

## THE PRISONER'S FRIEND.

There was a good man of this country, who was very rich, had a great house and lands, and many servants. He heard of the great distress of the poor people shut up in the prisons, he heard how bad their food was, how they had scarcely any bed to lie on, and how, from want of proper nourishment and cleanliness, they often had a bad disease, called the jail fever (because it used to begin in jails and prisons), by which many poor prisoners died. God put it into his heart to visit the prisons, and see into the distress there, and his kind heart was so moved with what he saw, that he made up his mind to give up his time and his strength, and his money, to help poor prisoners. He did not rest till he had got a law passed (called an Act of Parliament), to have prisons properly looked to. Through this law, which he was the means of getting made, the people who now are sent to prison for crime, and who, though guilty and bad, should not be left to perish by filth, and want, and disease, are properly looked after—have good and proper food, clean clothing, decent beds—and if they are ill, they have medicine given them; so that they do not die of jail fever now. When this good man had thus got the prisons of his own country put into order, he wished to go abroad, and do what he could there; for he was not so narrow minded as to think that none but his countrymen were his neighbours. He believed that every man was his neighbour, and God Almighty had taught him, by his Holy Spirit, to love even his enemies. So he went abroad, and travelled into many countries, and went into the prisons, doing good himself, and setting other people to do good, wherever he went.

At last he came to a country where the plague was, and instead of being frightened at this dreadful disease, he knew that the worse it was, the more need there was that those who could, should help the poor sufferers. He wished, therefore, to try and find out what the cause of the plague was, that so, with God's blessing, a cure might be found. So he went to visit the prisons where the plague was, and in going to see one poor person, he caught it himself, and died. His monument is put up in St. Paul's Church, in London. He stands there, cut out in white marble, holding in his hand a bunch of keys, to show that he went about opening prisons; and a paper also, on which are written some words about improving prisons; and at the bottom, on the great white slab on which the stone figure stands, is carved in stone the inside of a prison—a poor old man lying on his bed of straw, and the good man standing by, and servants