

Northern Messenger

Lillie Pozer 28298

VOLUME XXXII., No 33.

MONTREAL AND NEW YORK, AUGUST 13, 1897.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.

Elizabeth Fry.

Ninety-four years ago there lived in Norwich, England, a motherless girl of twelve years. Her mother had just died, and she was left in the care of others. She was sensitive and timid. Without a good pious mother to guide such a nature she was at a great loss. To add to her misfortune she was considered dull and did not like to study. She grew obstinate and became worldly-minded. She loved dress, and wore a scarlet riding habit and purple sleeves with scarlet lacings. She was fond of music and dancing, and these led her into excitement, vanity and flirtation. These things went on until she was seventeen years of age. It

work, and with a noble firmness of soul she devoted herself to it, not dreaming of the greatness of the work which she could accomplish. One of the secrets of her great success may be learned from some of her latest words. She said, 'Since my heart was touched at seventeen years old, I believe I have never awakened from my sleep, day or night, without my first thought being how best I might serve the Lord.'

Some time after her conversion she united with the Quakers, whose doctrines and customs she fully endorsed and observed. In 1800 she was married to Joseph Fry. In 1813 she made her first visit to Newgate prison, and four years after that she succeeded in establishing a school and manufactory

lence. Not long afterwards, under the influence of Mrs. Fry, the change was marvelous. Loud and angry words were no longer heard; order and propriety now reigned. As related by a visitor the picture was one never to be forgotten. Around a table, occupied in sewing, were many of the women who so lately had been filled with wrath and turbulence. At the head of the table sat Mrs. Fry, reading the bible, and explaining as she read, while all listened respectfully, and many with eager interest. Instead of scowling, leering, and ill-suppressed laughing, there was in the countenances of the women an expression of self-respect and consciousness of their improved character and condition.

The work begun at Newgate broadened, till not only in England, but throughout Great Britain, the Channel Islands, and Continental Europe, her influence was brought to bear upon the elevation of prison regulations and convict life; remedies in modes of punishment and discipline; and the erection of buildings necessary to the carrying out of her system. In her extensive travels, she was received by royalty and government officials everywhere with great cordiality. They followed her counsels, and joined her in measures of reforms; and she enjoyed the rare privilege of living to see most of her reforms become laws of the land. Organizations were founded by her for the improvement of prison life for female and juvenile convicts; for the improvement of prison discipline; for the protection and reformation of juvenile offenders, and of females after leaving prison; for the protection of servants in times of emergency; and, in fact, for almost every phase of human need, her last effort of the kind being the founding of an order called the 'Nursing Sisters,' a band of women to be trained as nurses for the sick.

She passed to the heavenly home, October 12, 1845, at the age of sixty-five. Soon after her death, at a public meeting in London, measures were taken for establishing as a fitting monument to her memory, "The Elizabeth Fry Refuge," for affording temporary food and shelter to destitute females on their discharge from metropolitan prisons.'

A Cheerful Service.

(By Ruth Argyle.)

When Robert Smith was about thirty years of age he experienced religion and became as enthusiastic in serving the Lord as he had formerly been in the pursuit of pleasure. At first he was anxious to enter the ministry, feeling quite sure that in this capacity alone he could serve the Master he had so lately learned to love; but there were very serious objections to his taking this step. He had been educated for a druggist, and had made medicine and chemistry specialties for years; in addition to this he had just invested all his savings and a little money his father had left him in a stock of drugs with which he had opened a store in a thriving town. He had recently married the lady of his choice and settled down in the new home she had selected and furnished. After much prayerful and earnest deliberation he made up his mind to remain in business and serve the Lord in it.

This he did for more than fifty years. For



will not do to forget her name. It was Elizabeth, and her father's name was John Gurney. She was born on May 21, 1780.

Elizabeth's mother was an earnest Christian. Her firmness of character was such that the influence of it never left her daughter. At the age of seventeen the prayers of that good mother for her began to be answered, and Elizabeth's heart was led to God. Although there were many influences to lead her away from Christ, she remained firm in her mother's faith. Her former timidity was changed into courage. Her obstinacy turned into a godly firmness in what she believed to be right. The Gospel she heard preached gave her new views of life and duty. She learned the value of that excellent grace, self-sacrifice for the good of others. She felt that God had called her to do some great

work within the prison, organized a ladies' association for the reformation of the prisoners, and thenceforward devoted all her energies to prison reform. A writer in an exchange gives the following account of her beautiful and heroic life:

'Soon after she united with the Quakers her fitness to expound the Scriptures was recognized, and her eloquence and power as a preacher gave her great influence. But it was as a prison reformer that she was most eminent. The revolting conditions of prison life in Great Britain at that time, and the causes that led to it, cannot be detailed in a sketch like this. To visit Newgate as Mrs. Fry first found it, was like going into a den of infuriated wild beasts. Women almost without clothing huddled together, screaming, begging, and threatening with awful vio-