

already made over to the government of fiends. The cruelty, lust, and cursed greed for gold of a brutal gaoler were indulged without restraint. Howard found comparatively few felons in the prisons. It was found cheaper to hang them than to keep them in prison. The unfortunate wretches were dragged on hurdles to the place of execution, and, amid every indignity, put to death.* The crimes for which they were thus sentenced, were oftentimes not only most trivial, but positively excusable. Thus the iniquitous press-gang would seize hold of a man, hurry him away from his wife and children; and after the lapse of years, he would return to find that his wife, driven to extremity, had been arrested, convicted, and hanged for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving children. O, England of the eighteenth century, thy sons blush to-day to mention thy inhumanity towards thy unfortunate sons and daughters. We have in imagination joined Mr. Brocas in his visit to Madely: let us join him now in a few of his visits to the prison. It is Sunday, February 27, 1785, just ninety years ago.

C.—“Good morning, Mr. Brocas. You seem dressed up for a journey. Where are you going to this cold, disagreeable day? Are you on your way to church?”

“Aye, Mr. C., but not the church that the fashionable and the great are fond of visiting. Come, go along with me, and I will show you sights at which your very soul will weep.”

C.—“Well, I don’t mind if I do: just wait a moment till I draw on my great coat, for the day is bitter cold. Well, now, where are you going?”

Mr. B.—“I am going to preach to the poor prisoners in the gaol. My heart has been strangely moved towards them of late, especially since I read Mr. Howard’s report of the state of prisons in England. It is near a year ago that I first made it my business to go to Shrewsbury to visit the prison; but alas! the cross was too heavy for one, and I could not prevail on any one to accompany me, so I gave it up; but my conscience gave me no rest, and I availed myself, therefore, of the first opportunity of going back. I met with a great many discouragements, but at last I obtained admission, and O, what a sight met my eyes! but what a blessing

*“John Howard,” by Rev. W. H. Withrow, in *Canadian Methodist Magazine* for July, 1875.