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I AM married, and long out of business now, but some fifteen years ago I was an assistant-matron in a prison for female convicts, situated on the south side of London. I am not inclined to give its particular name, though I got good reports and a fair share of promotion in the establishment, and left it with the character of an efficient officer; for the story I am about to tell might appear somewhat compromising in the eyes of strict lady-superintendents, if it ever came across them.

Well, I had been about a year in the service, and got fully acquainted with its duties, when a Jewess named Jemima Jacobs was placed in my ward. She was young—not over twenty, I should say—but not at all handsome, being coarse-featured, squat, and of a dirty-brown complexion, which the prison-dress did not improve, as you may imagine. Her trial had taken place at the Central Criminal Court, on a charge of stealing plate and jewellery to a large amount from a wealthy Jewish family in which she had been kitchen-maid. The evidence was clear against her, the family being the chief witnesses. Jacobs was convicted, and sentenced to one year's penal servitude—a lenient sentence, it was thought, for her offence. But the family, while they appeared against her, were unanimous on the subject of her previous good conduct, and showed a laudable anxiety to

mitigate her punishment by all the means in their power.

After her arrival within our penal walls, no visiting-day elapsed without some of them coming to see and converse with their unlucky kitchen maid. As my readers are (as I hope) without experience in prison-discipline, I may mention that such interviews take place between two opposite grates—the convict standing at the inner, her friends at the outer one, and the prison officer seated in the space between them, to see that nothing is said or done contrary to regulations. I frequently occupied that post, and thus had an opportunity of seeing the whole family, for they came in turn by ones and twos. Let me premise that their name was Josephs, and their place of business a notable one in Cheapside, with a jeweller's shop in front, and a pawnbroker's shop round the corner. They consisted, as far as I ever knew, of a father and a son, a mother and two daughters. The father, a tall, thin, stooping man, who looked as if he had cried "Clo'" in his time, was always rather shabbily dressed. The son was exactly like him, only some inches shorter; to me he did not look many years younger, though, of course, he must have been; and I cannot say how I found out his name was Samuel. Probably it was from hearing his mother call him so, for he came with her on the first day. She