provided for, in health or in sickness, so that they can labor without care or anxiety. Every sister is bound to do the work appointed for her by the Direc-

tion, and to put her whole strength into it. But her service is entirely voluntary, and she can leave the association at any time.

The Direction consists of the pastor and the superior, who, together, govern and guide the sisterhood. The special field of the pastor, or rector, is the churchly, intellectual, and spiritual care of the house, the theoretical instruction of the sisters, and the representation of the cause in the outer world. The superior (Oberin) is the housemother, and is mainly responsible for the practical training of the sisters in their vocation. In most houses she is also bookkeeper, and is in charge of financial details. Together, the Direction decides on the admission, investiture, consecration, and dismissal of probationers and deaconesses; on the division of work, rules, and instructions for the sisters, and on accepting or declining fields of labor. The sisters employed in leading positions, or as heads of departments, form generally a Sisters' Council, whose opinion is consulted in important decisions. On the investiture and consecration of probationers and deaconesses the vote of the sisterhood is taken.

The general direction of the house is through a body, usually called the Board of Directors, which has supreme oversight of the institution, especially in its financial affairs. It calls the pastor and the superior, in the choice of whom the sisterhood usually has certain specified coöperation. Most of the motherhouses have been built and sustained by the free-will offerings of Christian beneficence. A very few were founded and endowed by

single individuals. The American motherhouses are partly supported by their churches.

In Europe the motherhouses rank as free institutions in connection with the established Church. Everywhere it is impressed upon the sisters that they must fulfil their duties to the Church zealously and punctually. Opinion varies as to whether the diaconate, as at present constituted, can be considered an ecclesiastical office. Kaiserswerth heads those who answer this question in the affirmative. Some wish to have the deaconess houses regarded merely as resembling the house of Stephanas, "who have set themselves to minister unto the saints" (I Cor. 16: 15). In England the calling of the deaconess is formally recognized as a churchly office, as is also the case in America among the Methodists and Episcopalians. The general bodies of the Lutheran Church are likewise inclined to regard the deaconess vocation as a churchly office, with the exception of the Missouri Synod, which, on the whole, has held aloof from the movement.

As institutions, the motherhouses are absolutely independent of each other, but their mutual relations are of the friendliest kind. It is considered a matter of course that help and encouragement shall be forthcoming wherever the opportunity offers. If a sister wishes to go over to a different motherhouse, or if she has left her motherhouse for any reason, and later seeks admission to another house, it will only be permitted when the house to which she belongs can give her a satisfactory testimonial.

Most of the existing motherhouses have connected themselves with the Kaiserswerth Conference, which meets every three years. The requirement for admission to this association is the acceptance of the Kaiserswerth fundamental principles, which correspond to the description of the organization of the motherhouse given above.

The General Conference appoints two committees, the Presidency and the Executive Committee. The Presidency consists of four members. When requested, they give counsel and help in difficult cases, watch over principles held in common, and represent the Conference outside. The Executive Committee is formed by ten pastors of the motherhouses. It can be called together by the Presidency to consider weighty questions, and makes the necessary preparations for the meeting of the Conference.

Various criticisms have been made against the motherhouses, and they have, of course, their dark side, like everything human. The chief objection, however, which has been advanced over and over again—that they are Romish—is all nonsense. The reason for this reproach is that the motherhouse, in common with the public service of women in the Catholic Church, takes the form of a voluntary independent association recognized by the Church. This form belongs to pre-Reformation times, and is in itself neither Romish nor Evangelical. Everything depends on the spirit which animates it. The unevangelical spirit of justification by works does not depend on the form, but is deeply in-

trenched in the human heart, and is always ready to put itself forward, where it has not been overcome by the life that is from God. And just as little is spiritual pride a consequence of this form. It can flourish finely even without it.

Another objection is that the motherhouse puts too much restriction on personal independence, even where this is not quite abolished. Certainly the motherhouse does restrict personal independence, it can only exist as long as its sisters obey it. But where would any organization for work be, without some limitation to personal independence? In spite of this, there are such combinations everywhere, and the individual sacrifices his independence willingly in the hope of financial gain. And those who wish to work for the Lord are not to be ready for such sacrifices? Moreover, the deaconess vocation does require self-reliant, steadfast personalities, and often gives to sisters in leading positions a large measure of responsibility and independence. Therefore, the motherhouse tries to make the sisters rely on themselves, and to train them to a full personal consciousness of the responsibilities and obligations they have assumed. In perfect accord with this training, however, is a tight rein and strict discipline. As in a military organization, so also in a deaconess house, success depends just as much on discipline as on the thorough perfecting of individual characteristics. An energetic government, which does not hesitate to put down, without respect of persons, whatever is unworthy of a deaconess or injurious to her sacred cause, which loses

no time in getting rid of useless and improper elements, is, for a deaconess motherhouse, absolutely essential to life, for without it there can be no prosperity.

A true motherhouse is worth much to the deaconess cause. It is a place for that training, of which all who offer themselves as deaconesses, are more or less in need. If an applicant already possesses a thorough education and broad culture, it is of great value; but even then, no one changes at once into a capable deaconess by putting on the deaconess garb. The motherhouse gives opportunity for a churchly training, in addition to the theoretical and practical shaping for a vocation; for it is, at the same time, a churchly association and a company of Christians having the same calling. The life of the community itself is a factor in cultivating and polishing, and contributes to the development of Christian character.

The motherhouse is also a place for testing and sifting. Not every one is fit to be a deaconess. Insincere or haughty spirits soon find themselves, for the most part, under the imperative necessity of "moving on."

Through the great diversity in its fields of labor the motherhouse gives opportunity for putting the various talents of the deaconesses to the very best use. A change of work will often give rest and recreation, and so the energy of the individual will last longer.

To deaconesses in outer stations the motherhouse secures protection and support, advice and refuge in difficult positions. To congregations and institutions

it guarantees that the worker concerned is trained and qualified for her post.

It is hard to tell all that a real motherhouse is to its sisters. Even the name has a pleasant, cosy sound. "I will comfort you as one whom his mother comforteth," says the Lord, when He wishes to show His people the fullness of His consolation. The motherhouse is for the sister the pleasant home, where she knows she is surrounded and kept by earnest, thoughtful motherly love. Here punishment and consolation go together, as with a faithful mother. Hither the weary worker comes back to renew her strength. To sisters who are sick or old it offers a welcome retreat for the evening of life, where they can still feel assured that they are not utterly useless to the community. "The old sisters who hold their age as a gift of God, borne before Him, and tending to Him, are an incalculable treasure for the younger generations. True old age does not resemble an extinct volcano, too weary for glow or flame, surrounded only by slag and ruins, but the home-bound ship, saved from storm and the battle of the waves, drawing slowly and steadily toward the shore. It holds within its heart much gratitude for faithfulness and protection, much praise for undeserved grace, and much sympathy for those who are still in the storm and in the fight, but in its outward appearance is the fullness of consolation and peace" (Bezzel).

The sisters belonging to a motherhouse wear a uniform dress. The necessity of this is everywhere apparent, even when, at first, not much attention was paid

to it. This rule has also met with opposition from those who judge without much reflection. The garb has for the individual sister the great disadvantage that it makes every one look at her when she shows herself in public, but this is far outweighed by numerous advantages.

The garb cuts off at once all luxury in attire, and saves much money, time, and thought which other women think they must spend in order to keep their clothing in the current fashion.

It makes the sisters outwardly alike, however much they may differ in origin, culture, talents, etc., and in this way becomes a symbol of the spiritual relation of the sisterhood into which the sisters have entered with one another.

The garb is recommendation and protection, the means of securing for its wearer her share in whatever respect and esteem the deaconess cause has gained. It makes the deaconess known at once, and so is to her, at the same time, a constant reminder that she must walk worthy of her calling. As a confession of the vocation of its wearer, the garb is also a confession of the Lord whom she serves.

The requirements for admission are essentially similar in all motherhouses. Single women and childless widows from eighteen to thirty-six years old, of blameless reputation, in good health, and with capacity for receiving instruction, who wish, out of gratitude and love for their Lord, to serve Him, who are ready for any work, and willing to be trained, are most welcome. Every

motherhouse could use many more workers than it has applicants.

At first the new arrivals are deaconess pupils, fore-probationers, candidates, or whatever else they may be called, and are commended to the special care and instruction of the mistress of the probationers. Their task is to learn both theory and practice; that of the motherhouse is to test their fitness for the service. In most motherhouses a theoretical course of instruction must be gone through, and, at the same time, some opportunity is given for practice in the work. Often a temporary trial in the practical work precedes the course. The length of the theoretical course varies, according to the time that can be daily given to it. The minimum is six months. It is not proposed to give to the young sister a rapid and finished education, but to complete and deepen what she has already learned, especially in religious matters, and to impart to her a knowledge and an understanding of the history of the diaconate, and of the vocation in general. In this period the foundation is to be laid, and the work is to be begun, which the future sister can and must carry on herself. For a true deaconess works to increase her knowledge and to perfect her skill in her vocation until the very end. "The lowest and the highest must a deaconess be able and willing to do, not ashamed of the lowest nor spoiling the highest work of woman," says Löhe, and in these words he fixes the object which we must strive to attain.

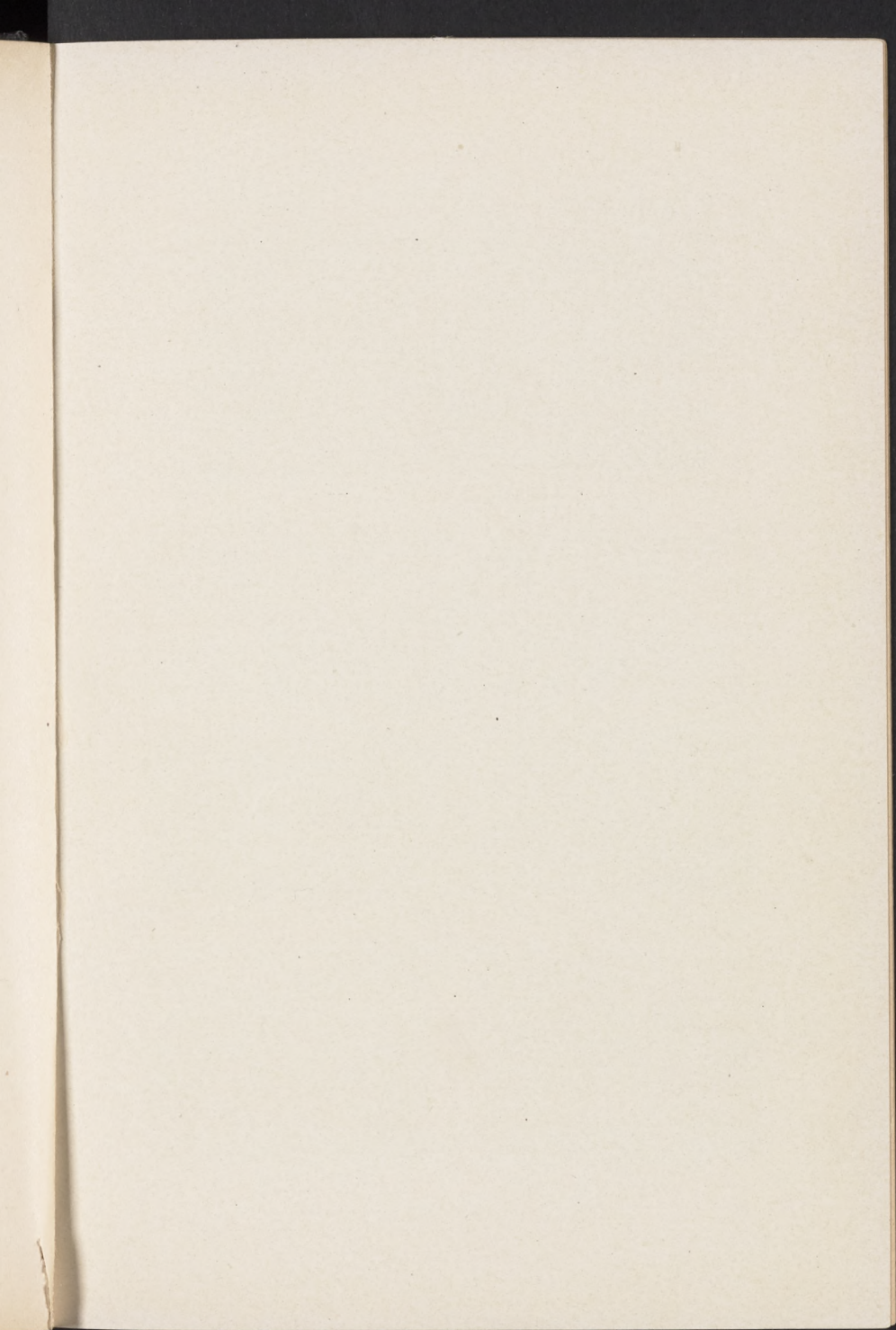
After a period of six to twelve months the pupil, if she has proved capable, is invested as probationer.

This is generally done with some ceremony—singing, reading of Scripture, an address by the rector, and prayer. At her investiture the young probationer promises willing and prompt obedience to the orders of her superiors, and to the rules and regulations of her motherhouse.

The time of probation follows now, lasting, on an average, three to five years. During these years the probationer is given opportunity for training in the different branches of her calling, according to her capacity. She should, at the same time, grow more and more into the fellowship of the house, and while the motherhouse is testing her and her capability and adaptibility to the service of the diaconate, she should also examine herself whether she has the true inward call to become a deaconess.

If, during the years of probation, the young sister has shown herself worthy, the question is laid before her, by the direction of the motherhouse, whether she is ready to be consecrated. If she can answer this question in the affirmative, her call from within and without has reached a conclusion, needing only to be confirmed by the act of consecration.

The order of consecration is not the same in all deaconess houses. In many the attitude of those who are to be consecrated is entirely passive, while supplication is made for them, that, by the continual help of the Holy Spirit, they may be enabled worthily to accomplish the work to which they are called. In most deaconess houses the form of consecration includes a

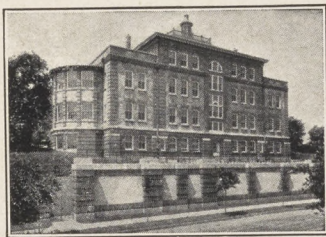




Deaconess Motherhouse



Hospital



Layton Home



The Rectory

THE INSTITUTIONS AT MILWAUKEE, WIS.

solemn promise of loyalty and devotion to the service of the Lord.

By consecration the sister is received definitely into the Association of Deaconesses of her motherhouse, which binds itself to provide for all her needs even if she becomes unable to work. This obligation, however, is in force only so long as the deaconess continues to walk worthy of her vocation, and would be canceled in the case of one who fell into serious transgression.

Among themselves, the sisters of a motherhouse are absolutely equal. It is expected of them that they shall follow the Apostle's rule, "in honor preferring one another" (Rom. 12: 10), and that they shall willingly submit to one another where their calling requires it. It can easily happen in a deaconess house that a sister, in the line of her vocation, may be called to obey one to whom, in another relation, she may be superior. This is no humiliation to her, and is just as little reason for bragging on the part of the other.

As already mentioned, in the last quarter of a century numerous independent organizations have arisen beside those of the motherhouses. The object of many of these is simply humane or mercenary, leaving Christian principles out of consideration. But among these more independent organizations there are also some which wish to carry on the work of the diaconate. The most important is the union for the diaconate, founded by Dr. Zimmer fifteen years ago, which has branches all over Germany. Its members are trained in a seminary, and, after passing an examination, are received

into the Union, which secures positions for them if desired. The first object of this undertaking is not the service of the Lord in His Church, but to open to unemployed women an honorable calling, which will satisfy them and secure them a competency. Their work is mainly in the field of general philanthropy, known as "Inner Mission." Thus, the fundamental idea in this independent organization is to serve women in need of occupation; the main consideration is the person who is to do the work. The motherhouse wishes to relieve the necessities of the Church in its congregations. Here the first consideration is not the person who serves, but a great and sacred cause in which the person is lost to sight, and for which one who has the right conception of her calling is willing and glad even to make personal sacrifices.



II. THE SPHERE OF DEACONESS WORK

Work is the object of the deaconess houses. A sisterhood of deaconesses is an association for a common work. The sphere of work is exceedingly large. It includes every kind of activity in which women can engage. But the deaconess's work has distinctly defined limits, and its object is clearly set before her. All deaconess work must be done as service to the Lord, and in the endeavor to build up His kingdom on earth. We consider the sphere of work as a whole, although no single deaconess house can attempt more than a part of it. But as it is impossible to describe it in every detail, we shall only give a sketch in outline of the principal groups of work.

THE CHIEF GROUPS OF WORK

1. Care of the Sick and Needy in Hospitals and Similar Institutions

The care of the sick is, as a rule, a chief part of the work of a deaconess house. Most deaconess houses are, therefore, connected with a hospital, so that the young sisters may have opportunity to acquire a thorough knowledge of nursing. In addition to this, the out-stations include generally a number of hospitals.

Hospitals are intended to relieve the difficulties of the congregation or of individuals caused by sickness.

The hospital arose in the Christian era, and was founded by Christian beneficence. It grew out of the *Xenodochium* or *Hospitium* of the Ancient Church. The *hospitium* received all who needed a shelter—strangers, the poor, widows, orphans, and sick persons. Gradually the institutions for different classes of those who needed help were separated, and hospitals, in our modern sense, were established for the reception and care of the sick and infirm. One of the oldest and most famous of the hospices is the *Basilias* in *Cæsarea*, founded A. D. 370 by the Bishop Basil the Great. It is described as a city before the city. A church was in the centre, surrounded by a great number of single houses, planned like simple dwelling-houses, and arranged in regular streets. They were partly for the reception of poor and sick persons of various kinds, and partly for officers and servants, while a portion was set apart as workshops. Whatever was needed in the institution was made on the spot by its own mechanics. A large part was devoted to lepers. Basil directed these institutions, and was himself active in the work, especially among the lepers. He also caused similar hospices to be established in every rural diocese.

It may be said of Ephraem, the Syrian, that he improvised the first real hospital. During the pestilence which followed on famine the poorer population of Edessa suffered great distress. Ephraem forsook his hermitage, and, in powerful appeals to the rich, rebuked them for their lack of compassion in allowing their poor brethren to perish in hunger and wretchedness.

They replied, it was not avarice that held them back, but the want of some one who would unselfishly devote himself to the care of the poor. Ephraem declared himself ready for this undertaking, bought three hundred beds with the money supplied by the rich, and set them up in the public colonades. There he directed the nursing, helping everywhere himself. When the pestilence was over, he returned to his solitude, where he died soon afterward (378).

In the thirteenth century the Italians began to erect hospitals in the style in which great men built their palaces. These edifices may be regarded as the second step in the building of hospitals. One of the oldest of this kind is the Hospital San Spirito (of the Holy Ghost) in Rome, a palatial building of the great Pope Innocent III. It was the pattern for many others bearing the same name. The Hôtel-Dieu in Paris, dating from the seventh century, was enlarged and rebuilt in this style. The Charité in Paris (1640), a similar building, was the model of the Charité built in Berlin in 1710. In these immense buildings were great halls, in which at times hundreds of sick persons were lying together. Christoph Rink, a master mechanic in Dresden, relates how he was taken sick in Paris, when he was a traveling journeyman, and lay for several weeks in the Hôtel-Dieu, three in a bed. According to the account of a Vienna surgeon, in the year 1783 there were 400 to 450 sick in one room there, and four or five were lying together in one bed. Board partitions kept them from actual contact.

Since the nineteenth century hospitals are built

either on the corridor system or that of the pavilion. In the first, the passage lies on one side of the room, to the north, if possible, and by the proper locating of doors and windows fine ventilation is secured. In the second, or pavilion system, every ward is a house for itself, open on all sides. A pavilion is frequently several stories high.

A variation of the pavilion system is the barracks. These are one-story buildings, made of light material. The roof is lined with boards, and not only replaces the ceiling, but also provides ventilation by means of several air-valves. These various modes of construction are the third stage in hospital building.

The chief thing in a hospital is the nursing force. Where the nurses are poor, the finest building is worthless. Christoph Rink, mentioned above, tells of conditions in the Hôtel-Dieu, which we should find unbearable now. But the nursing force was the reason why he "could not commend and praise it enough." He says, "That man is well off who comes out again restored to health, and he is still better off who is not obliged to go into it, but I cannot sufficiently commend and praise it, and many of the poor are helped there, for these nuns endure everything—the weary toil, stench, and discomfort—with patience and a cheerful heart, speaking to the sick like a mother, or even better than a mother. I have never heard the like in any land or city, and they put to shame the selfish Lutherans. If these people had our form of worship and our Gospel, their equal for blessedness could not be found." Such a deep impression, in

spite of much that was horrible, did ministering love make upon this sick and lonely stranger.

In the Ancient Church the body of nurses was composed of church functionaries who were called *Parabolani*. They belonged to the clergy as its lowest order. Also widows, supported by the Church, were employed in this service. To these regularly commissioned attendants many volunteers were added, especially, as already mentioned, pious women, often from families of the highest rank. For example, it is recorded of the Empress Placilla, wife of Theodosius the Great, that she went to the hospitals herself, saw that the beds were comfortable, and even rendered menial service to the sick. Many sought to lighten their own sorrows by soothing the pain of others.

In the beginning of the Middle Ages the sick were cared for chiefly by the monks, and the hospital was part of the cloister. Later, at the time of the Crusades, the great knightly Orders of Hospitalers—the Knights of St. John, the Knights of the Teutonic Order, and the Lazarites—took first rank among those engaged in nursing. In 1236 the Knights of St. John had 4000 cloisters, in every land of Christendom. The Lazarites were employed in caring for lepers, who, at that time, were very numerous all over Europe. Members of these orders were at the same time knights and monks.

With the increase of their wealth the knightly orders became secularized and alienated from their original purpose. In their stead appeared the hospital orders

of the commoners. The most important of these were the Cross-bearers, the Brothers of St. Anthony, and the Order of the Holy Ghost. It is noteworthy that these nursing bodies were all associations restricted to men. Women could not be dispensed with entirely in the care of the sick, and so we find sisters mentioned here and there, but they held a very subordinate position. Among the knightly orders they were designated as half-sisters. In the Commoners' orders the sisters were more numerous, but here, too, woman did not take her full right as nurse. Beside the large hospital orders, there were a great many small communities, connected only with one hospital. They consisted of brothers and sisters, governed by a master and mistress, and lived under strict rules. The hospitals were also a kind of cloister; in most of them the regulations of St. Augustine were followed. Even the infirm and sick were often organized as brothers and sisters, and subjected, as far as possible, to monastic rules.

The great awakening of the thirteenth century has been mentioned before. In consequence of the religious excitement, a very great number thronged into the lay-brotherhoods of the hospital orders. The nursing force was frequently more numerous than the patients, so that restrictions were necessary in accepting new members. The nurses often gave or bequeathed their property to the hospital, or bought from it annuities or life-rents for their own benefit or that of their families. In this way the hospital often was more like an asylum. Through such relations to the societies men believed that they

became also partakers in their spiritual blessings—an interweaving of the earthly and the heavenly.

It has been questioned how much real beneficence was found in these hospitals. "That love, faithful unto death, was not wanting was evident, especially during the great epidemic of the fourteenth century. When the 'Black Death' was reaping his frightful harvest, among his victims were 124,434 mendicant friars alone, a witness to their faithfulness in the pastor's office. In the Hôtel-Dieu, in Paris, there were often 500 pest patients. Every one of the brothers and sisters are said to have been entirely swept away more than once, and still there were always new ones to take their place. But without regard to such special instances, the fact that hundreds and thousands of large and small hospitals existed, supported by Christian beneficence, and served by multitudes of brothers and sisters, who, out of love to God and Christ their Lord, devoted themselves to the poor and wretched; that in these hospitals so many souls, weary from the tumult of the world, found a quiet retreat for the evening of life; that there so many were cared for in their need, restored to health from sickness; that the dying came to a peaceful end supported by the prayers of the brothers and sisters—this one fact alone is sufficient to show that at this time Christian philanthropy had reached a flourishing condition, which we vainly seek in the Ancient Church" (Uhlhorn).

In the fifteenth century came the decline. "Love is often stifled by riches. The members of the religious

orders left the nursing to their numerous servants, and made themselves comfortable with the income of the institution." That was the beginning of the end. A great many hospitals had been established by the citizens of the towns, and were under the direction of the town councils. These institutions were the first to adopt secular nurses. It is curious that the sisters disappeared first. The brothers gradually followed. In their stead came male and female attendants, under officers appointed by the council. At last nursing was given over entirely to persons whose main object was to earn a living. The condition of the patients became worse and worse.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, with Vincent de Paul began a new period of growth in beneficent activity in the Catholic Church. Through the unselfish devotion with which the "Brothers of Mercy" and "Sisters of Mercy" dedicated themselves to it, the care of the sick was completely reconstructed. Even a scoffer like Voltaire was forced to confess, concerning the Sisters of Mercy in the hospitals, that there is nothing greater on earth than the sacrifice of temporal advantages, youthful bloom, and often noble birth, brought by the weaker sex, in order to comfort human misery, the sight of which is so humiliating to our pride, and so offensive to our fastidiousness.

In the evangelical countries the sick were still left to the men and women nurses, and the resulting conditions were often such that among the people arose a deep distrust of the hospital, if not an actual horror of it.

This was only changed when the deaconesses entered the hospital. Their work of love was also the reason why, in the last quarter of a century, many schools for nurses and secular societies for nursing have arisen. The care of the sick now received a new impulse everywhere.

The pioneer in this field was Florence Nightingale, who recently died at an advanced age. She had received her training in the deaconess house in Kaiserswerth and among the Sisters of Mercy in Paris, and had learned to appreciate the value of such a training. Then she studied for thirteen years the whole subject of hospitals in England and on the continent. Her splendid achievement among the wounded in the War of the Crimea showed the world what real woman's nursing can do.

After the war Florence Nightingale received, as acknowledgment of her services, a sum of money to be used at her discretion. She decided to use the income from it for training women as nurses. This was the origin of the Nightingale Fund, which supplied the means with which female nurses are to be trained for hospitals and poor-houses in St. Thomas' Hospital. In spite of many obstacles she succeeded in re-organizing the care of the sick in St. Thomas' Hospital in London, and in founding a school for female nurses. The fundamental principles represented by her are the foundation of all correct nursing. She required of the nurses a love for their calling, an unreserved devotion to it, an ability for quick and exact observation, and a full and clear consciousness of their great responsibility.

The Italian War resulted in the Geneva Convention, August 22, 1864, when an agreement was made among civilized nations that, in time of war, everything connected with the care of the sick and wounded is to be considered as on neutral ground. The protecting sign is the red cross on a white field. This action caused the formation of the Red Cross Society, which has been followed by many other independent associations.

In America, during the last quarter of a century, nearly all the more important hospitals have opened nurses' schools, which, after three years of theoretical and practical training, confer a diploma, testifying that the graduate is authorized to practice nursing. But as these nurses, outside of the hospitals, are employed only by the wealthy, on account of the high prices they demand, the poor receive no benefit from them. To supply this deficiency an effort is now being made to obtain district nurses, appointed by the city government or by private associations.¹

In our day natural aptitude is no longer sufficient for sick nursing—the nurse must have a minute and thorough training, especially for surgical nursing. Where this is not to be obtained, the success of the most skilful operation cannot be assured.

A modern hospital is divided into surgical and medical departments. For sick children, for confinement

¹ The Visiting Nurse Society, of Philadelphia, is supported by voluntary contributions, and furnishes nurses without charge to the very poor. Surgical and maternity cases and tuberculosis receive special attention. The society is in close touch with the Bureau of Health, the hospitals, and various relief societies of Philadelphia.

cases, and for infectious diseases there are again special departments. For the last named, large cities build special hospitals.

In I Sam. 8: 13 we find women mentioned as apothecaries,¹ showing that they were known from early time to the Israelites. And who has not heard of the wise women, especially among the Germanic tribes, who knew how to compound wholesome extracts from all sorts of herbs? So, then, it is nothing new if many a deaconess, in connection with her service in the hospital, is also intrusted with the responsible position of apothecary.

Insane asylums, infirmaries, tuberculosis institutions, etc., are variations of the hospital; and sanitarium, old people's homes, and similar places are all related to it also.

As we see above, the care of the sick, especially in the hospital, is one of the oldest branches of the work of Christian love. Here the female diaconate has come with a helping hand, where the field has already been long under good cultivation. May it continue to prove a worthy successor to the laborers who have gone before.

2. Care and Training of Those Lacking in One or More of the Senses (Defectives)

Under this heading we include all those who are wanting in one or more of the gifts with which God has endowed men sound in body and mind, in full possession

¹ So Luther's Bible, the Authorized Version, gives "confectioners"; the Revised Version, "perfumers."

of their senses, and in full control of their understanding—as the blind, the deaf, the blind mute. In the hospitals of the Ancient Church isolated cases of these unfortunates are found; there were no special institutions for them. The blind received most attention. The first blind asylum was founded in 1260 by St. Louis. It accommodated 300 blind, mostly soldiers, who had lost their sight in the Crusades; they received only shelter and partial maintenance and begged on the streets of Paris.

Only in the eighteenth century was the systematic teaching of the blind and deaf begun. Abbé Charles de L'Epée, a French ecclesiastic, and Samuel Heinicke, a German school-teacher, actuated by compassion and love, were the first to begin the instruction of the deaf.¹ In the course of their work they both invented methods which are still in use to-day, for love is its own inspiration. Heinicke's phonetic method was pronounced the best in the Congress of Teachers of deaf-mutes in Milan, 1881, and is also used here in America. In the instruction of the blind the French philanthropist, Valentin Haüy, 1746-1822, has won highest recognition. He originated the systematic order for teaching the blind. The impetus which he gave to the work in France, Germany, and Russia laid the foundation for the education of the blind.

When the capacity of the deaf and blind for instruc-

¹The phrase deaf-mute is not used as it formerly was. Even congenital deafness often leaves the organs of speech normal, and the deaf child is no longer necessarily mute.

tion was demonstrated, the authorities began to reflect upon their duty. In every land there are now institutions well adapted for teaching such cases, and also for giving special normal courses to the necessary instructors. These defectives are taught, by the aid of the senses which are left, to overcome the limitations which separate them from the outside world and from their fellow-men. Thus many are enabled to become independent and self-supporting.

Nine houses belonging to the Kaiserswerth Conference are engaged in the work among the blind and deaf, partly in connection with the care of cripples. Often such unfortunates are also deformed.

The possibility of piercing the thick wall isolating the soul of the blind-mute appealed to those who had learned to overcome the lesser hindrances in reaching the deaf. It was first discovered in America that rich mental endowment may exist, and may be developed in these cases, in spite of apparently insuperable difficulties. The autobiography of the famous American woman, Helen Keller, which has reached the seventeenth German edition, has everywhere greatly promoted the interest in this class of unfortunates. In Venersborg, Sweden, in 1886, Elisabeth Anrep-Nordin, a teacher of the deaf, opened the first school for blind-mutes, which has developed into a large institution.

The Sisters of the Oberlin House in Nowawes have, since 1887, taught single children of this kind, in connection with the care which their institution gives to cripples. Helen Keller's autobiography and Elisabeth

Anrep's example fired the deaconess house with the wish to do more for these unfortunates, with the result that, on the 2d of July, 1906, it opened the first home for blind-mutes in Germany. It now numbers 23 such children, and already needs enlarging, as with this number it is overcrowded and must make room for more applicants.

Much more numerous than the deaf and blind are those unfortunates covered by the general term cripples. For example, the last statistics of the German Empire counted 37,000 blind, 40,000 deaf mutes, 60,000 feeble-minded, 63,000 epileptics, and 250,000 cripples. Among these are about 70,000 crippled children.¹

We give the name cripple to a person who is lacking in one of the more important limbs, or who is bent or deformed or mis-shapen, and, being thus impeded in his natural motion, is unable to live and work like other men.

Some cripples can be helped by medical treatment and intelligent care, which may last for years, but very often only an alleviation of suffering is possible. For crippled

¹It has not been possible to secure complete statistics of defectives in the United States. For the census of 1900 no information concerning these classes was collected, except blind, 64,763, and deaf and dumb, 24,369. The enumerators for the census of 1910 reported for continental United States: Blind, 61,423; deaf and dumb, 43,784; blind-mutes, 583. A special enumeration of institutional population made in 1904 reported 14,347 feeble-minded in institutions. In 1910 these numbered 20,199. The full census for 1910, covering defectives among the general population, is not yet available, but the statistics here given have been furnished by the Census Bureau. There has never been a full report of cripples or epileptics.

children of the poorer classes the only effectual help, in most cases, is to put them into an institution.

The problem of a home for cripples is: (1) Where it is possible, to cure the physical defect of the cripple, or, at least, to help him to become better and stronger; (2) To make up the schooling, often neglected for years, and to instruct him in useful work and general knowledge; (3) To teach the cripple to bear his burden in the strength of God, and to help him, instead of the bitterness which is only too frequent, to find peace and joy in his Saviour.

The beginning of the care of cripples goes back to the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century. In the last decade this philanthropic activity has made rapid and strong growth. In Württemberg the institutions for cripples are particularly numerous, and the work has also been taken up in America. In Philadelphia, for example, there are two splendidly endowed homes for cripples—the Home of the Merciful Saviour, opened in 1882, and the Widener Memorial, founded a few years ago.

Especially active in this field is Pastor Hoppe, Director of the Oberlin House in Nowawes, and also prominent in the work among the blind-mutes. Parish sisters in Berlin, belonging to Oberlin House, first called his attention to the misery of cripples. In Copenhagen he studied the methods of caring for cripples first used by Hans Knudsen, and in 1886 began the Cripple Home of the Oberlin House. Through his advice and assistance seventeen cripple homes have been founded, in

which deaconesses out of seventeen different mother-houses labor.

In Scandinavia all cripple homes are under the management of women, but only the Deaconess House in Stockholm takes any direct part in the work.

3. Care and Training of the Feeble-minded and Idiots

The most wretched among the defective classes are the idiots. The Dutch writer, Van Koetsweld, says of them, "Man, and yet no man." They suffer in most cases not only from physical defects, though these are often connected with idiocy, but also from spiritual bondage. More than anything else the feeble-minded are lacking in capacity for decision and self-control. One who is really imbecile is never healthy or in full possession of his senses. The first to attempt the education of the feeble-minded was Dr. Guggenbühl, a Swiss. In 1836, in Seedorf, in Canton Uri, he heard a poor imbecile before the crucifix stammering and faltering through the Lord's Prayer. From that time the thought of improving the condition of these unfortunates never left him. In 1841 he founded the first institution for the feeble-minded near Interlaken. But he promised too much. When the cure of his inmates was not accomplished, people lost faith in his institution. And yet the seed sown by him germinated later. Disselhoff, after he became Fliedner's assistant, wrote an appeal to the German nation to help the most neglected among the wretched, that did much to awaken everywhere the zeal

with which, thenceforward, the cause of the feeble-minded was taken up.

Among the deaconess institutions, Neuendettelsau is most active in caring for the feeble-minded. This work is carried on in five large branch institutions, in which 928 inmates are cared for and trained by 60 sisters and 19 brothers. In this, Neuendettelsau follows in the footsteps of its father, Löhe, to whose heart this work was especially near.

The attention of Löhe was called to this misery through his experience as pastor. When he inquired as to the extent and cause of the evil, he found, to his surprise, that it is much more frequent than he thought or than is generally believed. In order to gain further information about it he visited the institution in Winterbach. This was more than a year before the deaconess institution was begun. On the 9th of May, 1854, he opened at the same time the Neuendettelsau Institution for the Feeble-minded, with one idiot boy, and the Deaconess House. In October, 1854, both institutions moved into the new motherhouse. In the first year the number of inmates rose to 28, and soon a separate building for this institution became necessary. It has grown steadily since. About half of the inmates have no capacity for education, but only need care.

What an amount of misery is contained in such an asylum for the feeble-minded! A party of Nuremberg gentlemen were on their way to Neuendettelsau. In the stage-coach, to pass the time, they amused themselves with stupid jokes about the Dettelsau praying sisters,

at whom they wanted to "take a look for once," etc. A fellow-passenger sat still in a corner. As they alighted in Neuendettelsau he said that, in case the gentlemen wished to see the institutions, he would gladly act as guide, being well known there. The offer was accepted, and he led them through the asylum for the feeble-minded. He showed them the helpless children, some of them twelve years old and over, who needed to be taken care of like young babies; the older inmates, just as helpless, and often hideously deformed; the arduous, patient labor in the school for imbeciles, and everything connected with this work of love. The laughing faces of the gentlemen had long become grave as they left the institution. Deeply moved, they thanked their guide, and said to him that in future they could only think with highest respect of those who, at such great sacrifice, labored in this field of beneficence. Well may the last Neuendettelsau Year-book exult, "No single sphere of our work has the support of universal sympathy, even love, in our national Church that is given to this."

The ways in which idiocy shows itself are very different. The most usual forms include a physical laxity or looseness, slow, indolent movements, lameness, and deformity of single parts of the body. Often most beautiful eyes are found, where intelligence is entirely wanting. Some idiots are irrepressible chatterboxes, others are apathetic and silent. The hearing is often well developed, and musical talent is not rare. Many idiots have a very good memory. The will is weak, and often paralyzed through imagination. His emotions are usually the

best endowment of the idiot. He has a very fine feeling for love and sympathy, or roughness and cruelty.

We distinguish between infantile and secondary idiocy. In infantile idiocy either there never was a normal condition, or a serious illness in early childhood checked intellectual development.

Secondary idiocy is the result of slow or rapid progress in mental disease. The intellectual powers gradually disappear.

The causes of idiocy are hard to ascertain. Most idiots have parents who are confirmed drunkards or are morally degenerate. Very often no cause can be traced. As a rule, an idiot is far better off in an institution. Here he has the best opportunity to be roused from his dullness, as all the arrangements—lesson-hours, methods, etc.—are adapted to his slow comprehension.

An asylum for idiots has three different divisions: (1) The inmates of the asylum proper, whose condition only allows physical training and care. (2) The pupils, with whom, in addition to taking care of them, instruction is the chief means of training. (3) The workers, who are so far advanced that they can contribute something toward their support.

The training of the feeble-minded is an arduous undertaking, requiring much patience. What the healthy child perceives for himself must be impressed on the idiot with painstaking toil. In many a case, for example, it is a triumph, after long months of effort, to have taught a child to eat without assistance.

There are three rules that apply to their instruction:

(1) The foundation of all teaching is through the eye, by looking at things. (2) The progress must be slow, but without a break. (3) Do not worry if you are always obliged to repeat the same thing over and over.

Arithmetic is generally the least successful branch taught them, and in matters pertaining to religion they do best. "The feeble-minded are children, and remain children as long as they live," Löhe used to say; "therefore the beautiful words of the Gospel in the service for baptism, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,' apply to them." It is remarkable how receptive they often are to religious truth. When the feeble-minded come to the Saviour, a bright light is shed even on their stunted lives. Everywhere now an interest is taken in the feeble-minded, and there are also numerous well-managed institutions, not directly the result of Christian love. Any one, however, who has had an opportunity to compare, must feel that only faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is really the "victory that overcometh" even the hopelessness of the imbecile.

4. The Care of the Epileptic

The malady of epilepsy stands in a certain relation to idiocy, because in serious cases it brings it on and often accompanies it. For example, among the patients of the Neuendettelsau institution for the feeble-minded nearly one-fourth are epileptic; for this reason, the deaconess house has changed the name, and now calls it the Asylum for Feeble-minded and Epileptics. On the

whole, it is better to treat the two classes of sufferers in separate institutions. Löhe even planned such a separation, but he did not succeed in carrying out his design.

The first special institution for epileptics was founded by Pastor Bost in Laforce, France. The most important, however, is Bethel,¹ in Bielefeld, rightly called unique, which the late pastor, von Bodelschwingh, undertook in 1872 with 24 patients. It had been opened in 1867, with 4 patients; now it numbers 2200. The motherhouses connected with the Kaiserswerth Conference have a total of 57 such institutions, with 502 nursing sisters, of whom 131 belong to Bielefeld. Of the American houses, two are engaged in this work—Milwaukee, with an institution in Rochester, Pa., and Marthasville and St. Charles, Mo.

The nature of this frightful disease is very little known. It shows itself in convulsions, in which the patient foams at the mouth, followed by a deep sleep, a kind of torpor.

The disease was known to the ancients, in whom it inspired great horror. It is still very wide-spread to-day. Drunken parents, a sudden and terrible fright, heredity, may all cause it. Often no reason whatever can be discovered.

Irritability, peevishness, anger, and mistrust are some

¹ "A Colony of Mercy," by Julie Sutter (1898), an English writer, is a most interesting and detailed account of the complex of institutions established by v. Bodelschwingh in Bielefeld. No one can read it without catching some of the enthusiasm of the writer for the work done there.

of the effects of the disease, and are increased by the trouble which his infirmity causes to the patient and to those about him. Added to this, the unfortunate epileptic can look forward only to the certainty of a gradual decline in all his faculties.

Experience has shown that the care of an institution is by far the best for these patients. Among cases admitted in time to an institution, there are only about 5 per cent. in which every effort fails. About 7 per cent. are cured, and 20 per cent. show substantial improvement. To all of them, however, their lot can be made easier by the regular and thoughtful care of the institution. That they are among fellow-sufferers, that no one flees from them or is afraid of them, but that they have a true home, where everything is adapted to them, has a strong influence on their inner life.

It is also a great benefit that every one can find work to do, according to the measure of his gifts and strength. Many work in the open air, others in work-shops. A number of the patients in Bielefeld have books in a savings-bank in which each day a very small sum is entered as wages. Thus they can accumulate a fund against the time of their recovery, or can send help to their poor parents. This increases their self-respect, and brightens their outlook for the future. A hopeless condition is also injurious to their physical well-being.

Above all, however, what the Lord said of the epileptic boy still applies to epileptics to-day: "Bring him to Me." When the soul finds peace in the Saviour, that exerts the most beneficent influence also on the bodily condition.

Where the peace of God enters, there is, at least, comfort in tribulation.

A life rich in devotional services, in which song takes a prominent place, is most important in such an institution. In this respect also Bielefeld is a model.

"The care of epileptics requires a great number of attendants, and makes great demands on them. Attendants who, animated by the love of Christ, have the tact to adapt themselves to the patients in their bearing and words, in what they do, and what they leave undone, are of inestimable value to such an institution."

5. The Training of Children

When St. Paul describes the good works necessary for a widow to have done well, if she is to be chosen for the service of the Church, he puts first, "If she have brought up children." And Luther says, "Beloved, the faithful training of other people's children is to be put among the highest virtues on earth." So, then, education must also be looked upon as one of the most important parts of the deaconess's work.

Institutions to be considered under this heading are:

(a) *Day Nurseries*

These are institutions which receive children from six weeks to two years old whose mothers are compelled to go out to work. The German name "*Krippe*" (manger) is a reminder of our Lord, who for our sake became a little child and lay in the manger.

Like so many other institutions of mercy, the day nurseries originated in France. A civic officer named Marbeau saw the difficulties of the working-women of Paris, who were obliged to leave their little children all day, often in very incompetent hands, and, at the same time, to pay out the most of their earnings to these caretakers. This prompted him to begin the first day nursery, which was opened on the 14th of October, 1844, with twelve little beds. Women belonging to one of the Catholic orders undertook the management. Seven years later there were 400 day nurseries in France. Now the day nursery has become naturalized everywhere, and is a great benefit to many.

In conducting a day nursery, care must be taken not to help mothers to get rid of their children out of pure laziness or in pursuit of pleasure. Where the mothers themselves have time to perform the duties God has given them, these should not be taken from them.

Deaconesses working in the day nurseries share with the mothers in caring for the welfare of the children in health or sickness. As the mothers, in many cases, do not know how to take proper care of their children, the sisters must try to give them as much practical instruction as possible, letting them look on and learn. But more than this, the deaconesses should try to awaken an understanding in the mothers of the great trust which God has given them in the training of their children. The attitude of the Catholic Church in this respect is typical. She establishes mothers' meetings, under the direction of capable men and women. In these

the mothers are encouraged to offer constant united prayer for their children, and are instructed in the duties and honor, the position and life problems, of a Christian mother. This movement was first organized in Paris, about 1850, by Theodore Ratisbonne, a priest who had been converted from Judaism.

(b) *The School for Little Children*

The next step in educational institutions is the school for little children, which receives children from two to six years old. This also considers primarily the children who are in danger of being ruined because the parents are obliged to go out to work. The school for little children must often make up the lack in parents of a right understanding of their duty to their children. It often happens that parents of a child four to six years old say that they do not know what to do with it, because it will not obey them. But, even where parents have time and understanding, they are often unable to give their children what is best for them, because they do not have it themselves. Such deficiencies as these the school for little children seeks to remedy.

Its task is to accustom the pupils to obedience, order, and neatness; to train them carefully in good habits; to develop their practical and mental ability, and to implant a love for the Saviour in their hearts.

A pioneer and example in this work was Louise Scheppler. On the 11th of June, 1779, at the age of sixteen, she entered the service of Pastor Oberlin, in

Waldbach, in Steinthal, Alsace. She became Oberlin's main help in his efforts for the neglected people of his congregation, and did much toward the great transformation which he succeeded in making. Immediately after entering Oberlin's house Louise was employed in looking after the children too small to go to school, who were running wild on the street, neglected and dirty, while their parents were laboring in the field. This work grew out of a knitting-school which Oberlin's wife had begun in order to help the young girls who were absolutely ignorant of needlecraft. Oberlin had watched Louise as a child, and recognized her unusual gifts, which now came to full development. Her school finally numbered one hundred children. When Louise was twenty years old Oberlin's wife died. Louise now took charge of his household and brought up his seven children. This would have been work enough for any one else, but Louise continued her activity among the children of the congregation, and, in addition, gave more and more help, in body and soul, to the sick and needy of the whole parish. She was not deterred by any weather, by any trouble, or by any difficulty that came in her way. A reward of merit of 5000 francs, awarded to her by the French Academy, she used in her beneficent work. For her funeral text she chose the verse, Luke 17: 10. This plain servant girl was great in the kingdom of God. She died in 1837.

In the mean while work in this line had also been actively carried on in England. Robert Owen, a manufacturer, founded an institution in Scotland to care for

the children of his workmen, and put James Buchanan, a pious weaver, in charge of it. Buchanan invented movement games, marches, and marching songs, regulated the object-lessons, and gave pedagogical rules for the treatment of little children. A society was formed for the furtherance of this work, which found a very active representative in Wilderspin. He was principal of the London Central School for Little Children; in his travels he urged and directed the erection of these schools, and published a work on this subject, which was translated into German, and was of great service in Germany.

Fliedner learned the value of the school for little children in England. He was in communication with Wilderspin, and in 1837 founded such a school, assisted by a young Christian woman of his congregation, whose fitness for the work he had recognized by seeing her in her knitting-school. The instruction of pupils to carry on this work was soon included. From this beginning grew the Seminary for female teachers of schools for little children in Kaiserswerth, which became a nursery out of which many hundreds of teachers have gone forth. Fliedner gained an unusually well-qualified co-worker for the cause of the school for little children in the teacher Friedrich Ranke, who also was efficient in forwarding it later, as first director of the Oberlin House.

One deaconess house after the other has since then taken up this work. Several houses are especially engaged in it. Belonging to the houses of the General Conference there are deaconesses employed in 1117

schools for children. Very often this work is connected with that of the parish.

One year later than Fliedner, and entirely independently of him, Froebel opened his first "kindergarten." He defended his system in speaking and writing. It was essentially different from that of Fliedner and his successors. The latter see in children Jesus' lambs, who, above all, are to be led to Him and trained for Him. In the kindergarten Froebel wishes to find the fundamental principles which, as he had experienced, are frequently wanting in educational systems. To him the question is how to develop the man. Man is an organism, and must be treated as such. Whatever harmonious development is reached at a tender age becomes the guarantee for corresponding perfection in riper years. From these radically different points of view arises the whole difference in the systems.

Froebel's system has found enthusiastic disciples, especially among those to whom the proper study of mankind is man and Christianity is merely incidental. If we do not agree with Froebel's system in all points, however, there is still much that is valuable in practical use in his games and occupations. The enthusiasm and zeal of his followers are also worthy of imitation, even by those who have learned a more excellent way.

(c) *The Sunday-school*

The first Sunday-school was founded in 1781, by Robert Raikes, editor of a newspaper in Gloucester,

England, out of compassion for the children running wild on the streets. In the first decade of its existence it was a substitute for the lacking common schools. The teachers were paid. The plan of teaching was as follows: 10 to 12 A. M., reading; 12 to 1 P. M., pause. Then the pupils attended church service with the teachers; afterward came instruction in the Catechism until 5 P. M.

In the course of time the Sunday-school has been remodeled in many respects, and is now exclusively devoted to religious instruction. The teachers, both men and women, are all volunteers.

The object of the Sunday-school is to lead the young to a knowledge and understanding of Holy Scripture, especially of the story of the redemption. It is, above all, necessary where the pupils in the public schools receive no religious instruction, or, what is even worse, are taught by unbelieving teachers. Apart from this, when rightly used, it is an invaluable means of making the Word of God properly cherished and loved by young and old. Especially in America, the work of elevating the Sunday-school is carried on with great zeal, and efforts are made to bring adults also into Bible classes, and to encourage the study of the divine Word.

Luther himself most urgently counsels the instruction of the young. "Therefore, let every man look to himself, and take care of his office, lest he sleep, and let the Devil take the place of the Lord God. For if we sleep and are silent here, so that the young are lost by our neglect, and our descendants become heathen or wild

beasts, our silence and snoring will be to blame, and we shall have a heavy account to render for it."

(d) Elementary and Higher Schools for Girls

When the girl has grown beyond the first schools, she passes through the elementary and eventually the higher school for girls. In these years her development usually takes a decisive turn.

The Roman Catholic Church, through a host of highly cultivated sisters, has been very active and very successful in this department of education, both in Europe and America, as well as in other parts of the world. In Europe, for example, Bavaria alone, although so small, has twelve orders of women employed in teaching and training girls. In the two most important of these orders the accessions within four years reached 941 sisters! The number of sisters in the United States is given as approaching 56,000. In the whole wide territory of the United States there is not one among the more important cities where the sisters of these orders do not conduct splendid institutes of the higher class, beside numerous parochial schools. They have 70,000 girls in their higher schools, and 800,000 children in their parish schools; and among them are many hundred girls from Evangelical families, who become estranged from their church, or are lost entirely, because the Evangelical congregations have so little to show that can bear the comparison. Only a relatively small number of deaconess houses are engaged in school work; in Germany,

principally Kaiserswerth and Neuendettelsau; in America, so far, only Philadelphia. It is worth while to make an effort to do more and more in this line. "The diaconate has a right to the training of the growing children, because to it also the need must appeal, which, through the rising generation and its spiritual impoverishment, is pressing upon the Church. The teaching and training diaconate is the preparing and grounding and preserving service of the Diaconate to Evangelical youth" (Bezzel).

The field of labor here offered to those who are adequate for it is a very large one, especially in America. In this country, which is mainly Protestant, it would require thousands of sisters to attain, in higher schools and the greatly needed parish schools, a result somewhat similar to that attained by the activity of the Roman Catholics. The training of girls is, in itself, one of the most fruitful fields of labor for helping to build up the kingdom of God. At the same time, the employment of deaconesses as teachers offers the best opportunity to make the rising generation acquainted with the female diaconate, and what it is doing, and to awaken the desire to take part in its work.

(e) Orphanages

To the Old Testament saints the provision for orphans was a sacred duty, for "God is a father of the fatherless." In the ancient Church the care of orphans was an important work of the widows and deaconesses. So, then,

in the whole history of the Church, a consciousness of her duty to show charity to orphans always awoke anew with the re-awakening of a life of faith, showing itself in works of love, even if this consciousness was often dulled by selfishness.

It has been much disputed whether family life or the training of an institution is better for an orphan. Each has its advantages, and both can be good if the training is based on that love which "seeketh not its own." That deaconesses are preëminently called to the training of orphans was recognized in the ancient Church, and is accepted without question to-day. Most deaconess houses are engaged in this blessed work.

The object of the orphanage, or orphans' home, is to replace to the child the home it has lost by the death of its parents, and to train it to be capable and useful and a true child of God. The whole arrangement of an orphanage must serve this double purpose, and all work done in it or for it must have the same end in view. The danger of all institutions, the bringing up of the inmates as if they were all cast in the same mould, must be kept in mind by the teacher, who must seek to overcome it by careful, faithful study of the individual character of the children committed to her, and an avoidance of the mechanical application of cut-and-dried methods.

6. Social Work

Industrial schools, schools of domestic economy, institutions for training maid-servants and working women,

and all similar institutions, aim at social betterment. Through them an effort is made, on the one hand, to elevate the young girls of our nation, to add to their ability and usefulness by cultivating their talents; on the other hand, pains are taken to bring them closer to the Christian ideal of noble womanhood. By this means our young women are at the same time preserved from the mistakes and temptations by which frivolous girls, awkward and averse to work, are so easily led to ruin.

That such efforts are most necessary is shown by the following instance: At the Victoria Bazaar, founded in Berlin, in 1866, "to provide working women with situations and employment," about 3000 persons, in four years, presented themselves with the request for maintenance and work. Only a few more than 200 could be helped. The others were absolute incapables. Inquiry showed that the fault lay in their education. They had never learned how to employ themselves usefully.

The industrial schools try to counteract this evil by making the girls dextrous in using their hands. Often these schools are conducted by deaconesses as a part of their parish work or growing out of it. The sisters strive to impart to the girls knowledge which will be needed later for housework or keeping house. The schools of domestic economy have a similar purpose, but add to the training in general handiness, instruction in cooking, laundry work, etc.

The schools for house-maids also aim to give thorough training in household matters and useful needlework.

The training is made as comprehensive as possible. In these schools only girls of good character are received. The fee is very small, but is never remitted, except in rare cases, for what one gets without paying is usually not valued very highly. When the course is satisfactorily completed the school provides suitable situations for the pupils, and continues to keep them under its protection and guidance. Among the deaconess houses, Kaiserwerth and Dresden are specially engaged in this work.

As the schools for house-maids are training institutions, so the lodging-houses for maid-servants are institutions for their protection. They offer a safe shelter to servants newly arrived in a city or temporarily out of a situation, and secure suitable places for them. They can also bring to bear a moral pressure, inasmuch as they do not send servants into households known to be undesirable, nor do they receive servants whom they know to be bad.

Statistical comparisons show that, out of communities from which the girls usually go to the Servants' Lodging House in Berlin, few girls, or none at all, are to be found in the syphilitic department of the Charité. This is a proof of the efficacy of the lodging-house in protecting its inmates.

Of great value, also, are the boarding-houses and lodgings for factory girls. These have usually no home, and what offers itself to them is worse than none. Here, too, the chief consideration is to protect the girls by motherly care and to provide a Christian home for them.

7. The Rescue of the Lost

"Protection from evil" is the object of the work described in the last section, and, therefore, it is certainly in keeping with the spirit of our Lord, for that is what He implored in His last prayer for the disciples, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Therefore is this work of such tremendous importance. All who are engaged in teaching and training the young in the right way, are helping to save them from being lost. But the work is often in vain, and many, too, are not reached at all. Thousands of the children and daughters of our nation fall into "the evil," and these are called the lost. The work among them leads into the blackest depths of human life, and is beset with the greatest difficulties. But Christian love dare not hold back from the lost; we must follow the example of the Good Shepherd, who goes after "that which is lost, until He find it" (Matt. 18 : 11; Luke 15 : 1 ff.). He has found imitators, for the history of this work in particular contains a long list of heroic names, burning and shining lights in the annals of Christian beneficence.

The three most important institutions in this sphere are:

- a. The Rescue Home for Girls.
- b. The Magdalen Asylum, and similar institutions.
- c. The House of Correction for female prisoners.

(a) The Rescue Home for Girls

The pupils in the Rescue Home are children who have been neglected or have fallen into bad ways. Often they come from the most depraved surroundings, and have seen nothing but evil during their whole life. Often they are "degenerates" of good family, whose relatives, after all their own efforts have been in vain, send them as a last resort to the Rescue Home.

Theft, lying and cheating, disobedience, refractoriness and stubbornness, form the melancholy register of the usual charges brought against the children in the Rescue Home. And yet the work, even among demoralized children, is something far more hopeful than that given to adults who are lost; and, therefore, much less difficult.

The best organization for a Rescue Home is considered to be the grouping system. This affords opportunity to give the training a family character, each group of children with their teacher forming one family.

The pupils receive regular schooling in the institution, and, in addition, are instructed in housework. Games and recreations must not be overlooked, for we are dealing with children. But everything, play as well as work, must help on their education, the aim of which is to develop a Christian character, and enable them to earn their own living honorably.

The greatest reformer of pedagogics, Pestalozzi, was also of service to the rescue work, although his personal labor, while done from the most ardent love, was not very successful; for Pestalozzi did not possess the skill

to put his admirable ideas into practical shape. What he tried to do was done by the Württemberger, Heinrich Zeller, in Beuggen. His institution, opened in 1820, became in the next ten years a pattern which found many imitators.

In 1813 Johannes Falk founded the "Society of Friends in Need," and began his blessed work among destitute and neglected children. The work grew and spread, for, from the highways and hedges he sought out the children, and provided for them as well as he could. The work centered in the Lutherhof, in Weimar, the first rescue home in Germany. Falk wished to make Christianity seem to the children the most natural, the best possible thing. He was also a poet. In the Lutherhof everything was ringing and singing. A number of the finest children's hymns originated there; for example, the Christmas hymn, "O du fröhliche, O du selige, gnadenbringende Weihnachtszeit." Zeller and Falk were pedagogues by the grace of God, originals in the best sense of the word. Streams of blessing flowed from them.

This may also be said, even in a higher degree, of Wichern, who was greater than either Falk or Zeller. He was the founder of the Rough House, near Hamburg, 1833. This is not really a rescue home, but a rescue village. Here the ideas of Falk have been realized much more completely than he himself succeeded in carrying them out, notably, the family system, which he first insisted upon, and the close connection between praying and working. The Rough House, without changing its original character, became a training-school for lay-

helpers, whom Wichern called "Brothers." They were intended to be like elder brothers to the children. "Everything went as if by itself; but, of course, back of it stood Wichern's wonderful personality, his eminent pedagogical gifts, his talent for organization, his love, laboring unceasingly, but encompassing all his labors in prayer" (Uhlhorn).

Beside these great names from an earlier time, the name of one man in recent years may worthily stand, Dr. Barnardo of London, the "father of Nobody's children," as he has been called. The accounts of his work read like a fairy tale, and yet are absolutely true; how, in the notorious East End of London, he finds out the poor, neglected Nobody's children, in most incredibly filthy nooks and corners, teaches them and provides for them, securing for many of them a new, comfortable home across the sea in Canada. This is the love of Christ, which goes after that which is lost until it is found.

Between the Rescue Home and the Magdalen Asylum is the reformatory, the inmates of which are girls in their minority, who, as professional prostitutes, thieves, etc., are handed over by the courts to Christian institutions for training until they become of age. This is done under a law passed in Germany more than ten years ago. So far the results of this work have been very gratifying. For example, recent investigations in Berlin showed that out of 149 former pupils of the Reformatory only 16 had fallen back into their evil life. Over against this, 86 girls were regularly employed or were married. Eight

were known to have left the country, and of 39 no information was obtained.

Comparing these figures with the results of work in the Magdalen asylums, we see how much brighter the outlook is for work with minors. The law mentioned above is admitted to be very salutary, although, as may easily be understood, it is an eyesore to unprincipled libertines. Many of the German deaconess institutions are engaged in this rescue work.

(b) *Magdalen Asylums*

Much harder than the work for neglected children is that with adult fallen women, of whom there are a deplorably large number. Indolence, disinclination to work, love of pleasure, and destitution caused by incapacity, homelessness, and loneliness, misguidance on the part of evil-minded relatives and acquaintances—these are the reasons why the daughters of our people sink in the slough of immorality. Most fallen women come from the poorer classes, but frequently they are the victims of designing villains, who draw them on by tempting promises, often far over land and sea, to sell them to houses of ill-fame.

Christian beneficence tries to approach these miserable creatures, and to induce them to come voluntarily into the asylums that they may be saved. Midnight meetings are held for this purpose, and hospitals and prisons are visited. Nursing deaconesses often have opportunity to influence those whom the consequences of their sin have brought to the hospital.

In the asylum the effort is made to teach these girls. Work, as varied as possible, and demanding physical exertion, is one of the most important means of training in the Magdalen Asylum. The wholesome open-air work in garden and field has proved particularly efficacious. Often these unfortunates must first be taught the very rudiments of work, which they have either never learned or have long forgotten. Besides being made to work, they are also instructed, especially in the Word of God. Pastoral counsel, strict and yet loving discipline, dare not be overlooked in such an institution.

The aim of this training is the return of the fallen woman to an independent, regular, and pure life. True, the success is, on the whole, not great. The efforts to help seem like a few drops in an ocean of sin and misery. Even if the wish is often felt by these poor creatures to return to a life of decency, they cannot tear themselves away from the power of sin and the devil. This can only take place when rescuing love succeeds in bringing them to the Saviour.

This has always been the main object of those who have tried to help this class of unfortunates. In the thirteenth century, in connection with the oft-mentioned awakening arose the "Order of Penitents of St. Mary Magdalene," and about the middle of the century there were cloisters belonging to this order all over Germany. The penitents lived under strict rules, in monastic seclusion, and were kept at hard labor. Later the order was diverted from its original purpose.

In the fourteenth century there were houses for peni-

tent sisters. These houses were not intended to be cloisters, but, in reality, asylums, reformatories, similar to the Magdalen asylums of our day. It was forbidden to recall to mind the former life of those who were truly repentant, and the Church declared it to be a meritorious work to marry such a woman.

Among the heroic figures who, in more recent times, have given their life to this difficult service we must mention, in the Romish Church, a French seamstress named Lacombe, who, out of compassion, took first two fallen women into her house, and gradually gathered one hundred and twenty about her. She gave them shelter, daily bread, and protection, and led them back to a pure life. With the earnings of the girls who were strong enough to work, this admirable woman was able to feed and clothe her charges and keep a roof over their heads. She was really the foundress of the Houses of the Good Shepherd, of which many have been erected after the pattern which she set.

On the Protestant side, the most important representative of this work is the ardent, untiring Heldring, of Hemmen, a pastor in Holland. His activity was many-sided, but his chief work was the Magdalen Asylum in Steenbeck, though this was only one of the institutions founded by him. Heldring had great force of character, and devoted himself entirely to the work of Christian philanthropy. At the time of his death there had been 975 inmates in Steenbeck.

As already stated, Flidner began his institutional activity with the Magdalen Asylum. Most deaconess

houses are active in this field; in several, this service was the beginning, and is still the centre of their work.

(c) The Care of Female Convicts

This is closely associated with the care of Magdalens. Only a small number of Deaconess houses are engaged in this work, although Fliedner's philanthropic activity began in the prison, and Heldring's decision to take up the work among Magdalens was also the result of a visit to the prison. Up to the present time four houses of the Kaiserswerth Conference are engaged in this work—two Swiss, one Swedish, and one German—and twenty-one sisters labor among female prisoners as head over-seers or sick nurses.

8. Parish Work

Work in the congregation is the original form of the diaconate as we find it in the ancient Church. The parish sister is the assistant of the pastor. Löhe considered the vocation of the parish deaconess as the highest in the diaconate and the final aim of all its activity. He says, "In our opinion the deaconess should be the servant of the congregation, a sanctified presence among its women. What can we imagine more beautiful than, at the side of the pastor and under his direction, to care for the souls of women and advise them in spiritual things? Such a woman was Phebe, who carried the greatest of all the Epistles of Paul, and delivered it to the Church in

Rome, and whose name¹ shines out of the Apostolic Era to our time with the soft radiance of the moon."

"If you want the regular gradation of the deaconess's calling let me suggest the following:

"*a.* First of all, become a maid-servant, and learn everything about domestic affairs, from the meanest tasks up to the finest accomplishments. Shame on the woman who does not reach the first step!

"*b.* Go for a time into a nursery and learn to take care of children. Shame on the deaconess who can be put to blush by a nurse-maid!

"*c.* Take a course of instruction in teaching little children, and do not rest until you know and can do all that is required of such a teacher. It is not so great a task.

"*d.* If you have the gift for it, take the full training as school teacher; do not rest until you have done your part to put the girls' school into a woman's hands instead of leaving it to a male teacher.

"*e.* Learn how to manage the rescue home of a congregation,² namely, the rescue home for women.

"*f.* Take a course of instruction in sick nursing, in the care of physical disease, and do not forget that your spiritual ministration is even more important than that to the body.

"*g.* Be instructed in the care of those who are mentally unsound; but learn that for every mental disorder there is a simple remedy in the word of God.

¹ Phebe means pure or shining.

² Covering often, in Germany, a whole town.

"h. After all this, become, *if you can*, a parish deaconess."

Meyer also insists that all the efficiency that can be attained in an institution is only preparation for work in a congregation.

It is not easy to describe in detail the work of a parish deaconess. We only glance at it in saying her task is to serve the poor, the distressed, the helpless, and the neglected; to labor with the children in the lower school, the Sunday-school, the sewing-school, and the young people's societies. Where one is in the service of the congregation, the broader and abler her personality is, so much the more diversified and beneficial will her work prove itself. There is scarcely any talent or any accomplishment she has ever cultivated that cannot be made useful by the right kind of parish sister. Especially must she understand how to draw the young women of the congregation to her, to gain them for the work of beneficence, and to train them to assist her.

Of the sisters belonging to the Kaiserswerth alliance, 5486 labor in congregations.

9. Work in Foreign Missions

Into this large and important field of labor the female diaconate has entered comparatively recently. So far, among the Motherhouses of the Kaiserswerth Conference only 13 houses, with 50 sisters, are engaged in this work.

The work is, on the whole, the same that it was in the

beginning of Christianity, with the added task of learning the language of the country, for, without a thorough knowledge of this, it is impossible to do all the work required. When this fortress has been taken, the way is open to our deaconesses to follow in the steps of those of the early Church; that is, to instruct women in Christianity and to prepare them for holy baptism.

10. Administration, Housekeeping, Kitchen, and Laundry

These must all be mentioned, for they are not only indispensable in the management of an institution, but success is impossible to any institution which does not possess capable and faithful laborers in all of these departments of service.

At the same time, the various branches of work connected with the domestic affairs of the institution offer the opportunity desired of teaching the young sisters these things, the knowledge of which is absolutely necessary to a deaconess who is to fill her calling successfully.

Hand in hand with the service of the deaconess, directed to the relief of distress and need, must go a service of honor and rejoicing. Wherever a deaconess labors, it should be her endeavor to give to her service the stamp of friendliness and charm. Deaconesses must understand how to draw their charges to a right celebration of the Christian festivals; Christmas offers a particularly fine opportunity for this. They should practice "singing and playing before the Lord." Especially should

it be a delight to them to do their part in giving beauty and dignity to the house of God, and to public worship. This covers also church embroidery, which serves to adorn the sanctuary (Ex. 26 : 36; 28 : 2, 6, 39). These embroidered vestments have been compared with Mary's ointment of pure nard, very precious, and the work is called one of the loveliest blossoms which Löhe has woven into the deaconess's life.







NORWEGIAN HOSPITAL, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

III. PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF THE DEACONESS'S WORK

I. General

(a) To Serve the Lord

A deaconess should be, and wishes to be, a hand-maid of Jesus Christ—*i. e.*, one who has devoted herself with all her faculties and possibilities to the service of her beloved Lord and Saviour. But, as she has not the privilege of serving Him in person, as did those blessed women who ministered to Him during His life on earth, she clings to His gracious words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me," and "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me," and it is the joy of her life to be allowed to serve Him in this way. Or, as Löhe beautifully expresses it, "I would give my life and all that it contains for a box of precious ointment for the head of my Lord. But, as he has withdrawn Himself so very far away, I will take myself, with all that I am and have, and, as from a cluster of ripe grapes, will press out a little refreshing draught for those whom He has chosen to take His place."

Deaconess means serving-maid, and diaconate means service; but the word is no longer used to indicate ser-

vice in general, but service to the Church in the work of mercy and love. When this service is taken up by women as their life vocation, we call it the female diaconate. A deaconess should impress upon her heart and daily call to mind what Löhe has well said, "What do I wish? I wish to serve.—Whom do I wish to serve? The Lord, in His poor and needy ones.—And what is my reward? I do not serve either for reward or for thanks, but out of gratitude and love; my reward is that I may do this!—And if I perish in doing it? 'If I perish, I perish,' said Queen Esther, who knew not Him, for love of whom I would perish; but He will not let me perish.—And if I grow old? Still shall my heart keep fresh as a palm tree, and the Lord shall satisfy me with grace and mercy. I go in peace and free from care."

To serve means to use one's gifts and strength, not for one's self, but for others. The heathen believed that one who served lowered himself, and service was left to women and slaves. To the natural man authority is held as desirable, but not service.

Jesus Christ has honored service, and has shown that it is the way to be truly great. He did not condemn the aspiration of His disciples toward greatness, therefore it is justifiable, but He told them how to become really "greatest." "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20 : 26-28). For the better understanding of these words, so foreign to the ideas of the natural man, He illustrates by an example. His sublime greatness was daily before their eyes, and

yet He moved among them as one that serveth (Luke 22 : 27).

But for the disciples, as for all men, this lesson was hard to learn. Therefore the Lord makes it still plainer through the object-lesson of the foot-washing (John 13 : 1-17). The "Lord and Master" has washed the disciples' feet—*i. e.*, He has not held Himself too high for the humblest service of a slave. That gives emphasis to the deduction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

With this the new commandment of love is closely connected (John 13 : 34, 35). Selfishness does not care to know anything of service, but selfishness is death to love. Wherever love lives, selfishness must die. Of this dying the Lord speaks (John 12 : 25), where He requires that His disciples shall hate their life in this world. Only one who puts to death his selfish "I" can truly serve Him, and only to such an one does He give the glorious promise, "Where I am, there shall also My servant be: If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour" (John 12 : 26).

But the fundamental condition of true service is that it shall be rendered with all the heart and with all the soul (Deut. 10 : 12). Whatever you may undertake in this world, whatever calling you may select, if you do not enter into it with your whole soul, you will not succeed. In half-hearted performances there is never either prosperity or happiness. In much larger measure is this true of the service of the Lord. If you really

hope to find pleasure, contentment, and success in the calling of a deaconess, you must pay the price. That means *giving yourself up fully and entirely to your vocation; and serving your Lord with all your heart and with all your soul*. Woe to the deaconess who tries to serve the Lord half-way! She will be, all her life, a sad failure.

But are deaconesses alone to serve the Lord? Does not Luther teach all Christians in the Second Article, "He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, secured and delivered me, in order that I might be His, live under Him in His Kingdom and serve Him?"

Certainly this command concerns all Christians, and not deaconesses only. Every Christian, in the consciousness that he belongs to the Lord, should perform the daily duties of his calling, be they great or small, as a service to God. Ministering love is the sign and the duty of every disciple of Jesus. But because the needs of this life, growing out of the consequences of sin, create problems which cannot be solved without interfering with other callings, and because organizations can accomplish more than single workers, specially organized associations of laborers have arisen, whose vocation is the service of merciful love. Deaconesses are such called and organized workers.

Who is under obligation to render such service? Whosoever is called by the Lord must render it. But how does the Lord call? "He calls inwardly through the Holy Ghost, who, with the impulse to such service, gives also the endowment necessary for it; and outwardly, through the Church, by the invitation of her

representatives. The outward sign that the call is intended for a certain individual is the whole trend of her life, for, where God calls, He also shows and clears the way. The public confirmation of the call is the consecration."

(b) Of Mercy

The service of a deaconess is a service of mercy. What is mercy?

"Mercy is kindness. Kindness is charity, therefore mercy is charity. Mercy is kindness and charity, but kindness and charity in a special relation, namely, in relation to the unfortunate and wretched. Love is manifold; when it ascends toward God it becomes devotion and adoration; when it goes abroad in the world, to the great brotherhood of the redeemed, it becomes kindness, affability, friendliness; but when it goes to the hovels of indigence, bringing comfort, relief, and assistance, then it becomes mercy.

"Divine mercy is an endless stirring and motion in the divine heart toward a lost world, an endless succession of benefits conferred upon it.

"In its relation to sin the mercy of God finds its greatest work, and has most to overcome; it comes in conflict with righteousness and holiness, and into a crucible out of which it emerges with a new name; for it is no longer called mercy, but grace. Grace is mercy in its relation to sin and to the sinner. So mercy rejoiceth against judgment (James 2 : 13). As a man often has several names, so mercy is variously named,

according to the way in which it shows itself; now punishment, now instruction, now encouragement, now correction, now comfort, now admonition, now consolation, always as its one integral force offers one or another precious fruit to the poor children of men.

"The great fundamental commandment for our life is: 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' The deaconess should show to all how, in sacred immunity from earthly things and with a soul vowed to God, one can do the work of womanly mercy and make it a priestly deed. What are love and mercy without works? But, again, what are works without love and mercy? Just as every body must have a soul dwelling in it, so the soul of every work must be merciful love. It is and remains a crude, worthless act where one tries to help without having the head and face anointed with the holy oil of merciful love. Only no attempt at being merciful which denies the consecrated form in which mercy appears! Remember, too, that to works of mercy, of the right kind, belong a lowly heart, which counts it as grace to be allowed to practice mercy; and a heart overflowing with the spirit of the prophet's words: 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of Jehovah negligently'" (Jer. 48 : 10).¹

(c) *Qualifications for the Office of the Diaconate.*

In Acts 6 : 3, of those who were to be chosen as deacons three things were to be required: They must

¹ Löhe, "Von der Barmherzigkeit."

be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and full of wisdom.

The honest report is the testimony of the Christian congregation as to the conduct of the candidates in their outward life. No spot must mar the good name of him who holds office in the Church of Jesus Christ. He must also be full of the Holy Ghost—*i. e.*, he must have not a dead, but a living Christianity; for the Spirit of the Lord quickeneth. And the worker for the Lord must possess wisdom, that he may know how to judge and to regulate human affairs with divine insight.

In I Tim. 3 : 8-13 further qualifications for the office of deacon are given:

(1) A deacon "must be grave"—*i. e.*, his conduct and demeanor must be worthy of a servant of Christ. Silly or rude and vulgar behavior is unbecoming in him, for it dishonors the Master whom he serves, and before whose eyes he should walk as is seemly.

(2) He must not be "double-tongued," for a double-dealer, a deceitful man, has not "chosen the way of truth" (Ps. 119 : 30), and does not deserve to be trusted.

(3) He must not be "given to much wine," for such a man is not sober, is not master of himself, and, therefore, is useless for sacred service. Whether he stupifies himself with wine or with drugs, he is equally to blame, and either will make him unworthy of his office.

(4) He must not be "greedy of filthy lucre"—*i. e.*, when applied to our modern relations, not a shadow of dishonesty or self-seeking must fall upon the conduct of a servant of Christ. The world is apt enough to scent

self-interest and selfishness back of every action. Woe to the servant of Christ who deserves this suspicion!

(5) He must hold "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." The great mystery of religion, the greatest of which we know, is the wonderful Person of Christ, the God-man, our Lord and Saviour. The deacon must be able to say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2 : 20). But for his conscience he must have experienced the efficacy of the blood of Christ in cleansing it from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. 9 : 14).

(6) The deacon must "also first be proved," and must have been proved blameless.

These are the requirements which, according to Holy Scripture, must be made of a deacon, and the deaconess also must fulfill them if she is to be found fit for the service of the Lord.

(d) Motives for Choosing the Calling of a Deaconess.

A young woman who desires the vocation of a deaconess should examine herself as to what is her reason for seeking this service. If it is discontent with her life as it has so far been, she ought to know that those who are constantly discovering that there is no luck where they are, will hardly find happiness in the deaconess calling. Many are resigned to become deaconesses when other wishes are not fulfilled. Life seems to promise them very little happiness, and they look upon themselves as a sort of martyr in their renunciation. But a weary heart, disappointed and disgusted with the world, is not fit

for the service. Of course, if you can really forget what is behind, you may, indeed, be permitted to find rich compensation, even for the deepest sorrow and bereavement. But as long as you keep on casting melancholy glances on your past, you are not fit for the service. If, however, you are looking for earthly glory and importance in the sight of men, because you have seen that these have come unsought to many in the deaconess vocation, know that she who covets empty honors will scarcely find what she is counting upon in becoming a deaconess; and, if she succeeds outwardly, her heart still remains hollow and unsatisfied as long as she lives.

What, then, is to be your motive? Love to the Saviour is the motive, and the wish to put your hand to the great work which the Lord has commanded us to do, and for which there are still so few laborers.

(e) Study and Practical Work

You do not need to feel badly if, on entering the deaconess house, you may not know much, nor be able to do much, but you must be ready to put forth all your strength, and be willing and diligent in learning wherever you are deficient. Nor do you need to worry if you cannot learn everything at once, for a true deaconess is learning all her life, and, as Luther says of a true Christian in general, is always growing.

But, if you have already received a good education, if you have learned much and achieved much, do not be conceited about it. The best are barely good enough for

this service, and if you are truly wise, you will have found out very soon that, even for you, there is still much to learn. "We know that we know nothing," says one of the greatest sages of antiquity, thereby showing his vast superiority to many wiseacres who imagine they know everything. So you must learn, for every calling requires special technical training, and no student of God's Word has ever yet exhausted it.

But how shall we learn? Learning and literary pursuits should never be an end in themselves to a deaconess; still less should they be taken up in order to make a parade of knowledge or capacity before others. The object of learning is to become better and better qualified for the service of the Lord, and to accomplish more and more in it. The learning must be thorough. If you have begun something, do not rest until you have really understood it and have mastered the subject. And do not forget, "With prayer begun is half done," therefore pray and study.

Along with study, more or less exercise in practical work usually goes. Do not despise this work, and do not consider yourself too good for any work. There is no work, not in itself evil, which can degrade any one; but the spirit and manner in which one works can very easily degrade him. Work as if in the presence of God, and forget not what He said to Abraham, "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect."¹

A deaconess should thoroughly understand every kind

¹ The marginal reading in the Authorized Version is "upright" or "sincere," answering better to the German "fromm."

of work, even the humblest, by personal experience, if for no other reason, so that she will be competent to teach it to others, and can judge how much time and trouble it requires.

Beware of thoughtless running hither and thither when at work. Many run themselves almost off their feet, and yet do not accomplish what others do, apparently without moving. Work cautiously and with a plan, that you may not waste valuable strength for nothing, lest it fall short later when you really need it.

Industry and order belong together. Do everything at the right time and in the right place—a proper distribution of work, and order in all things help to save much precious time.

“Cultivate neatness and cleanliness in all your work. Keep your own person neat; keep clean every person committed to your care, every place over which you rule, into the tiniest corner” (Meyer).

Do not try to shift on other people the work which you find disagreeable; such selfishness is altogether unworthy of a deaconess. And work, as we have already said, as if the eye of God were upon you, and not to please men. It is a shame for a deaconess to work well and carefully when she is under the eye of others, and to be negligent and slovenly when she thinks she is unobserved. Be careful even in little things. “Constant fidelity in trifles is a great and heroic virtue,” says Bonaventura. For it is easier now and then to do some grand and striking deed than to show one’s self faithful in small duties from day to day.

(f) Relation to those in Authority

A deaconess belonging to a motherhouse is a member of a great organization. No organization can exist, and do successful work, without discipline. Therefore, a deaconess is bound to render prompt and willing obedience to her superiors. These superiors are, in the first place, the directors of the house, then the head sisters and sisters placed over the stations, down to the pupil, who is monitor in the probationers' room. Every individual in the organization has her immediate superior under whose direction she works. Conduct yourself so that your superior can absolutely depend on you. If you have been ordered to do something, it will be done, and done exactly as you were ordered to do it. If, now and then, you should be commanded to do something really preposterous, even then remember that, in young sisters particularly, obedience is more becoming than forwardness, and that the responsibility is borne by the one who has given the command. Do not fall, however, into the error of those haughty souls who, at every suggestion received from one not in authority, announce in an injured tone that they only take orders from one of their superiors. Be thankful for friendly corrections, and answer politely, even when you are not bound to obey, and perhaps will do better to follow your own judgment, as in this case you bear the responsibility yourself.

You can learn something from every one as to how you should do various things. In many a case you can also learn how not to do it. But judge charitably, and forget

not that all the blemishes in your own face are very obvious, and may even offend the eye of another, though you must go to a looking-glass in order to see them. It might be that you have the same fault which you condemn so harshly in your neighbor. And with this we have reached the exceedingly important section:

(g) Of the Life in a Community

We can only touch upon it in a few words. A sisterhood is an association of those in the same calling; the members of this association belong together, are assigned to one another, and must live with one another. One stands for all, and all stand for one. "This coming together in a community for laboring with one another under the sign of the cross—for a life-long association in the same hope—a community of labor, interest, and daily life, this is called a motherhouse" (Bezzel). As a member of the community you have no right to go your own way, and, in general, are no longer your own mistress. But you do not owe it to the Lord alone to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing" (Col. 1 : 10), but also to your sisterhood. If you do not walk as is seemly, you injure not only yourself, but all who belong to your motherhouse, yea, the whole noble, sacred cause of the female diaconate. Therefore, bear in mind the great responsibility you take upon yourself, in putting on the garb of a sister.

If you wish for a standard of behavior for your life in the community, you need not go far to find it. Our

Lord has given it clearly and plainly, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you" (John 15 : 12).

But mark, love does not consist in sweet sentiments; love is action. "God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son." Do you believe that He could have sweet sentiments toward a world which He could only abhor, a world which was to Him, the pure, the holy One, a thousand times more offensive and repulsive than the loathsome, ill-smelling wounds of many a sick person are to you, from which you must sometimes turn aside, lest you faint away? But He *did* something for this world, the best that He *could* do; He gave His Only-begotten Son. Think of that, and you will have some idea of what love is. Love is *doing*, doing for others, without raising the question whether they have shown themselves worthy of love or not.

But, at the same time, do not rack your brain for lofty deeds of heroism to be done for others. Life consists of a thousand trifles. The opportunity for great deeds might never come. Begin with the little ones. Be considerate and friendly. Do not slam doors and carry on loud conversation when your room-mate is trying to sleep after a wearisome night-watch, or has, perhaps, retired earlier than usual because she is not feeling well, and must try to gain strength for the next day's tasks. Do not rise with a great bustle, and begin a teasing conversation when she wishes to sleep and has a right to do so. Think of what you find good and pleasant, in health or sickness, and try to show the same considera-

tion to your fellow-sister. Do not take for granted, however, that all your preferences must also be hers, but consider her tastes and peculiarities. Here you have a few hints which you can supplement for yourself if you are in earnest about practicing love.

Be true and upright toward the other sisters. You do not need to communicate everything. Silence is often better than speech, but when you do speak, be truthful. Be brave enough, too, to tell an unpleasant truth; you often do a great service to another by so speaking, even if it is not appreciated at once. "A word that suits will bear its fruits." If you are not convinced of your own infallibility, but are willing to hear what others have to say, they will also gladly take something from you. But what you would not say to your sister herself do not say to others. Love does not gossip, but covers a multitude of sins, where it is possible to do so, without making one's self a partner in the sins of another.

Above all, however, be careful that you never reveal to one sister the spiteful things said of her by another. Whoever does that makes herself a messenger of Satan, for he sows suspicion and discord between those who should be of one mind, and grieves the Spirit of God.

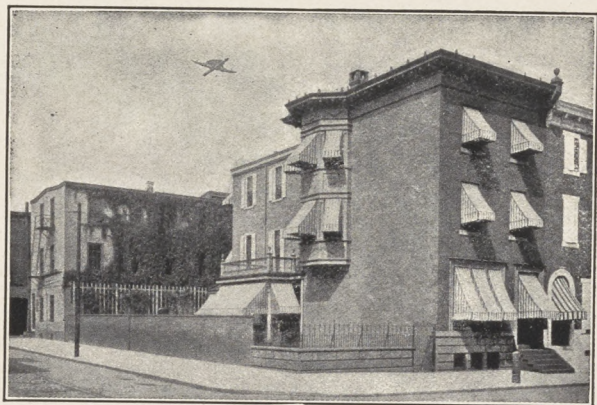
It often happens that new-comers in a community expect to find perfect saints, and are discouraged and embittered when they are confronted by so much imperfection and sin. Beware of this error. Reflect that you yourself are still far from perfection, therefore have no right to demand it of others, and be merciful. Every one of your fellow-sisters is called upon, before

God and man, to be merciful, and you are also. Reflect that judgment without mercy is appointed for him that hath showed no mercy (James 2 : 13). Have patience with your sister, that your Lord and Master may also have patience with you. Every human being exerts an influence on others, whether he will or not. The influence of the same person is often good at one time and bad at another. But, as a rule, the bad influence is the stronger, for evil finds only too easily a sympathetic echo in the sinful human heart. Take care that your influence at least is not bad, and "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good!" (Rom. 12 : 21).

Especially endeavor to cultivate friendliness and an obliging disposition. A friendly face is like sunshine, which warms and gladdens. Do not make a long face, and put on an expression as if you had been drinking vinegar, if you are not feeling quite well, if the work threatens to overwhelm you, if sorrowful and painful experiences depress you, if you must make sacrifices, or must suffer. "When thou fastest anoint thine head and wash thy face," says our Lord. Say to thy soul, "Blessed be the Lord daily; He layeth a burden upon us, but He also helpeth us," and let the friendliness of God shine from your eyes. Do not force others to suffer because you are suffering. That is selfishness, not love.

Do not form an immoderate attachment for any human being. This is a danger which threatens every woman. You can only escape it by giving your heart entirely to the Lord. It is not forbidden to cultivate honorable friendships. Our Lord had also one disciple





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whom He loved, who stood nearer to Him than the others, who was permitted to lean on His bosom. But as soon as a disagreeable emotion rises in your heart, when others also enjoy the friendship of the one on whom your affection is fixed, then you are no longer in the right way. Your heart is too much attached to one person, and you begin to feel the curse which the Lord pronounced upon those who trust in man (Jer. 17 : 5). Turn again and repent. Jealousy is a proof that you have forsaken your Lord; throw yourself at His feet and beseech Him to receive you again, and to tear it from your heart even if it causes you a thousand pangs.

Do not neglect to pray for your community often and earnestly, for, where supplication is no longer made in the community, there the life that is from God dies out and the evil one enters in.

Here you have some suggestions as to the requirements and restrictions of the life in a community. You can enlarge upon them yourself.

The chief thing in the community must always be that it shall continually gather anew about Him who is its Master and Head, Jesus Christ. Here its life is rooted, and from this centre new streams of vital strength must daily flow. Thus will it become an image of that blessed and holy communion, of which it is and must be a little fragment; that communion of which we confess, "I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints." Blessed is she who so cherishes her community!

(h) Of Public Worship and Private Devotion

Since our Lord and Saviour is the centre and fountain of life for a true deaconess community, the living worship of God must, above all things, be kept up. "The heart of the complicated structure of an institution is the chapel, with its sacred services. Here is the source of our strength, and of the light which shines forth, bringing comfort and joy, wisdom and inward peace, to those of good will and prayerful hearts." Do not unnecessarily neglect the services of your motherhouse. In entering or leaving the house of God, and while you are in it, see that even your outward behavior shows that you know yourself to be in the immediate presence of your Lord and Master (Matt. 18 : 20). "Be sure that the worship of God does not turn upon emotions, frame of mind or words, but upon a transaction between God and man, upon the giving up of our will, upon sacrifice. Endeavor earnestly to learn and understand the order and meaning of the sacred service, and accustom yourself to use the Church's form of worship as the vehicle for your own devotion. Do not pursue your own train of thought, but worship with the Church. Bow yourself when she says the Confession; rejoice when she sings the Gloria; unite in her petition when the Collect is said. Do not listen to the foolish thoughts of your own mind when God's Word is proclaimed and demands your undivided attention. Such salutary discipline bears blessed fruit" (Meyer).

Beside the public worship, a deaconess dare not neglect

"the quiet half hour" and her own private devotions (Matt. 6 : 6). She who is indifferent and negligent in these things, will soon find out how her vital strength diminishes, her ideal fades, and will one day awake to the consciousness that she is nothing but a tired, unwilling, peevish worker, perhaps only prevented by lack of energy from throwing off the outward husk from which the inner substance has long since disappeared. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15 : 5); and, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15 : 7), are the words of our Lord. Be faithful in prayer, be faithful in studying the Word of God, so shall you abide by the fountain of life (Ps. 36 : 9). The more you read your Bible, with prayerful reflection, so much the more will your understanding be enlightened and your familiarity with your Lord's thoughts and ways be increased.

It is well to form the habit of memorizing a few of our Lord's words each morning while dressing. If you daily impress on your memory only one such gospel verse you will gradually acquire a treasure of inestimable value.

(i) *Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience*

Roman Catholic sisters, on entering their orders, take a vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience which binds them for life. The sisterhoods of the Episcopalians also "permit" this vow. Lutheran sisters are not

bound to their calling by vows; their service is to be a voluntary one, and no vow should bind them if their heart is no longer bound by love for their vocation. This does not make it easier for the Lutheran sister, but harder, for vows are a support to the weak. Discontent, discouragement, and faint-heartedness will not so easily find room if you know that you are bound; when the foolish heart cannot whisper, "You are not obliged to put up with everything; you do not need to remain in this service; you can very easily find a much pleasanter and more profitable position somewhere else, and one can serve God as well in one place as another." Such temptations are all precluded by the vow. Nevertheless, we consider this freedom to be right, though it makes our work more difficult. God does not wish forced service: "God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9 : 7).

And yet the things to which the Romish sisters are bound by their vows are not without significance for the diaconate, and, therefore, must be referred to briefly. Take first, poverty. Is not a deaconess who lives to enjoy her wealth a contradiction? A wealthy deaconess must then to a certain extent resign her wealth; yet still she retains the uncontrolled disposition of her property. She must be, however, as though she possessed nothing. Many deaconesses have not only given themselves, but also their property, for the carrying on of the work. Where this is done from love to the Master, the deaconess is walking in the footsteps of her Lord, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through

His poverty might be rich (II Cor. 8 : 9). In any case a deaconess should try to have few personal wants. It does not look well for her to fill her room with ornamental trifles, and, while she cannot live in great luxury, to try to attain it in small things. How much precious time is wasted in keeping this magnificence in order! Furthermore, a deaconess must be ready at any time to change her quarters as her service may require. What a burden a mass of unnecessary things becomes then!

Chastity and purity are enjoined by the sixth commandment on all Christians, and, of course, on every deaconess. But the vocation of a deaconess demands more than this of her. She must remain unmarried, for her calling is incompatible with the married state. A young woman who looks upon marriage as the aim of her life should not take up the vocation of deaconess. To be sure, a deaconess remains free to lay down her calling in order to accept an offer of marriage when she believes that she sees in it the purpose of God; but she can only do so with a clear conscience if there is absolutely no shadow of suspicion that she has made advances or that she has, in the slightest way, endeavored to find favor with her suitor. St. Paul commends the unmarried state, by word and example, as a means to an end, that one may be so much the less hindered in serving the Lord. And Löhe gives this advice to a young probationer, "Above all else, pray for the gift of an ingenuous pure heart, a virgin soul, consecrated to God, for the time in which you now are, when you should undoubtedly serve the Lord in singleness of heart. Do not forget

that the unmarried condition is less an outward than an inward one, and pray to God for the blessing of inward freedom."

Of obedience and its necessity in a community for work we have already spoken in other places.

2. Deaconesses in Different Kinds of Work

"We will work in His service, to be useful to Him while it is day: it matters not where or when we are called by those who need us!" (Bezzel).

The work of a deaconess is just as varied as woman's work in general can be; thence, it is easy to understand that very few approach, in any degree, the ideal which Löhé set up, "she can do everything." But that is just the advantage of the motherhouses that every talent can be made useful, if only faithfulness is not wanting.

It would be a great mistake to speak of deaconess work as if some kinds were better than others. Men, of course, value those sisters whose work exerts an influence or makes an impression on the world at large; but is not the sister greater perhaps, in the sight of God, who quietly and with loving cheerfulness cares day and night for idiotic children, helpless as a babe in arms, but with no trace of the infantile charm which compels our love? If a sister should consider herself too good for this or that post, she would only show that she no longer serves the Lord. He washed the Disciples' feet, though He was King of kings and Lord of lords. "Be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus" is the

fundamental idea upon which all deaconess work must rest. This is the test whether a sister is really seriously in earnest about serving the Lord.

To the willingness to take up this service belongs the ability to "think soberly" of one's self and of one's own performances. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," is applicable also to fitness for a vocation. But the chief requisites to true service are found in I Cor. 13 : 1-3. Unless they proceed from love, the most brilliant accomplishments are worthless, and do not attain their real end, however highly they may be praised by men. Humility, modesty, charity—without these there is no true deaconess work.

In the following sections the special requirements of the different spheres of labor will be briefly treated.

(a) Nursing and Care-taking.

In our day there are schools everywhere in which nurses are trained. Where the same opportunity is offered to them, deaconesses must show that "godliness is profitable unto all things," and must not allow themselves to be surpassed in technical skill by secular nurses. It is proper that Christian beneficence should worthily hold its own in its time-honored domain of sick nursing.

We cannot here describe nursing in itself, but only the qualities which a nursing deaconess should possess and show in her calling.

"For her patients the deaconess needs a clear, sharp eye, composure of mind, a patient, friendly heart and

face, a godly solicitude, wisdom and tranquillity, propriety of behavior, a kindly approachableness, combined with reserve, an interceding love.

"No nursing sister should be without the clear, sharp eye, which observes her patients aright, recognizes their needs of body and soul, does not mistake imaginary suffering for real pain, and enables her to prepare for the physician a clear report, distinguishing between important things and those of no consequence."

A dreamy, absent-minded person, who thinks more of herself than of her patients; who does not notice how she jars the bed in cleaning; or how uncomfortably the patient lies; or whether the broth is hot or cold, or so greasy that the patient cannot eat it; who does not even know that she has forgotten the spoon, etc., has not the composure of mind which belongs to the care of the sick, and is unfit for it. "The countenance of a gracious God which is sometimes hidden in sickness, especially when it bears the character of a visitation, should be revealed again to the patient through the face of the consecrated nurse who ministers to him. As in the sick-room, the friendly sunshine must not be wanting, so, through the nursing sister, the brightness of Jesus' friendliness, which has enlightened her own grateful heart, should shine upon those who sit in sorrow and affliction. No singularity, no fault-finding, no ill-humor or rudeness of the sick person should make the nurse lose her patience. The sick must be treated as sick. One must not take anything from them as personal or as a cause of offence. Pray daily for the gift from above of a cheer-

ful patience, combined with a courteous firmness, which can meet the worst humors of a patient calmly. Practice also the fine virtue of faithfulness in small things, carefulness and punctuality in all that the patient requires. Regularity in time; order in the room; cleanliness about the patient and his surroundings; a dainty, pleasant, sensible arrangement of the things kept near him; providing for his needs at the right time; clearing away everything that can disturb or annoy him—all these are important, none are trifles, and blessed is the nurse who is faithful in them all, and recognizes that in them she is really serving God at the sick-bed.

“Neither must she neglect to pray for the gift of wisdom. The sick are not things, not ‘cases,’ but human beings, endowed by their Creator with characteristics of their own. To treat each patient exactly as is profitable and wholesome for him; to speak the right word at the right moment; to regard him with spiritual insight; to serve him as a sanctified presence; to show him his own life in the right light; to practice the housewifely virtues of faithfulness and economy; to cultivate a refined tactfulness of behavior toward all persons, high or low, in the hospital—this is wisdom of which God gives some portion to every one who prays for it in singleness of heart.

“Guard strictly the propriety of your conduct, you who are called to care for the sick. An indiscreet deaconess deteriorates more rapidly, inwardly and outwardly, than she would in any other calling. Do not parade before the patient your needs and struggles, your sorrows

and joys. Show always a friendly face. Keep a watch upon your words. Say nothing to your patients, or before them, which can excite or annoy them or injure them in any way; nor should you speak much of your patients with others, not even with your fellow-sisters, especially not of their weakness, their sins, or things which they have told you in confidence. The quieter the better in every case! Be quiet in speaking, quiet in action, quiet in your whole behavior, down to the way you walk, and the tone of your voice—accustom yourself to this, and you will do well in that to which you are called.

“Propriety and modesty will be three-fold and four-fold necessary to you in nursing male patients. Pray daily for a deep consciousness of the presence of God and of His Spirit, simplicity of deportment, and inaccessibility of the heart that is pledged to God. Above all, in nursing whom you will, you must understand how to retain a dignified reserve, without becoming distant and unsympathetic. Avoid unnecessarily near approach to the patient. The best nurse will always be one whom the sick can call ‘Mother,’ whom they can love and honor.

“In short, let love be your life; ministering love, which does not lose courage; fostering love, which sees and honors the Saviour in the sick; solicitous love, which looks after the smallest things; interceding love, which carries both soul and body of the patient to the throne of grace; enduring love, which holds out to the end; still, self-effacing love, which spends itself in sacrifice,

without a word; love to which the crown is promised by Him who first loved us."¹

We are often reminded in the hospital, by the most frightful experience, how fatal are the consequences of sin. Sometimes, in caring for children, this fact may cause disquietude or doubt. That a man should reap what he has sown, even short-sighted humanity can understand. But why must a poor child often suffer unspeakably, why must it drag on a crippled, sickly, wretched existence on account of the sins of its parents? We are confronted here by one of the darkest problems in life, where the clay is tempted to say to Him that fashioned it, "What makest Thou?" (Isa. 45 : 9; Rom. 9 : 20).

But even if we cannot penetrate the dark mystery of suffering, one thing we know, our Lord and Master loves these children more than we can ever love them, and our own duty to treat them with a double portion of love and kindness need not be hard to understand. Without love for them, one can do little enough with healthy children, and the children are to be pitied. They are like plants which are expected to grow without sunshine. But not only are sick children to be pitied where the nurse is wanting in love, but she herself much more, for here, if anywhere, the words apply, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy" (James 2 : 13).

It is often not easy to be patient with sick children, especially when they are too overcome by pain and fright to let themselves be soothed, or to be persuaded to

¹ Meyer, "Von den Diakonissen und ihrem Beruf."

control themselves; and yet they can forget pain and trouble very quickly, and often put grown persons to shame by their childish happiness as soon as the worst agony is over.

But even with sick children we must insist on the strictest obedience. A cordial friendliness must be combined with a firm will and a firm hand, but without many words; a glance of the eye should suffice. Such firmness on the part of the nurse is a great benefit to the sick child, for it saves much naughtiness and the trouble which follows.

As a nurse the deaconess is under the physician, and must do as he directs. Where several sisters are working together in the stations of a hospital, the communication with the physician belongs to the duties of the station sister. She makes the round with him, reports the condition of the patients, and receives his orders and prescriptions. From her the other sisters receive their directions, and are bound to follow them conscientiously, and report to their station sister anything worthy of note concerning their charges. Conversation between them and the physician in regard to the patients, unless by the station sister's order, would show great want of tact, for the station sister bears the responsibility.

Physicians who have labored for many years in the deaconesses' hospitals are often among their truest friends. Many chapters might be written of the kindness which the deaconess houses have received from physicians. On the other hand, among the great number of the young assistant doctors in the hospitals, side

by side with able men, there are often quite immature youths, or even men with no fixed moral or religious views, so that meeting with them daily, and working with them may, especially for young, unsettled sisters, become a serious risk. It is right for young sisters to know the imminent danger that threatens them here, and that the only thing for them to do is faithfully to watch and pray that they may not fall into temptation. Your best weapon against it is the steady, vital consciousness of the nearness of the Lord whom you wish to serve. This gives your whole character and demeanor a true maidenliness, *i. e.*, that unconscious purity and dignity before which the too familiar or unchaste word dies on the lips, and which compel respect even from frivolous men. But beware that you do not lecture doctors or other men on the consideration they owe you. That is the surest way to forfeit all respect. When you are treated disrespectfully, examine yourself wherein you have come short of that nobility which is given to you by your position as a servant of the Lord of lords. As a rule, a woman receives just as much respect from men as she deserves. A true servant of Christ has always found, sooner or later, the respect which only an absolutely depraved man would refuse to a pure woman. Especially endeavor at all times, in your intercourse with the different persons in the hospital, to show to each one an obliging courtesy and kindness—only never become too confidential!

To private nursing—*i. e.*, to nursing single patients in the private rooms of a hospital or in families, the

same rules apply as those we have given for nursing in general. Patients of means need just as much ministering love and mercy in their suffering as do the poor. But beware of worshipping the golden calf, of serving the rich more willingly than the poor! Woe to you if you do that, for then you are no longer serving God, but mammon. On the whole, well-to-do patients are perhaps somewhat more exacting, though this is by no means always the case; they are often much more grateful than the poor. But precisely when this is so must you be on your guard, lest flattery and praise cloud your sense and make you vain, for where vanity gains admittance the service of the Lord ceases. Nor should deaconesses enter into friendship with their patients, and try to keep up relations which would draw their interest to outside things and interfere with the faithful pursuit of their vocation.

The care of those who are mentally or spiritually diseased is a service to which not every nurse is equal. It often involves frightful experiences. In this sphere is much that is dark and unexplained, and we would not go far wrong in assuming that in it the evil one often has a hand. Therefore is it particularly necessary, that one in charge of those mentally diseased should stand fast in living faith in her Saviour, and not be afraid. Patience, immovable calmness of spirit, and wisdom are needed. But the wisdom must not consist in mere craftiness, but must be combined with truthfulness. It is a great mistake to lie to the sick. Demented persons are often subject to grievous temptations. One should not argue

with such sufferers to divert them from their false ideas, but witness to the truth in firm, triumphant faith.

The nursing in old people's homes and in infirmaries is, in many respects, very much the same. Old persons also suffer, as a rule, from many infirmities, whence somebody once jestingly called old age an incurable disease. The care of the feeble and aged does not require nearly so much technical skill as nursing in the hospital, but again it makes demands of a different kind. In the hospital the patients change, the cases of sickness often have something intensely interesting in their progress, one has the joy of seeing severe illness followed by recovery and restored strength. The tasks are varied in different stations. In the infirmary is nothing of all this; the patients have, of course, also their easier, better times, yet, on the whole, they are going slowly, perhaps, but surely down the hill. This has a depressing influence, and makes old people often discouraged and fretful. The work of the sister in charge is very much the same, day by day, interrupted, perhaps, by the going home of one weary pilgrim and the entrance of another, to whom the vacated place has been allotted. What then is the task of the care-taker? All her deeds should bear witness to the love and mercy of God by faithful attention and loving care, joined with a sunny friendliness and cheerfulness. If she has these qualities, then she may point to the Saviour, who calls the weary and heavy-laden to Him, and promises them rest and comfort, and she will find willing hearts; and at evening time it shall be light, for something of the

eternal dawn shall shine into the rooms of the infirm and aged, where only too often there is only the overwhelming consciousness of the emptiness and vanity of human life.

The care and training of those deficient in one or more senses demands, especially, untiring patience. How could we begin to do anything, for instance, with a child who was deaf and dumb and blind without this? If the mental faculties are there, the hindrances are successfully overcome at last, the teacher's patient work begins to bear fruit, and then comes the joy of harvest. We know what wonderful results have already been attained.

It is entirely different with idiots and the feeble-minded. Let us begin with the lowest grade, those incapable of education (die Asylisten). We try, even in such cases, to give them something like training, particularly in their habits; but what an expenditure of patience is necessary! With many, practically nothing is achieved, and we can only take care of them, often as if they were very little children. How much merciful love is required not to become weary of this task! But we can tell that even the most wretched among them know very well who really loves them.

Lighter, because more successful, is the work among feeble-minded children. It is a delight to see with what pleasure and love they often learn the Word of God when it is presented to them in the right way. If the heart of the deaconess herself is truly the dwelling-place of her Saviour, it will not be hard for her to lead the imbecile children to Him. Many can be brought so





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far that they can be received for confirmation and admitted to the holy communion. Such occasions are truly days of rejoicing. Where true, merciful love and unremitting patience are bestowed upon these poor children, they show their susceptibility in most surprising ways. For example, a deaconess who was house-mother in a home for imbeciles died after a short illness. We may say that nowhere could she have been less disturbed than in her room in the midst of her imbecile children, who, out of love to her, kept wonderfully quiet and composed. This shows how capable these poor children are of returning with grateful affection the love bestowed on them. But it must be admitted that no one has yet succeeded in educating them up to the point of truly self-dependent manhood. Many a child, dismissed from the institution as greatly improved, has speedily sunk back into the old dulness when returned to its former environment. The care of an institution has shown itself to be by far the best for such cases. One good thing about the condition of the feeble-minded is, that they do not feel the misery of their state. When no physical suffering is connected with it, and when they are kindly treated, they can be happy as children, except when they are naughty, exactly like children, too.

It is otherwise with epileptics. There we find nothing of the childishly happy disposition of the imbecile, for the epileptic knows his wretchedness. How often does it happen that a life endowed with rich mental gifts, and most promising in every respect, is broken up by this frightful disease! These are mysterious dispensations,

and no ray of light could pierce the gloom but for faith in the Lord, who healeth all our diseases and redeemeth our life from destruction. In this faith the deaconess must be steadfast, and here she must find the strength of her life; then can she care aright for these unfortunates, and can truly comfort them with the sure confidence that to those who love God, all things, even such sorrows as theirs, must work together for good; and that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Bethel, near Bielefeld, is a shining example of the proper care for these patients. At Bodelschwingh's coffin one of his co-laborers beautifully recapitulated what this man of God had striven for, and, through God's grace, had attained for epileptics, and wherein all who are engaged in this work should strive to follow in his footsteps, "You, dear patients, should feel at home and in your proper place in Bethel, well and happy, not shunned, but drawn in by love, cared for and surrounded by love. You should feel that you have a right to be here. How many a time did the Father say to you, 'Everything in Bethel belongs to you, dear patients, and we are your servants.' But, above all things, he wished that in your distress and trials you might be richly comforted and sustained by God's Word. You must become acquainted with the cross of Christ, and your hearts must be quiet under the cross. You must learn that to them who love God all things work together for good. Then our Father wished that you should find work here, each one according to his education, his habits and talents, and

that in this community of Christian work and life you should be contented and happy from your heart. Each day one less lamentation, one more song of thanksgiving, should be heard. God be praised that this was the spirit in which the people here in Bethel were to be helped! That is why every one feels so happy here. We are, indeed, a congregation whose members die off rapidly; but, so long as we do live, we live in joyful faith just on the threshold of the heavenly Jerusalem" (Pastor Rehn).

(b) The Work among Children

"Look for the secret of education not in methods and forms, but in the power of sanctified personality and of a Christian character" (Wetzel).

The deaconess's work of education begins with the smallest children in the day nursery. Many think, perhaps, how will you begin to teach an infant? The principal thing is to take good care of it.

Certainly we cannot dispense with judicious, careful nursing; the life of an infant hangs on a slender thread, and if you are not conscientious in nursing, there will soon be nothing left to educate. But you are wrong if you think there is nothing to educate. On the contrary, the training of infants is of the greatest importance, but is carried on mainly by the forming of good habits. You must accustom the little child to regularity, cleanliness, and obedience. It is not difficult to love babies; there are few women who can resist their sweetness and

charm. Only do not make playthings of them or prefer one to another, but serve them all with an equal love. Kindly affection is one of the most important attributes of a sister in the day nursery. The little ones are as sensitive to it as plants are to warm sunshine. Calmness and quietness are just as indispensable. An excited, restless person cannot cope with a single child, to say nothing of a number together. We often notice how one person quiets a screaming child at once, while another tries for a long time without succeeding.

"Disobedience and obstinacy can largely be prevented if the nurse possesses tact, fine feeling, and quick observation, to clear out of the way temptation to be naughty and causes of offence. Watchfulness is one of the chief things in all training." But you must also have "a prayerful spirit, which brings the children constantly to Jesus, and is always aware that ministering to them is serving Him." Pray for them and with them; they are not too young. Surely, to the Saviour who loved children their childish lisping is well pleasing. "Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven," says the Master (Matt. 18 : 10). Children are important and highly honored in the Lord's sight, and those who serve them find themselves in holy company. Therefore, guard against the error into which the best meaning people so often thoughtlessly fall, and do not abuse the implicit confidence of the child's heart by telling him silliest lies. Certainly the child cannot yet discern whether you are speaking the truth, whether the Black Man really comes if he is naughty, etc. But the

time comes when he learns to distinguish. How shall he then recognize a lie as reprehensible when his nearest and dearest have so often lied to him? Through such thoughtless falsehood incalculable harm may have been done to his soul.

When we consider what a child takes in during the first three years of his life the list seems almost endless. These years are of the greatest importance for the whole development of the man. The younger the child is, the more sensitive he is to outside impressions, and the more decided is their effect on his future development. Merely the helplessness in many ways, and the lack of self-confidence in the earlier years, force a child to be dependent on those about him, and thus he is most susceptible to the influence of adults. Hence the responsibility of the teacher is very great. May we never forget the earnest words of warning spoken by the Master (Matt. 18 : 6).

With the third year the child reaches the age at which it is admitted to the school for little children. Here and in the lower classes of the elementary school we have many opportunities of noticing the talent for sharp observation possessed by the young. As they are accustomed involuntarily to watch grown persons, so this gift is usually brought to bear on them especially. Think, for instance, of the surprisingly faithful copies of grown persons which come to light in the games of children.

In riper years, as we see them in the upper elementary classes and in the higher schools, young people no longer reflect all they have seen or heard so naively as do little children, at least not in the presence of grown persons.

But instead, they judge, and compare, and criticise, and turn over in their minds what they have observed. None of our weaknesses or peculiarities, no mistakes that we make, escape the notice of the children entrusted to us. Pet phrases, strong language, a faulty carriage, peculiar gestures, the way we dress and eat, the play of expression,—nothing is hidden from their eyes. Well for us if, at least, they do not discover anything really wrong; for they pass sentence quickly. In many respects we may say there is nothing more unmerciful than a child, for it judges from first impressions, and is too ignorant and thoughtless to ask the reason for anything that seems unpleasant to it, or even to seek some excuse for it, such as, perhaps, a morbid condition of the person concerned.

Should those engaged in teaching and training raise the question what unformed children think of them or how they judge them? Should it not be a matter of indifference to a deaconess? Yes, and No. It would be foolish and preposterous to cater too much to the favor and good opinion of children, and unworthy of your position as a Christian and a deaconess. Only do not forget that the somewhat malicious satisfaction with which a child looks at your faults, while your good traits are mostly passed over as a matter of course, has a deeper psychological reason; namely, that he sees in them a justification of his own defects, and thereby allays the pricks of conscience which eventually result from his persistence in wrong-doing. The most beautiful and well-meant exhortations have no effect when he who receives them has a feeling that the exhorter does

not practice what he preaches. So he considers himself justified in casting the admonition to the winds. From this fact it follows that your duty requires you to keep your personal life under strict control, especially if you are called to work among children. Nor must you despise the hints which come to you through overhearing the occasional remarks of your charges concerning yourself. They may be helpful to you in the self-examination, which you can scarcely make too searching, for in no one are we more easily deceived than in ourselves. Every educator should daily labor energetically to improve himself, so that he may be, in all points, an example to his pupils. What you teach your children and what you expect from them must be exemplified in your own life; or else, rather give up teaching altogether. You must become a sanctified personality, a Christian character; only such are a power for good in education, which no child can entirely ignore. Or, in other words, you must be conformed to the image of Christ if you wish rightly to train others.

Beside the enormous value of example, which really includes everything else, we must lay equal stress on carefulness as a necessary quality in a teacher. This requires you to forget yourself, and to place all your faculties at the service of your calling. The teacher must take everything into consideration that concerns his pupils. How can he do this if he is occupied with himself? And when we come to that "watching for the soul" of the child—*i. e.*, his disposition, his special peculiarities, his inward development, his progress in good or evil—

constant sharp observation is needed, comparing, drawing conclusions; even, to a certain extent, mind-reading. This implies a serious strain on one's own mental powers, which is impossible to those who are lost in self-centred reveries. The teacher must also give careful attention to external matters. With many this is a natural gift; their inborn sense of order is disturbed by any lack of it in the appearance of others or in the rooms occupied by them. Any one who has not this sense should endeavor to acquire it. If you can pick your way through the greatest disorder without its disturbing you, there is something wanting in you which is very essential, especially for the training of girls. For order is of the greatest value for every calling in which women engage, and any one who has taught a young girl neatness and love of order has done her an inestimable service.

But every educational work requires wisdom. Precisely the teacher who is zealous and faithful falls most easily into the danger of doing "too much of a good thing," too much commanding, too much fault-finding, and thus making his labor unprofitable. Orders and regulations must exist, but there should be as few of them as possible. Make no rules where it is possible to get through without them; do not command or threaten where you are not sure you can carry out the command or fulfil the threat. A wise teacher will avoid running against a stone wall in the attempt to realize his ideals, but he understands how to estimate what can be attained and shows an untiring tenacity in carrying his point. Education is, more than anything else, a work of patience.

Bad habits, which have rooted deeper from year to year, cannot be laid off at once, even when the child has the best will to do it; nor can good habits be formed over night. Use as few words as possible when you find that you must reprove. The more you say, the less will it be heard. Of course you must see everything, but it is far from necessary to discuss it always; a fine tact will show you when it is better to overlook something. Above all, you must clearly understand what you want; not order this to-day and something different to-morrow. "Give few commands, but make these few full and complete, and see, especially in little things, that you are obeyed. Whoever has not the courage to follow up his commands should not command at all, but rather give up teaching; for, if one cannot rule, neither can he teach" (Bezzel).

But the firm, persistent will must be combined with warm love, or it might do more harm than good. "Love is not easily provoked." It is love that vanquishes the sensitiveness peculiar to one person, and that can embrace in heartfelt compassion, even the rude, impudent child, that seems to have no appreciation for kindness done to him, that shows no trace of gratitude for the pains taken with him, and that even feels a spiteful pleasure in provoking his teacher. The love which has learned from God to be kind unto the unthankful and to the evil (Luke 6 : 35), this love is the strongest factor in education and has softened many a hard heart. It alone makes us capable of the optimism with which we should renew our work each day, in sure faith that

the Lord will bless our earnest endeavors when and how it pleases Him. Without this optimism, trouble and labor in education are lost. Distrust creates distrust. Doubt and despondency have never won any good cause. But the work of education *is* a good cause, our vocation is from God. "Ask me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands command ye Me," saith the Lord (Isa. 45 : 11). They are His children; it is our part to show them that love which hopeth all things and is never discouraged, because they are His children, and He has committed them to us.

(c) Social Work

So far as this work is educational, what we have said in the last section applies here also. It requires especially a thorough knowledge and experience in all departments of practical work belonging to the affairs of a house, for what one does not possess she cannot give to others. In this work a sister comes in contact with many different people, and must here and there know how to guard the interests of those under her protection. Therefore, she must know men, and be capable of judging. Here in America the charity organizations which labor in almost every large city can be of valuable assistance to her, as she can turn to them whenever her own information or power is insufficient. Servants and factory girls are often widely separated from their families or have no near relatives living. The deaconess should be like a mother to them. Let them talk to you

about their childhood, about their home relations, so you will become acquainted with the needs of the people and learn to understand them. Give them kindly instruction how they may help themselves here and there and how to improve their condition. Show an affectionate interest in their joys and sorrows. Often the daughters of the poor have not found much sympathy. If you succeed in winning their hearts, a good influence is secured. Do not be too quick in condemning their amusements, as long as they are not actually wrong; but try to replace what is doubtful by something higher and better, and so get rid of it; in short, endeavor in every way, by word and example, to bring your charges nearer the ideal of noble womanhood.

It is of great value when sisters who are engaged in this work possess as varied accomplishments as possible, including a knowledge of music. They must know how to collect the former pupils of the schools for domestic training, and especially young women employed in all the different departments of work, and bring them into societies combining pleasure and profit. For this, one needs the ability to arrange and conduct appropriate entertainment; also skill in discovering and drawing out talent, and making it contribute to the common good. But we should not aim merely at entertainment or the societies will soon become flat and degenerate. The deaconess must endeavor to awaken more and more an interest in intellectual and spiritual things, especially in the work of God's kingdom. When properly taken in hand, it is mostly not difficult to arouse an interest in

this work, and to gain enthusiastic co-laborers for it. And even if the assistance is not of much account, the girls themselves can still derive great blessing in rendering it.

(d) Rescue of the Lost

Every deaconess's work requires complete surrender and devotion of her own personality. To rescue work this applies in a peculiar sense. She who cannot bring to it a heart full of fervent, sincere compassion, should rather refrain from it entirely. All that has been said of educational work in general applies also to the work in the Rescue Home; for the inmates here are just as much children as those in the school. They have the same inclination to good or evil. The great difference is that so far they have had no training, and very often the problem is made still more difficult by inherited evil tendencies. Here we must frequently see with dismay how sin is passed on from generation to generation.

But love never gives up a child. It holds fast to the belief that with God nothing is impossible, not even the renewal of a sinful human heart. Just with such children it is most important to show them that we believe in them and expect good from them. That strengthens them in what is good. If, on the contrary, they see that no one gives them credit for being good, their efforts cease, and the teacher can do nothing more with them. Ben B. Lindsey, Judge of the Court for Juvenile Delinquents, in Denver, Colorado, acts in accordance with this principal. He is probably the warmest and most unself-

ish, and, therefore, the most successful friend of these poor children now living. Thousands of boys and girls have already been helped by him to return to the right way, and they cling to him with enthusiastic affection. Boys committed to the reform schools he sends without a guard, only furnished with a letter to the director of the institution to which they are going. He has such power over their minds that it does not enter their heads to escape. He also succeeded in reconstructing these institutions on a Christian basis. On an average only 10 per cent. of these young people appear in his court charged with a second offence. Up to this time 90 per cent. have been saved. His example has found imitators in many American courts.

For the work among fallen women these principles must also be fixed: "The greatest wisdom in teaching fallen women is not to look upon them as fallen. The Lord says, 'My heart yearneth for him; I will surely have mercy upon him' (Jer. 31 : 20). In this divine yearning of compassion, which misery does not discourage, but simply deepens, lies the secret of work among the fallen. Connected with the pastoral work in a Magdalen asylum is the glad anticipation that it may be the preparation of joy among the angels in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. A certain delicacy, sanctified and ennobled by Jesus, is needed if one is to show true compassion to these girls. This delicacy says nothing of the past; that it leaves to the lonely night, to the Judge that draws near as the evening shadows fall; that it leaves to the repentance which He sends, to the voice of conscience

through which He speaks; but it helps to soften the heart to tears once more. Look at Jesus in His care of souls (John 4 : 15, 16). No searching questions; 'Go, call thy husband,' no more, no less; the naked fact, and the revelation of mercy. The Lord gives both, one to show how serious the condition is, the other as consolation. The one He lays upon the soul, that it may tremble, the other He administers, that it may revive. This soul is precious to Christ, that is enough; this life brought the Saviour to the cross, and He ennobles it; for this, His creature, God has rent the heavens and come down; for her, too, He has thoughts of peace and not of evil. Come, let us polish again the bit of silver that has lain so long in the mire, and let the lost sheep have a double portion.

"Greatest of all will it be if the diaconate can bring to fallen women, after the heavy, sweltering night of sin, a new morning in all its dewy freshness, in which they can learn once more to work—to work as a shield against sin. For we are not minded to console these fallen ones with a life of contemplation or luxury, or with any life which substitutes one sin for another; we are far more bent upon straining their every nerve, and reminding them of their duty on earth, and of the commandment, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' If, so far, the daily bread has borne the fearful stamp of sin, and the curse of the basest service has rested upon the superabundant earnings, now honest work must come to its own again in this soul, work in many forms. The Apostle speaks of the 'manifold wisdom of God,' and it

is a rule of His kingdom to elevate labor by the diversities in it (I Cor. 12 : 4 *ff*). It is salutary and right when these girls are actively employed in a variety of duties.

"In the next place, we must influence them through their honor. I need not begin by saying that every reproachful term must be repressed, for any common or vulgar word is death to the pastor's care. The girls must see that they are treated as Christians. Serious charges must be brought against them privately, and only when the girl is determined not to be saved must we proceed as the Saviour directs (Matt. 18 : 15-17).

"Thirdly, let the girls have access to innocent pleasures, to amusements outside, to entertainments in the institution. Let them go up hill and down dale, and do not be overly anxious as to how many may thus escape. Confidence always carries a promise with it, and better is a great wealth of hope than the narrowness and stinginess which wonders how far it is safe to trust in God.

"Let us give the girls sufficient liberty rather than confine or constrain them. But, then, let us lead them diligently and faithfully into the mystery of God's Word, into the seriousness of His holy commandments, into the beaming joy, when a child of God is born once more to the world. Let us show these poor girls with circumspection, but also unreservedly, that God has rescued from the depths even our own souls, the souls of those who are training and teaching them, and how He speaks to all His poor, and how He restores all His waste places. The Magdalens should know—and only

a fool will lose their respect by this knowledge—that their conflicts and struggles are ours also, and that it was only the marvellous protection of God which kept us from the abyss in which they suffer. In a Magdalen asylum should be a holy emulation who shall best show forth the example of Jesus in his own life. This, then, is the substance of the true diaconate of Jesus Christ, to be at once the objects and the imitators of His pastoral care” (Bezzel).

(e) *Parish Work*

“Beyond dispute, the flower of our work is the parish diaconate, *i. e.*, the service of the poor, the wretched, the helpless, weak, and neglected, found here and there in the homes of the congregation. A parish deaconess should regard herself as an assistant in the sacred office, and all her actions should be regulated by a clear consciousness of this position. She will take the direction in her work from the pastor of the congregation, will not undertake anything in opposition to him, even if her way is best, and will consider herself bound to render to him true, clear, and full reports, in which she should be guided by the thought that she must dispose her charges to feel the need of pastoral care, and to make use of it.”

In America, as a rule, the parish deaconess must take part in the Sunday-school. For this she must bear in mind:

(1) This work should be to her one of the most im-

portant services she can render to the children of her church.

(2) For every session she should make careful and conscientious preparation.

(3) She must spare no pains to increase her own religious knowledge and teaching ability.

(4) She must visit the Sunday-school children in their homes, and take a real interest in their lives, so that she may know how to bring the Word of God closer to them.

(5) She must not forget that all work among children is seed-sowing, and that, above all, the Lord Jesus must be formed in her (Gal. 4 : 19) before she can lead the children to Him.

"The service in a parish is difficult, and may be regarded as the flower of all deaconess work, in so far as all the capacity gained in the institution forms the preparation for it. A parish sister must be capable as a nurse in her dealing with young people, with the neglected, the fallen; capable in housekeeping and in the kitchen, capable with the needle. For every one of these qualifications is useful to one who enters upon this busy life, with its manifold requirements.

"The cardinal virtue for a parish deaconess is energetic wisdom, which keeps everything in order. The gift of quickly finding out all about the field of activity opened to her, of separating the true from the false, of discerning the point at which the right sort of assistance comes in, of recognizing the safe means to be used in helping; of understanding the way to approach people, of being all things to all men, and yet remaining mistress

of the situation—this is wisdom, and the sister whom God has placed in the parish work must never omit from her daily petitions the prayer that the Lord, who gives to those who ask in singleness of heart, will give her this.

“To the gift of wisdom is added the gift of discerning spirits as necessary for the parish sister. Not only misery, poverty, helpless need, but also lying, dissimulation, hypocrisy, and flattery surround her. Well for her if she can be wise as the serpent and harmless as the dove. A keen eye, combined with a warm, loving heart, is her best portion. But love must be the keynote in her heart and work, love for poverty and the poor, love for misery and the miserable. Where love does not take this form in a deaconess, her work will never be the real thing—much done, nothing won. She who is fond of associating with people of the better class, and looks graciously and condescendingly upon poverty, is not fit for the noble calling of the parish diaconate. That sister receives the highest praise of whom we can say, she is a mother to the poor, a friend of the wretched; and she has reached the highest degree who has learned wisely to combine a kindly approachableness with a dignified reserve. To be mother and friend, yet never to become intimate, to awaken and retain confidence, while remaining a guest and a stranger, to come as an angel of God, to spread out sustaining hands, to lift, to carry, to protect, to care for, and then silently vanish—this is the right attitude for the sister of the poor, who must be everywhere, yet must keep clear of entanglement. For her a certain promptness, combined with quiet energy,

is desirable. The indolent, the dilatory, who are never done, the awkward and unpractical, cannot become parish sisters, who are often overwhelmed by the diversity of their work, who must take many steps, must think rapidly and turn about quickly, and still must accomplish their object, lest all their coming and going, their stirring life, should be without result.

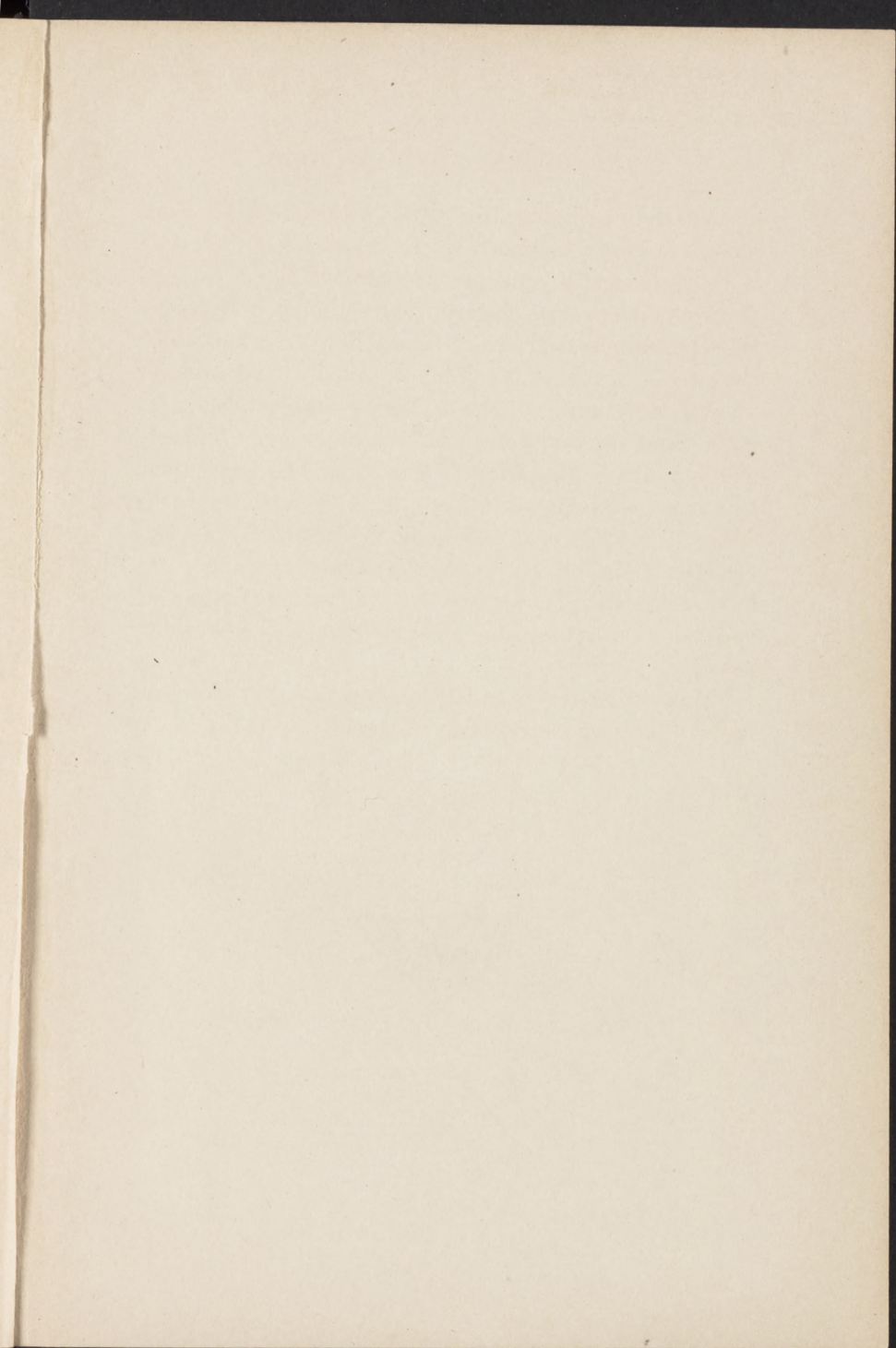
"They come in contact with much that is good and refreshing, but also with much that is wicked, common, ugly. Well for them when they can keep themselves undefiled, following the guidance, step by step, of Him whose blood is given for our cleansing, knowing that our good conversation in Christ (I Peter 3 : 16) will keep us firm and secure, moderate and circumspect, sober and pure. For this reason parish sisters should be persons of strong character, bearing the stamp of a nature sanctified in Christ. Firmness without roughness toward insolence, presumption, inexperience, and unreasonableness; patience, without abject submission to the opposition of the wicked, and before the bolts and bars of distrust; silence concerning all that has been told her in confidence or that she has noticed—these are the ornaments of the deaconess, who knows that in her glorious calling she is to live not unto herself, but unto Christ.

"And shall we name two things yet which will complete our picture of the parish sister? They are, the gift of begging, with courage to do it, and the gift of suggesting and inventing. The charity of those who are well-to-do must be set in motion for the poor. She who wishes to

do her part in the beautiful work of caring for the poor must know how to knock at the door and the heart of the rich, modestly yet bravely, with tact, but upholding the honorableness of charity, that she may bridge over the separation between the poor and rich, a work to which the parish diaconate is especially called. And whoever knows that the poor are not helped simply by gifts of money and ordinary assistance; but only then, profitably and in a way well-pleasing to God, when one shows them their wasted opportunities, and leads them to the living spring of work, which makes the desert places revive as the streams of renewed power flow again; he knows, too, how salutary it is to suggest this and that, to invent occupations, and to make possible that which was impossible.

“May the Lord give to His congregation ever more and more of such wonder-workers” (Meyer).







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