

was an enormous woman, dressed in expensive but half soiled finery. Her two daughters were handsome dashing girls, with full faces, an abundance of jewellery, and very fashionable bonnets. They mostly came in their carriage to the top of the road in which the prison was situated; there it waited for them till the interview was over, and father, mother, son, or daughters never stayed more than five minutes. The sight of Jacobs and the exchange of a very few words with her seemed to satisfy them, but one and all accosted her with the same sorrowful kindness, as if deeply grieved by her unfortunate position. There was a brief enquiry after her health, an admonition to submit implicitly to the prison regulations, and consider them all for her good, and a declaration that they would take her back again to their service, at the expiration of her sentence, if she behaved well. Jacobs made suitable responses and very humble acknowledgements; but one thing struck me as remarkable, and it was never omitted in one of their visits—they never went without asking if she had come to a proper repentance of her great sin yet, and Jacobs as invariably answered: "I'm afraid I have not." This was so regularly done that I at last concluded it must have some religious signification known only to the Jews. The conduct of the Josephs towards their convicted kitchen-maid was certainly more amiable than Gentiles generally show in like circumstances. But we matrons and assistants soon began to think that the cause might be found in Jacobs herself. A more civil or submissive creature, no prison officer could desire to have in charge. In fact, Jacobs required little care; she scrubbed the stone floors, made the rough bags, was locked up at night, and even attended the chapel with the same uncomplaining humility. Jacobs gave no trouble; and anybody accustomed to look after female convicts, will have an idea of what a rare jewel she must have appeared in our eyes, and what a contrast she presented to the other women of the ward.

I am not going to enter on the woes of an assistant matron, but the unexampled good-behavior of my new prisoner, while it spared my nerves and temper, could not but gain my best regards. I positively liked Jacobs before she had been a fort-

night under my charge, and the poor Jewess seemed to return my good-will. There was no trouble she would not have taken, no haste she wouldn't have made to serve me; and she ran without being called; fetched and carried without being bidden; and when allowed to clean my room, as a reward for good conduct, because it conferred additional liberty, she made everything look as bright and polished as if it had been new. I was pleased, of course; but cleaning and scouring seemed to be Jacob's hobby—an uncommon one for a Jewess—and still more rare among the inhabitants of our wards. All the time she could spare from prison work was devoted to sweeping, scrubbing, and polishing up her own cell in every corner. Walls, floor, and even the ceiling got the benefit of her exertions; she reached them with an agility which nobody could expect from her squat figure. Almost the entire ward was indebted to her in this way, which brings me to the only troublesome inclination Jacobs ever showed. There was no such thing as getting her to rest or remain in a cell more than two or three weeks; once it was fairly scoured out, and there was nothing more for Jacobs to clean, not a speck of dust left on its bare walls or in its four corners, she became uneasy, restless, always imploring leave to change with her next neighbor. Prison rules do not recognize such humors, but, as in the working of every system, rules will be relaxed and modified according to character and circumstances, so in female convict establishments, the good will of officers, the consideration of directors, and sometimes the general desire for as much of a quiet life as can be got in such places, admit of small matters and allowances beyond the strict regulations. Jacobs seemed to understand the fact, and took her measures accordingly. The only request she ever made to directors, lady superintendent or chaplain—the only privilege she ever coaxed from me, in return for her spontaneous services—the only approach to intimacy with her fellow-prisoners she ever tried, was for leave to exchange her cell. There was a report among us—I know not how it originated—to the effect that the Josephs had made interest in her favor with the prison authorities. Whatever the influence brought to bear on the case might be, certain it is that Jacob's