

was the scene of drunkenness, gaming, fighting, singing, dancing and dressing-up in men's clothes. It was, indeed, more like a den of wild beasts than anything else, and when the Governor entered this part of the prison, which was seldom, it was always with great reluctance for fear of being molested by the undisciplined inmates.

But one day the prison door opened softly, and there in the doorway stood the form of a woman. She was tall, rather stout, with dark eyes and wavy hair, which was nearly concealed by the close-fitting cap, worn at that time by Friends, and in her face shone a peculiar light, which probably none of those assembled in that cell could ever forget. When the heavy iron door closed behind her, she did not seem to feel the least fear at being shut up alone with such a herd of novel and desperate companions; but opened her Bible and read to them that beautiful passage about the Lord of the Vineyard, telling them that Christ was willing to save them, even though they had wasted the greater part of their lives estranged from Him, if they would but put their trust in Him.

Some of the prisoners had never heard of Christ before, others thought that their day of Salvation was past, and many were moved to tears by her words. "She spoke especially to the mothers who had children in prison with them, pointing out the grievous consequences of their offspring living in such a scene of depravity, and she proposed to establish a school for them, to which they acceded with tears of joy. She told them plainly that she could do nothing without their help, and desired them to select a governess from among themselves. They chose the poor, degraded woman whom we followed into the prison, and who, under the good influence of Elizabeth Fry's visits, had become a fit person to instruct the children. She was never known to break any of the rules, and became one of the first of the criminals

to accept Christianity. The school was opened in an unoccupied cell, for all persons under twenty-five years of age. Many older ones begged to be allowed to enter, but on account of the size of the room, could not."

Soon after this school was opened for the children, Elizabeth Fry (for this was the lady's name) formed an "Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners in Newgate." Its object was "to provide for the clothing, the instruction and the improvement of the women, to introduce them to a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and to form in them as much as possible those habits of order, sobriety, and industry which might render them peaceable whilst in prison and respectable when they left it." This plan worked admirably, and about six months after the establishment of the school for the children, and the manufactory for the tried side, the committee received an urgent request from the untried side, entreating that the same might be done for them. This experiment did not meet with such great success as the first, because the prisoners were not disposed to work, flattering themselves with the prospect of soon being released. This good work continued to attract public attention, until people came from all parts of the country to witness what soon became one of the greatest curiosities of London.

But it need not be supposed that these degraded prisoners could sit all their gaming, fighting and drinking at once. Elizabeth Fry was informed that some gaming still existed in the prison, so she went alone and told them what she had heard, and begged them for their own sakes to give it up, also how it had pained her to hear that they had disobeyed the rules she had given them, and before she ended five packs of cards were bought to her, which she burned in their presence.

"Such was the beginning of that celebrated prison reform initiated in Newgate by Elizabeth Fry, afterwards