

# KAISERSWERTH AND ITS FOUNDER.

WITH PICTURES BY WERNER ZEHME.

## I. FLIEDNER'S LIFE.



*Theodore Fliedner*

FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY ENGELBACH.

THEODORE FLIEDNER.

THE story of a human life, of small beginnings and great achievement, often possesses a charm greater than fiction. The real, when it includes the ideal, not only accomplishes its own purpose, but creates purpose in others. And specially to men and women struggling toward difficult goals does the story of a successful life—successful in the sense of aims attained—give encouragement and cheer. Such a one preëminently was Theodore Fliedner's. His name is perhaps little known to-day, even in Germany, the land of his birth, but it is one that many people, in many lands, have daily cause to bless.

Theodore Fliedner was born in a village near the Rhine in 1800, and was the son and the grandson of pious Lutheran clergymen. The Napoleonic invasions which, early in the century, devastated Germany brought gloom and terror into his childhood, and deepened

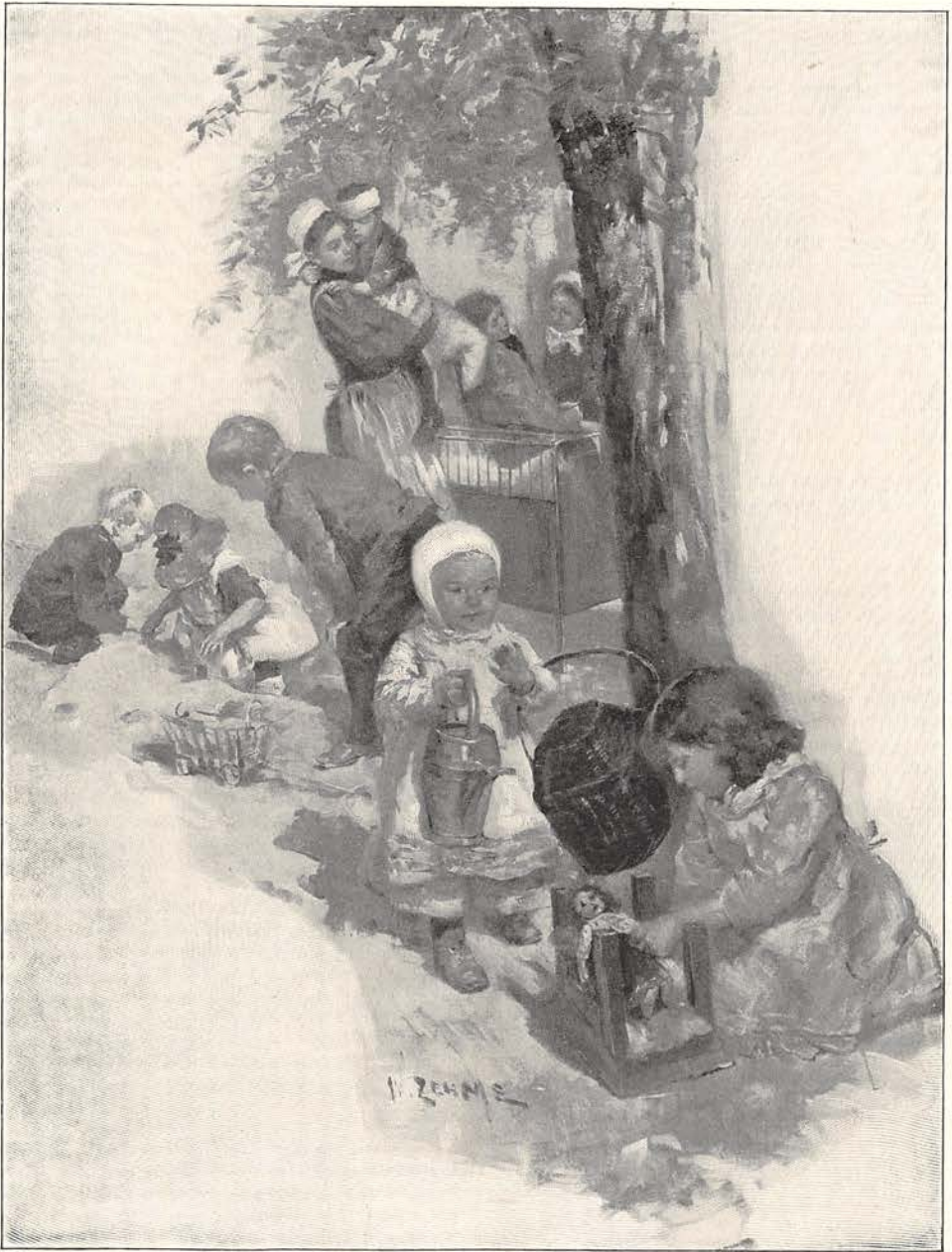
an inherited desire to make his own life, like his forefathers', one of quiet usefulness to others. With this lofty purpose in his heart, the sensitive child's feelings were hurt when his father, because of the plumpness of his figure, called him in jest «the little beer-brewer.»

When school years were over the boy managed to work his way into the universities of Giessen and Göttingen, with the help of friends, and by giving instruction in return for food and lodging. He blacked boots, sawed wood, and darned his own clothes; the darning, however, must have been of a somewhat primitive kind, for he writes to his mother that he sewed up the holes in his trousers with white thread, and then inked it over.

The intellectual atmosphere of the universities strongly influenced him against his early formed resolution to enter the ministry, which was further weakened by the bitter controversies among the theologians of the day. «I only manage,» he writes, «to cling to the one belief: that Christ was neither Deceiver nor Deceived.» He studied foreign languages; read the lives of great men, making notes upon them; collected songs and games for children, which are known to-day in hundreds of kindergartens; studied botany and the use of simple household remedies for man and beast—all with the one object in view of making himself practically helpful to others. During the college vacations he managed to see something of the world. His first journey was a sixty-mile tramp to Nuremberg, with only two gulden in his pocket; his second, a four weeks' visit to Bremen and Hamburg, by means of a hard-earned gold-piece. In financial matters Fliedner early developed two qualities rarely combined: faith in money to come, and economy in the spending of money in hand.

At the age of twenty the young student passed successfully his examinations for the ministry, and went to Cologne, where, by way of a beginning, he accepted the position of tutor in a private family. He tells naively of the lessons in deportment given to him at this time by the mother of his two boy-pupils, a woman of fashion and wealth, and confesses to have learned that «gentle ways and polite





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

IN THE GARDEN OF THE HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN.

manners help greatly to further the kingdom of God.» He made the acquaintance of many influential people at Cologne, among them the foremost Evangelical clergyman, who allowed him to assist him in parish and prison preaching.

Fliedner gradually worked himself into a belief that he was unfit for the ministry, and was about to apply for a vacant instructorship at Bonn, when he received a call to the

parish of Kaiserswerth, near Düsseldorf. Believing the message, coming, as it did, at a turning-point in his life, to be a divine summons, he accepted immediately, was ordained in his native village, surrounded by a proud family circle, and entered Kaiserswerth, alone and on foot, a day earlier than arranged, so that he might spare the little parish the expense of a formal reception.

The position in which he found himself



was not a brilliant one. Kaiserswerth was a small town composed almost entirely of factory people, and was the one feeble Protestant spark in the heart of a Roman Catholic country. The yearly salary of the minister was one hundred and eighty thaler, with the use of the parsonage, which, however, he was obliged to share with the aged widow of his predecessor. The twenty-two-year-old «Herr Pastor,» however, set to work energetically, returning first to his home to fetch two younger brothers and a sister, so that his widowed mother might be somewhat relieved in the support of a large family. With their slim household belongings, they sailed for several days down the Rhine in a small craft.

Four weeks after Fliedner's installation at Kaiserswerth the velvet factory upon which the support of the population depended failed, and the extinction of the one Protestant communion in the neighborhood seemed inevitable. The young minister directly received calls to two other parishes; but a feeling now came over him that he was a shepherd, not a hireling, and that it was his duty to go out into the world and seek help for his unfortunate people. Staff in hand, he started off on foot for Holland. A kind old gentleman, patting him on the back, bade him God-speed, with this parting reminder: «Faith, persuasiveness, and a little impudence, are the qualities that you most will need.»

In Holland, among the prosperous burghers, where the Protestant spirit glowed warm, and later in England, Fliedner received substantial aid.

## II. THE ORDER OF DEACONESSES.

SINGULARLY appropriate is the church seal of Kaiserswerth, which represents a tree growing and expanding under the rays of a sun, with the motto, «The grain of mustard-seed becometh a tree.» The same idea is expressed in a picture in the little gate-house of the parsonage garden, bearing the inscription, «The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed.»

This gate-house, consisting of one room twelve feet square, is the cradle of Fliedner's life-work. In it, after having founded the first German prison-reform association, he lodged a released prisoner—a poor, forlorn woman who had managed to find her way to him, because she had heard the strange story that here was a man who felt pity in his heart for outcasts; indeed, that he encouraged them to come to him for help. This woman was fol-

lowed by others, and very soon the question forced itself upon Fliedner's mind, «How shall I find house-room for these unfortunates, and, above all, where shall I look for proper care-takers for them?» During his travels in foreign parts he had frequently been impressed by the want of efficient service in many hospitals. «Often I found marble entrances, but a pitiful absence of skill and faithfulness on the part of nurses and attendants.»

Fliedner, confronted by an immediate need in his own parish work, revived in the Protestant Church of Germany the order of deaconess, which had its origin in apostolic times. The office was preserved in the Roman Church down to the eighth, in the Greek Church to the twelfth, century, but was discontinued in both, partly on account of abuses that had crept in, and partly because the hierarchy of the middle ages was averse to all lay activity. It was displaced by that entirely different system, the conventual system. The nun appeared, the deaconess disappeared; but in the church of the Waldenses and Moravians women continued to hold this ministering office.

Also in the British Church, which had received Christianity from the East and not through Rome, women were employed as deaconesses as early as the fifth century.

Luther in his writings advised the reestablishment of the order in the reformed churches of Germany. «But we do not dare begin,» he says, «until the Lord God makes better Christians.» Again,—and Luther, in his direct methods of pursuing truth, did not always speak graciously of the weaker sex,—«The readiness to feel compassion for others is more natural to women than to men; they have a special gift for comforting and soothing sorrow.»

The first General Synod of the Reformed Church of the Lower Rhine and the Netherlands put Luther's recommendations into effect in 1568. In the annals of the time we find the deaconess frequently spoken of as «an ornament of the church,» a figure of speech which must have been rather obscure to the youthful mind of those days, for it was then the custom for the deaconess to occupy during services a commanding seat in the church, with a long birch rod in her hand, with which from time to time she would deal out smart ear-taps to the inattentive children in the congregation.

Here again the deaconess gradually disappeared; probably because the church order, which was changed into a purely civic one,





DRAWN BY WENKER ZEHME.

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL AT KAISERSWERTH.





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

THE GATE-HOUSE, THE BEGINNING OF THE INSTITUTION OF KAISERSWERTH.

lost much of its centralizing and vitalizing power, and also because of the absence of special training-schools.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, when Germany had freed herself from the bondage of the French, and the Church had thrown off to a great extent her lethargy, signs appeared anew of a desire to draw women into active participation in church ministry. Amalia Sieveking, a patrician of Hamburg, and later in many ways its benefactress, tells in a pathetic manner how she herself tried to bring it about: « In the year of the cholera epidemic, — 1831, — believing that the right moment had come, I offered my services at the cholera hospital. They were accepted, and directly I sent out an urgent appeal to my sisters to join me. But none came.»

This brings us down to the time when Fliedner set to work to make a practical beginning.

Of course the first thing needed for the training of nurses was a hospital. Kaiserswerth possessed no hospital, nor was there one anywhere in the neighborhood; so Fliedner secured a large house which happened to be standing vacant in the village, fitted up a few rooms with mended furniture, cracked china, and a supply of six sheets, and on October 13, 1836, opened the «Deaconess Hospital

of Kaiserswerth,» without patients and without deaconesses. This was the first training-school for nurses of modern times.

On the Sunday morning following a poor servant-girl knocked at the door for admittance, and before the end of the month four acutely ill patients were under its roof. There was vigorous opposition to the founding of the hospital on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy and laity of the neighborhood, but it so happened that the first patient admitted and the first physician appointed were both Roman Catholics. Soon after the opening, one candidate for deaconess presented herself, and with her several probationers.

As the growth of a tree is marked from year to year by added rings and new branches, so the growth of Kaiserswerth has been marked, from that day to this, by yearly increase and expansion. It stands to-day one of the world-centers of philanthropic work, and each institution that it includes bears the stamp of its energetic founder. Besides the main hospital, now containing two hundred and ten beds, there are to be seen there to-day a hospital for deaconesses, a Magdalen home, a large kindergarten, a seminary for school-teachers of all grades, an orphan-asylum, a holiday house and home for retired deaconesses, an old ladies' home, and innumerable



workshops and buildings. The property embraces several hundred acres, and the well-managed farm helps largely to meet the expenses of the collective institutions. One of the recent annual reports shows among its products 141 tons of grain, 7000 barrels of potatoes, 20,000 eggs, and 125,000 quarts of milk.

its income is self-earned. It is derived in largest part from board-wages paid for the persons educated or nursed at Kaiserswerth; from payment for the services of graduated nurses all over the world; and from the Kaiserswerth publishing establishment, which produces much popular reading-matter in cheap form. During 1893, 110,000 copies of



DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

OLD SISTERS (DEACONESSES) IN THE GARDEN OF THE HOUSE OF REST.

Of course generous sums of money have alone enabled the founding of the different institutions at Kaiserswerth, and many are still in need of endowment; but the financial report of 1893 shows that three quarters of

the «Volkskalender,» an annual publication, were sold, and a few years ago 755,000 copies of a «Life of Luther.»

The founding of these many institutions, and the conduct of their financial affairs,



formed but a small part of Fliedner's life-work. From all over the world came to him calls for advice and for nurses. Kaiserswerth became, in fact and in figure, a light set upon a hill. Three years after its establishment Elizabeth Fry founded a deaconess order in England; Vermail, the Huguenot clergyman and philanthropist, one in Paris; others following their example in Switzerland and Denmark. Florence Nightingale presented herself as a pupil at Kaiserswerth, and was among the first graduates to make its name honored abroad.

Frederick William IV. of Prussia, always a generous supporter of Fliedner, appreciating his rare executive talents, called him to live at his side in Berlin. «Your Majesty, I was not made for Berlin,» was Fliedner's modest refusal. He went there, however, and established a deaconess house and several other institutions, among them an admirable training-school for domestic servants, which is also a temporary home, a social meeting-place, and an inquiry-office, for all women-servants in and out of employment in Berlin. Attached to this school is a child's nursery for the training of nursery-maids.

Fliedner was twice married. His work in life was advanced, perhaps even made possible, by the two noble women who shared his labors and more than shared his privations, and who in turn became the first Deaconess Mothers of Kaiserswerth. The first wife lived but a comparatively short time. During the period of his widowerhood Fliedner tells in his journal that he went to Hamburg to ask Amalia Sieveking to take charge of a deaconess home. She refused, but recommended Caroline Bertheau, a former pupil, who had for four years been devoting herself to similar work in the Hamburg hospital. Fliedner was so well pleased with the candidate that he offered her a hospital appointment, along with the alternative of becoming his wife. After mature deliberation the young woman decided, not between the two, but in favor of both. She foresaw that as Fliedner's wife she could better serve the cause of the sick and the suffering. The wedding-journey of the quickly married couple was to Berlin, for the purpose of placing the first five deaconesses in the Charité Hospital, and was typical of their journey together through life—twice-blessed in bringing blessings to others.

With the graduation of more and more deaconesses at Kaiserswerth came calls for their services from every part of the world. During the first ten years Fliedner established sixty nurses in twenty-five different places.

He was specially gratified when church presbyteries applied to him for help in nursing the sick of their parishes. «It is your duty,» he always said, when starting off with a little band of graduates, «to give your first service to the poor. If ever you happen to be forced to choose between them and the rich, go to those who cannot recompense you, for they are the ones who need you the most.»

His first long journey—in the days when travel was not made easy, as it is now—was to America, to conduct two deaconesses to the Rev. Dr. Passavant's German parish at Pittsburgh. One is still living as the faithful superintendent of an orphan-asylum in Rochester, Pennsylvania. In 1884 several former Kaiserswerth deaconesses came to America, at Mr. Anthony Drexel's request, to fill places in the German Hospital in Philadelphia. Fliedner in his note-book gives many impressions of this «wonderful, upward-striving country,» and records with regret and much perplexity the number of its conflicting religious sects.

The second long journey was to Jerusalem, where with four deaconesses he opened a hospital and a school in two small buildings placed at his disposal by the king of Prussia. Fliedner lived to see, as a result of his untiring efforts, between four and five hundred patients cared for yearly in this hospital, and over one hundred girls in the school.

From Jerusalem he turned his steps to Constantinople, where fifteen centuries earlier the deaconess office had flourished, and where to-day again, thanks to his initiative, it exerts a wide and beneficent influence. Throughout the Orient thousands of human beings, of every country and color, are cared for by the brave German women who have given up home, and all that the word includes, to nurse strangers in a strange land.

After Constantinople came the founding of the hospitals, boarding-schools, and orphanages at Alexandria, Beirut, Smyrna, Bucharest, and many other places. It would be wearisome for those not specially interested to read even a list of the posts at which German deaconesses are stationed to-day. Following the example of Kaiserswerth, other church sisterhoods have been established. Since the founding of the first order, 10,400 deaconesses have been ordained in the German Protestant Church, and they are working to-day at 3640 different posts. An American commentator, referring to Fliedner's work, speaks of it as a wonderful illustration of the way in which a man eminent for no gifts save those called moral may succeed in accomplishing tremendous results.





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

YOUNG PROBATIONERS COMING OUT OF SCHOOL.

The last seven years of his life were marked by physical suffering; but he labored cheerfully to the end in the cause so dear to him. Almost his last words were, «As I look back upon my life, I appreciate how full it has been of blessings; every heart-beat should have been gratitude, and every breath praise.»

### III. THE LIFE OF A DEACONESS.

DURING a recent illness in a foreign hospital unexpected opportunity was given to me to gather further information concerning

Fliedner's life-work, and to come personally under the shadow of its blessing. Observing that the nurse who had been called to my care wore a distinctive dress, differing from the Roman Catholic sisterhoods in that her gown was cotton, not woolen, and her white muslin cap had no band across the forehead, concealing the brow and hair, I said, «You are a German deaconess, are you not?» «Yes,» was the prompt and pleasant reply, confirmed by speech, blond hair, and rosy cheeks; «I am a Kaiserswertherin.»

«Tell me something about Kaiserswerth,» I



said one day. «How long was your training there? What are the conditions of your life as a deaconess, and what is the difference between your order and the Roman Catholic sisterhoods?»

«The training at Kaiserswerth,» began Sister Margarethe, «covers three years. The training-school has two classes, one for nurses, the other for teachers; and every woman upon entering decides which of the two she wishes to join, the (Krankenschwestern,) or the (Lehrschwestern,) as they are called; for although each must know something of the work of the other, the subjects of instruction differ in the higher branches of knowledge. Every probationer begins with a course in practical housework—that is to say, she helps do the housework of the hospital; she cooks, irons, sews, repairs mattresses, etc., because in her future sphere among the poor, even though she may not always be called upon to do the work herself, knowledge of all these branches is essential. Instruction in simple book-keeping, letter-writing, and reading aloud is included in the general course, after which the two classes diverge; the nurse goes into the medical and surgical wards of the hospital, and the teacher, whose future sphere of work will be in orphan-asylums, kindergartens, and distant colonization-schools, is taught primarily how to teach.

«In my own case, when I entered Kaiserswerth, it was as a teaching-sister, because I had previously been fitted for, and had filled, the position of governess; but the desire became so strong in me to nurse the sick that whenever I had a spare hour I used to run over to the hospital, and finally I was entirely transferred.

«The (Mutterhaus,) as we always call Kaiserswerth, is presided over by a mother-deaconess, chosen, as is the housekeeper-deaconess, from among the sisters by their vote. The several clergymen connected with the institutions are appointed by the Kaiserswerth board of governors, their election, however, being subject to approval by the church authorities.

«How I wish that you could once be present at the consecration service in the beautiful Kaiserswerth chapel! As soon as a sister has been ordained she is sent wherever the need for her is greatest. If she is a nurse, it is either to a hospital where the nursing-staff is composed of deaconesses, or to some town or church parish, where her duty will be to care for the poor and the sick in the community. If she go into parish work she

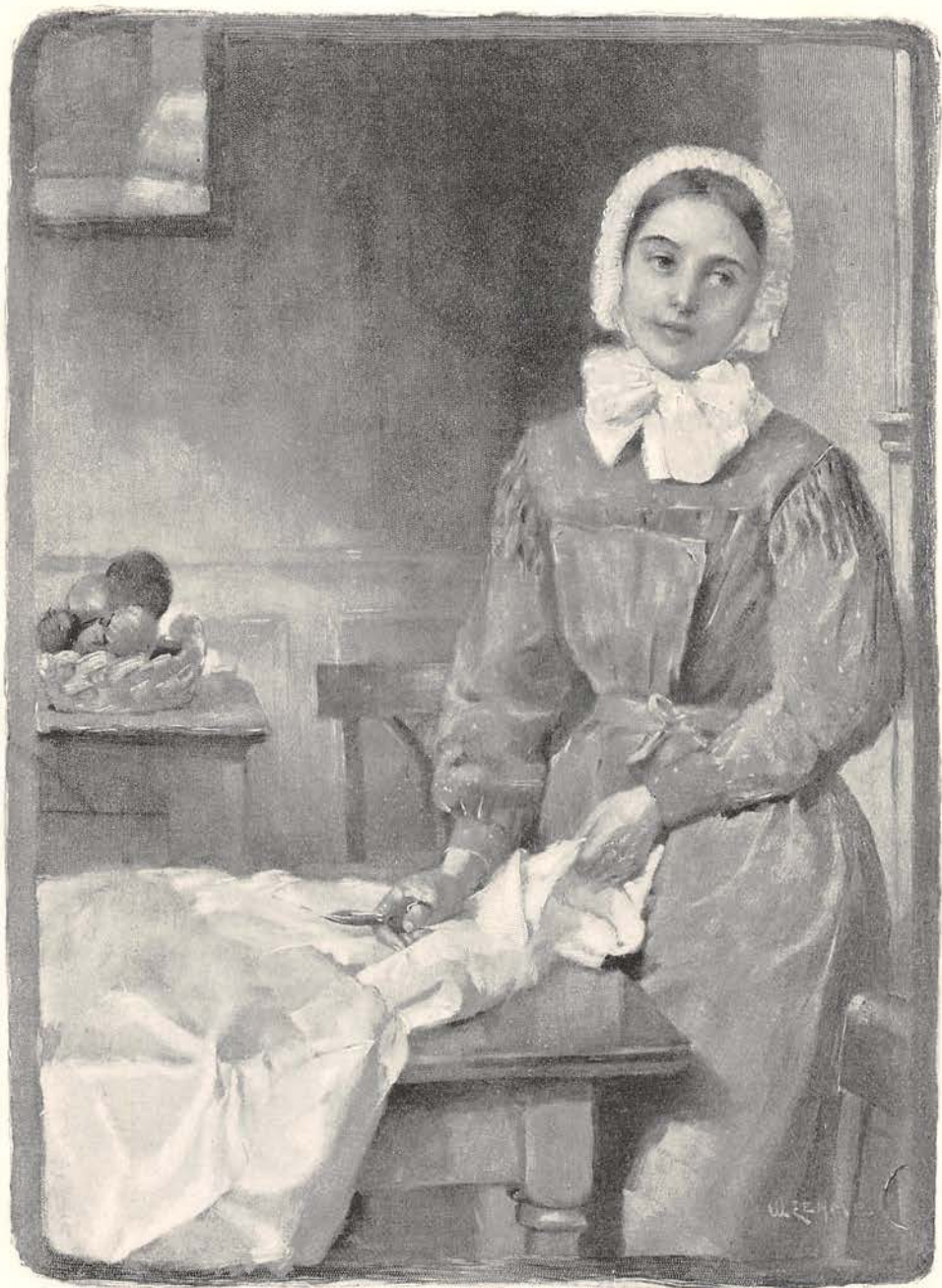
will live with one or more deaconesses in a little home, the expenses of which are borne by the municipality or the church which has applied to Kaiserswerth for her services, and which also pays to the mother-house an annual sum for each deaconess employed. In cases of private nursing, where people are able and anxious to pay for skilled care, a gift of money is usually made to the society supporting the local deaconess home.

«Almost every town in Germany to-day has, or is seeking to have, a deaconess home; for no matter how well a town may be equipped with hospitals, there is much illness in every community that does not call for hospital treatment. Many families in moderate circumstances cannot afford to employ a private professional nurse, and among the really poor even slight illness may produce conditions of distress. In such cases the services of a competent nurse for an hour in the morning, and again at night, are all-sufficient, and one woman can thus lend a helping hand in many homes. Of course, if allowed to choose, every trained nurse interested in her profession would prefer to occupy herself only with the acutely ill, rather than to do other work, because this brings her best faculties into play; but we deaconesses are taught from the beginning that while we must fit ourselves to meet the worst emergencies in illness, our duty is not to be sick-nurses only.

«See, for instance, how often it may happen, when a poor working-woman is ill, that while she requires very little personal attention,—the poor are unspoiled,—she is in urgent need of somebody to cook the family dinner, to tidy up the room, and to keep the baby from the stove. This may seem to you menial and disagreeable work for one trained in the higher branches of knowledge, but I assure you it is not; there is physical and mental variety in it all, and practice makes everything easy. Then, too, it is such a pleasure to help people at the times when they are most in need of help.

«I must not forget to tell you,» Sister Margarethe continued, «that throughout Germany, besides the deaconesses, there are the lay graduates of Kaiserswerth, the Sisters of St. John. These comprise women of every age and social position, married and single, who at some time in their life have taken a six months' course at the Kaiserswerth hospital. The Knights of the Order of St. John offer to pay the traveling and tuition expenses of any woman desiring to take this course. We deaconesses find the (Johanniterschwestern) very helpful in our parish work. They stand





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

A DEACONESS.





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME.

A SISTER OF ST. JOHN.



ready, as an army of reserves, to assist when individually we are over-tired, to take our place at the bedside of a patient for a few hours at a time, and to help procure for us little necessaries and comforts for the sick. Their hospital training makes them efficient aids.»

«You accept personally no money for your services, and even refuse a gift in remembrance of them?» I asked.

«Yes; and this must be so, even though it may seem ungracious. But do not forget that we have no wants; neither have we, as individuals, any permanent abiding-place in which to store possessions. When we start out in our career Kaiserswerth gives us a full outfit; we receive, wherever we may be, a small yearly allowance for pocket-money, and are supplied once a year with the gowns that we need by the Kaiserswerth dressmaking department, where the measures of every sister are kept.»

«And what are your needs?» I asked, knowing the elasticity of the word as applied to feminine adornment.

«Two blue cotton gowns and two cotton aprons yearly, and every five years a new blue woolen gown and a black alpaca apron, for Sunday and dress occasions,» was the rapid summing up. «Our indoor dress is blue, this being considered more cheerful than black in the sick-room; and it is of cotton, so that it may be washed frequently. We wear in the street a long black cloak and a black bonnet, which fits closely over our cap. Our dress, you know, must be adapted to quick change without trouble. In Roman Catholic countries we deaconesses are stared at in the street because we wear no white band across the forehead. I hear people say frequently as I walk along, (Look at the blonde nun!) I must not omit to tell you that every deaconess who happens to possess private property upon entering the order retains full control of it, and at her death it reverts to her family, unless otherwise disposed of by will.

«When we start out from Kaiserswerth into the world we are instructed, among other things, never to obtrude our religion upon any one, and proselyting as a duty of our calling is distinctly discouraged. We are taught that when brought into relation with people who are antagonistic or indifferent to Christian teachings, our best power of persuasion will not lie in words.

«Kaiserswerth always appoints the stations to which we go, and changes us about from place to place according to its best judgment; but service in foreign countries and in times of epidemic is not obligatory.»

«Have you ever been through an epidemic?» I asked.

«Oh, yes,»—her face lighting up,—«I have been through typhus and diphtheria, and I was at Hamburg throughout the cholera two years ago.»

Here I recalled having read in a newspaper that at the time of the last outbreak of cholera in Hamburg Kaiserswerth had sent out a call to all her deaconesses, asking them to signify whether they were willing to go to the Hamburg hospitals, and that every response had come in promptly in the affirmative.

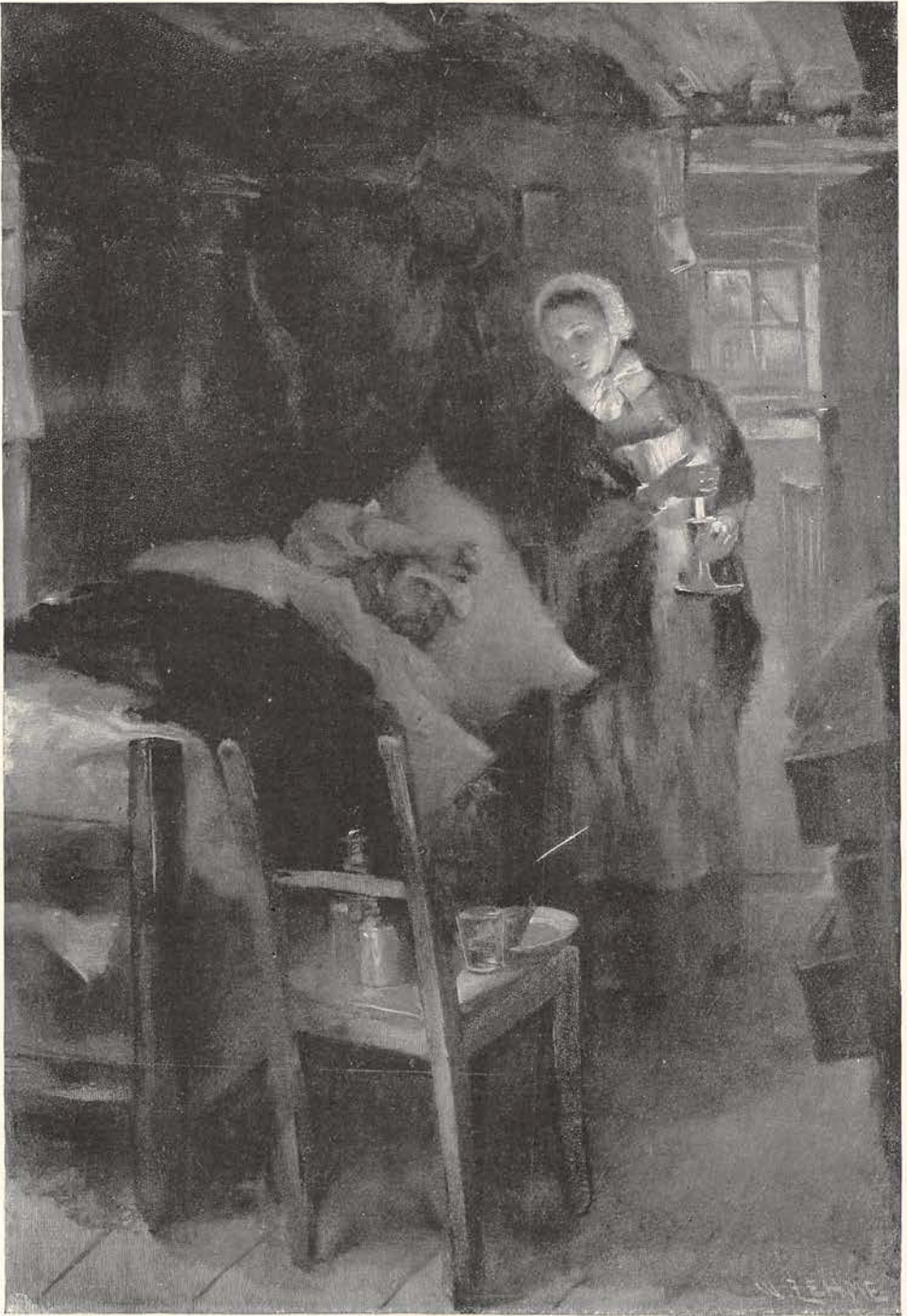
«Oh, that was a never-to-be-forgotten experience!» continued the gentle little woman at my side. «I was at the city hospital during the worst of it. Cholera is the most difficult and exciting of scourges to nurse, because its course is so short and acute. Patients are apparently in the death agony when they are brought in, and must be worked over incessantly during the few hours in which their fate lies in the balance. If they live they also recover rapidly. During the first days in Hamburg patients were brought in in such overwhelming numbers that the hospital forces were almost paralyzed. Physicians and nurses were taxed to the utmost, but soon order was brought out of chaos.

«Sometimes the changes were so rapid that upon returning to the wards after a few hours' sleep I would find new faces in almost every bed. The saddest corner of the hospital was the inquiry office, where crowds of anxious people were forever coming and going. I used to hurry past the door as quickly as possible, because I knew only too well the message that was awaiting most of them. Frequently I recall to memory the coming of an orderly into the ward with several little children in his arms, begging me to find places for them. I had no place, and still he would stand. I would then take four or five of the poor little things, and lay them crosswise on one bed. They did n't mind the crowding—in fact, they were quite unaware of it; and sometimes one would suddenly sit up out of an apparently comatose condition, and begin to laugh and play. Oh, how much I would like to see again some of the dear little faces that helped make even those dark scenes bright! They come back to me now like angel faces.»

«When it was all over, did you not break down physically from the strain?» I asked.

«Oh, no; when our services were no longer needed, we were quarantined for ten days, and so had a good rest, and were quite fresh and ready at the end of that time to return to our various posts.»





DRAWN BY WERNER ZEHME

END OF A NIGHT WATCH—EARLY MORNING.



What a difference, thought I, as I listened to this heroic tale, so simply told, between the woman of nerves and the woman of nerve, and what a force it takes to remove one little letter!

«You asked me to tell you,» said Sister Margarethe one day, «how the Protestant sister differs from the Roman Catholic. Very little, I am sure, in the impulse that leads her to the choice of her calling, but greatly in the relation of each to each. The principal difference between the two lies in the fact that the Protestant sister retains throughout life her freedom of action. At her ordination she takes no vows. She only promises that while a deaconess she will endeavor to do her duty, in the fear of God, according to his holy teachings.» She may withdraw from the order at any time without disgrace, to marry, or to return to private life. She is requested, however, to signify her intention in the matter every five years.

«Probationers at Kaiserswerth frequently fall away, either from unfitness, or because they enter with sentimental ideas of the office, which hard work soon dispels. There is usually as little liking for hard work in a sentimental sister as in a so-called (esthetic Christian); but rarely does a deaconess once ordained desire to give up her calling.

«For my own part, I must confess that when I look about me in the world at other women who, like myself, are standing alone, —and there are many, many such,—my own lot, even from an outside point of view, looks to me brighter and fuller than many others. My calling brings me into happy, healthful relations with people; it is free from petty personal cares of every kind; and when I look ahead into the future I need never dread that worst of all dreads, a lonely old age. If I outlive my usefulness the dear home at Kaiserswerth stands ready with open arms to welcome me back. There every retired sister has her

own little room in the Feierabendhaus, and her own patch of flower-garden. Moreover, she has the great pleasure of being reunited, after long separation, to the friends of her girlhood, and of seeing in the busy life that surrounds her a younger generation preparing to fill the place of the one calmly looking on. Returning to a home is a very different thing from being taken into a strange institution in old age.

«Remember, whenever you compare the lot of a deaconess with that of another woman, that to be just you should compare it only to that of another single woman. Marriage and motherhood must be left out of the scales. It is not the calling of a deaconess that shuts her off from these. People seem to forget, sometimes, when they talk about woman's vocations, that all women in the world are not happy to marry, nor are all happily married. There will always be some who from force of circumstance are obliged to create an independent sphere of usefulness for themselves; and surely, among these, the deaconess has her right and honorable place.»

Sister Margarethe seemed to me to be herself the best answer to the question. At the end of six weeks she left me, with only a «thank you» on my part for all her kindness and skill. From the window of my room after night-fall I watched the slender figure in black as it disappeared into the darkness, hurrying to respond to another call of distress, and, for one, was grateful and glad that such as she exist in the world. Whatever one's convictions, or lack of conviction, on the problems of life, it is impossible to come into touch with such disinterested goodness without an increase of faith in human nature, a keener appreciation of the opportunities for usefulness that lie in every woman's path, and, above all, a more reverent recognition of the one Source whence such a life draws day by day its own strength and sweetness.

*Eleonora Kinnicutt.*



SEAL OF KAISERSWERTH.